



August 5, 2021

**TO:** LOCSD Board of Directors

**FROM:** Ron Munds, General Manager

**SUBJECT: Agenda Item 8B – 08/05/2021 Board Meeting**

A Request for Board Direction to Transition from Broadcasting on Channel 20.

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**DESCRIPTION**

The District has been broadcasting on Channel 20 since the year 2000. Broadcasting Board meetings live has provided the community with valuable access to the District's decision-making process for many years. Several factors have entered into a decision by staff to seek direction from the Board to transition away from Channel 20. This report discusses these factors and requests direction from the Board to discontinue broadcasting on Channel 20 and transitioning to a new method of transmitting live meetings.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

***Motion: I move that the Board:***

- 1. Direct staff to research and compile information for broadcasting alternatives and bring back a recommendation for the Board's consideration at a future Board meeting.***
- 2. Approve discontinuing broadcasting on Channel 20 and moving to live streaming meetings on SLOSPAN.***

**DISCUSSION**

**Background**

This District has broadcasted Board of Directors meetings since the 2000 on cable Channel 20. This has provided the community with relatively easy access to live meetings and has enabled citizens to remotely participate by viewing or listening to the meetings in real time. AGP Video (AGP) has been the contracted provider for the audio/video services since the year 2000 as well. Their service to the community has been outstanding.

The initial equipment purchases to provide video broadcasting capabilities was provided by the County through a Public, Educational or Governmental (PEG) Trust fund grant in 2003. As the equipment aged, another PEG grant was received in 2013 to upgrade the equipment. According to AGP, the equipment is again nearing the end of its useful life. Discussions with the County have indicated that there are PEG funds available to replace the existing equipment but, as in the past, are limited to procuring equipment necessary to continue broadcasting and/or streaming on the government access channels (Channel 20 and 21).

Technology wise, a lot has changed since the year 2000. Internet streaming and social media platforms have transformed the way individuals view entertainment,

news and receive information. Additionally, during the last year and half, the District has seen the value of alternative viewing and participation options for District's committee and Board meetings. Reviewing all the broadcasting options available to the District at this time is prudent as live meetings resume but are still in a transitional stage as the pandemic impacts hopefully decline.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Staff is recommending that the Board approve discontinuing broadcasting on Channel 20 and move to live streaming on SLOSPAN with re-broadcasts of the meetings airing in a rotation with other agency meetings on Channel 21. Though the District does not have numbers on the viewership of Channel 20, it is surmised that very few Los Osos residents watch Channel 20 in general or specifically for watching Board meetings. Low viewership coupled with the cost to maintain the channel, approximately \$400 per month, is driving the request by staff for Board direction to explore other alternatives for broadcasting District meetings.