

BOARD MEETING DATE: January 9, 2015

AGENDA NO. 6

**PROPOSAL:** Airing SCAQMD Governing Board Monthly Meetings on Local Public Affairs Channels

**SYNOPSIS:** Pursuant to Board direction, as a means to expand agency outreach and public awareness of SCAQMD actions to achieve healthful air quality for all residents, staff is seeking to secure commitments to rebroadcast the SCAQMD Governing Board's monthly meetings on Public, Education and Government channels and/or cable companies' public affairs channels operating throughout the region.

**COMMITTEE:** Administrative, July 18 and December 12, 2014; Recommended for Approval

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

Direct staff to secure commitments to rebroadcast the SCAQMD Governing Board monthly meetings on Public, Education and Government channels and/or cable companies' public affairs channels operating throughout the region.

Barry R. Wallerstein, D.Env.  
Executive Officer

LBS:DJA:PC

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**Background**

During the February 2014 Administrative Committee meeting, Board Chairman Dr. William A. Burke and other Committee Members discussed broadcasting the monthly Governing Board meetings and other SCAQMD messages on local public access channels throughout the agency's four-county jurisdiction. Direction was given to both the Legislative and Public Affairs and Information Management departments to research arrangement of such broadcasts.

State law in California requires franchised cable providers to provide channels to rebroadcast a local community's Public, Education, and Government (PEG) channel if a

city channel has at least eight hours of programming each day. Most of these channels provide local educational and public affairs programming intended to serve the public interest. They are vehicles for a city to inform their residents about local events and to broadcast city council and other local governmental meetings. Many cities have PEG channels that are completely programmed, managed and underwritten by the local jurisdictions, with cable providers merely rebroadcasting them to viewers.

Five cable providers serve residents in the South Coast Air Basin: Charter, Cox, and Time Warner (which is currently being purchased by Comcast), AT&T, and Verizon.

Based in Irwindale, Charter's coverage area in the SCAQMD region includes cities in Los Angeles County, Riverside County, and San Bernardino County. Rancho Santa Margarita-based Cox has a coverage area that includes cities in Los Angeles County and Orange County. Time Warner, based in El Segundo, provides coverage to various cities in all four SCAQMD counties. AT&T and Verizon serve customers statewide without regard to local jurisdictions.

Each cable provider rebroadcasts the PEG channels of the cities they serve. Of the 165 cities and counties in the SCAQMD region, 79 localities have their own PEG channels. In addition, two of the five cable providers, Charter and Cox, have a separate local public interest channel which they program with a wide variety of local content. These are Charter Channel 101 and Cox3, respectively.

PEG access channel rebroadcasting requirements do not apply to the two direct broadcast satellite (DBS) systems DirecTV and DISH Network.

Staff has been in contact with Cox and Charter about their ability and interest in rebroadcasting SCAQMD Governing Board hearings each month on their own public interest channels, and has approached many of the 79 localities to see to if there is availability and interest to show SCAQMD meetings on their PEG channels. Charter has expressed some interest pending schedule availability, and Cox has said they could consider it on a trial basis to see what kind of audience it brings. Among the local PEG channels, a number of localities, including Riverside's Government Access TV and San Bernardino's KCSB, have expressed an interest in showing SCAQMD meetings.

None of the channels would be able to broadcast the meetings live as they would need to know the exact length of each meeting in order to fit it into their schedules. Information Management would be able to provide either a DVD or a feed of the meeting over an FTP server for the station to download. It would take staff approximately two to three days to prepare the taping in the proper medium for delivery.

Prior to each Board Meeting informational videos or Public Service announcements (PSAs) could be provided that highlight SCAQMD's current programs, such as the Lawnmower Exchange, the Smartphone app, and the VIP program. The DVD or download of each meeting would include these videos and/or PSAs.

**Proposal**

Authorize staff to follow through with gaining commitments to partner with local municipalities that have PEG channels to rebroadcast the Governing Board monthly meetings. In addition, authorize staff to work with Cox and Charter to develop a partnership to air the meetings on their local public interest channels, Charter 101 and Cox3.