



Lompoc City Council Agenda Item

City Council Meeting Date: January 16, 2007

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM: Gary P. Keefe, City Administrator
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SUBJECT: Proposed Staff Addition for City of Lompoc Wireless Internet Project

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Adopt the [attached class specification for the Wireless Services Technician](#).
2. Approve a salary range of \$3,282 - \$3,989 for the classification of Wireless Services Technician.
3. Approve [Resolution No. 5379\(07\)](#) which amends the Personnel Rules relative to the Classification Plan (Rule III) and Compensation Plan (Rule IV) and adds the Wireless Services Technician class specification.
4. Approve a budget adjustment of \$18,990 to fund the position for the remainder of FY 2005-07.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

At the City Council's September 21, 2004 meeting, the Council authorized the construction and implementation of Wireless Internet Access Services in the City of Lompoc. The City of Lompoc Wireless Internet Utility (WIU) was launched and became available on September 7, 2006. It should be noted that this initial offering was made without benefit of an appropriate advertising and media campaign. In the opinion of staff a "soft opening" allows the City the opportunity to deal with any problems or issues normally associated with initial start up.

Council is aware that for the initial testing periods of 2005-2006 the City has relied on its original contractors; McKibben Consulting for general support; PCC Network Solutions for construction and limited maintenance; Tropos and Motorola for technical support for the equipment installation; and Pronto for the billing and payment software systems. Their efforts were coordinated through the City's general consultant for the convenience of the City. There relationships were in place prior to the City hiring its Wireless Services Administrator. During the later part of 2006 the City added the services of one additional consulting firm; Siemens Communications Inc. Siemens currently provides customer service and network operations support.

CURRENT WIRELESS UTILITY OPERATIONS: There has been an increase in demand and expectations of the Broadband Network, which has led to a significant increase of the workload and areas of responsibility of the Wireless Services Administrator (WSA). The Wireless Services Administrator has reduced Operational Costs by over \$800,000 in the past (12) twelve months by supplanting both: a) lead Contractor (McKibben Consulting); and b) the outsourcing of the Network Operations (NOC) and Customer Service Center. The replacement of the NOC saved the City in excess of \$340,000. While supplanting the lead consultant brought significant savings it also brought significant responsibilities, accountability and action items to the Wireless Services Administrator (WSA).

The WSA diligently managed the final implementation, contractual obligations from the various vendors and the successful launch of the broadband Network. However, as we move into the next phase of the Broadband Service offerings there will be ongoing “operational” needs that we will need sufficient internal resources to address. These resources will enable:

- Timely responses to our customers
- Monitoring, supervising and adherence of our outsourced managed groups
- Direct customer interaction, escalation, and policy adherence
- Process improvement and compiling customer input/recommendations

The workload that the Wireless Services Administrator (WSA) is presently addressing and will be addressing on an ongoing basis includes, but is not limited to:

- Engineering
- Network development
- Network upgrades, authentication, addressing, mapping, documentation
- Network backhaul power and alarming
- Web development
- Development of network tools to manage, monitor, and maintain network health
- Business model development to meet expanding and future needs
- Development of new revenue generation avenues
- Managing (4) primary and (3) secondary vendors
- Customer equipment development and sending requirements to manufacturers
- Customer education tools
- Addressing the current and future Broadband network expectations from City executives and customers
- Process development, guidelines, expectations (internal, external, vendors, and manufacturers)
- Database creation to capture all documents, process, and pertinent program information

At the present time the City’s Wireless Internet Utility should be viewed as an evolving entity. While the primary components listed above are being addressed by the Wireless

Services Administrator, a number of critical components such as local customer service, technical customer support, timely follow up with primary vendors as required, and developing internal policies and procedures are either not being handled or at best may be addressed intermittently by individuals whose primary responsibility is not the Wireless Internet Utility.

IMMEDIATE STAFFING NEEDS: To address these emerging unmet needs, staff is proposing that the Council approve the creation of one full-time position to be classified as Wireless Services Technician. The newly created position will assist, have knowledge of, be responsible for, and have the ability to perform the following tasks:

- Overseeing the daily customer service operations of the Broadband Wireless Network
- Interacting with the primary vendor of the Customer Service Center
- Handling customer service at City Hall
- Addressing customer concerns, complaints, and escalations (internally & from external groups)
- Assisting with the process and procedures development for customer service operations
- Customer equipment inventory, inventory control, and tracking
- Customer Premise Equipment (CPE) troubleshooting
- Assisting and monitoring customer service contract adherence and processes with outsourced vendors
- Making recommendations for process improvements
- Report generation and compiling as it pertains to customer issues, complaints, and resolutions
- Supervising others

If approved, this position will enable the Wireless Services Administrator to concentrate on and address the higher-level engineering, Technical and program needs for the Broadband Wireless Network. In addition, the incumbent will become the focal point for providing timely responses and comprehensive customer services to our system customers.

FUNDING SOURCE: The Broadband Division of the Utilities Department has \$28,957 in personnel savings as a result of not filling a previously approved part-time Office Staff Assistant III position. Staff recommends that these salary savings be used to fund the proposed position for the balance of FY 2005-2007. The cost of this new position is estimated to be \$18,990 for the remainder of the fiscal year, and \$136,000 for FY 2007-09. During the preparation of the 2007-09 FY City Budget the Council will have the opportunity to review in depth the current and future needs of the Broadband Division.

SUMMARY:

As stated previously, the workload and staffing requirements of the City's Wireless Internet Utility are continuing to evolve as the number of subscribers increases. Staff is

learning the importance of local customer service as a component of the WiFi network. Customer service and interfacing; ability to educate customers on CPE set-up and trouble-shooting; educating customers on WiFi networks and providing realistic expectations about the WiFi network; ability to work with outsourced groups and assisting in process development for both customer service and operation support are critical issues with must be addressed if our Wireless Internet Project is to be successful.

Staffs' recommendations will provide the necessary resources to meet these current needs.

Staff will be available to answer any questions Council may have.

Gary P. Keefe, City Administrator