



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: January 10, 2012

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Treasury Division, Finance Department

SUBJECT: UCSB-TV Educational Access Channel Launch

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council hear a presentation from University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB) staff on the new educational access channel, UCSB-TV, debuting January 10, 2012, on Channel 72 of the regional cable system operated by Cox Communications.

DISCUSSION:

Background

Cox Communications currently operates a regional cable system in the Santa Barbara South Coast ("South Coast"), providing cable television service to the cities of Santa Barbara, Goleta and Carpinteria and the nearby unincorporated regions of the County of Santa Barbara. Within the City of Santa Barbara, Cox provides cable services pursuant to a non-exclusive state video franchise authorized under Digital Infrastructure and Video Competition Act of 2006 ("DIVCA"). Under DIVCA and the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996, local governments can require cable service providers to contribute public, educational and government access funding and channel space as a condition of operating in the public right-of-way.

Cox currently provides six public, education and government ("PEG") access channels in the South Coast region. The County of Santa Barbara and the cities of Santa Barbara, Carpinteria and Goleta each have their own government access channel. The City's government access channel is Channel 18 which is managed and programmed by City staff. The public and educational access channels are shared across the entire region on Channels 17 and 21, managed and programmed by the Santa Barbara Channels.

On January 10, 2012, the seventh regional PEG channel, UCSB-TV, makes its debut on Channel 72 of the Cox cable system. The new channel is the City's fourth and final PEG channel allowable under DIVCA and was authorized by Council in December 2010. At

that time, Council dedicated the channel for exclusive use by UCSB for higher education purposes and the general benefit of the Santa Barbara South Coast region.

Initially, UCSB-TV will air UCTV, which consists of non-commercial educational, informational, and cultural programming from the University of California's ten campuses, three national labs, and other affiliated institutions. Programs include documentaries, lectures, symposiums, artistic performances and other events, and cover a broad range of general interest topics, such as science, health, humanities, and public affairs. It also provides programming supporting educators in order to enrich the classroom experience for K-12 students. Currently, UCSB contributes approximately 30 percent of the programming to UCTV. It is expected that over the next several years, UCSB-TV will increase the amount of UCSB-originated programming and other local programming that would appeal to the greater Santa Barbara community.

PREPARED BY: Jill Taura, Treasury Manager

SUBMITTED BY: Robert Samario, Finance Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office