

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Council:

SUBJECT: **Community Services** - Accept and appropriate grant from the Friends of the Torrance Library to replace microform reader-printers at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library

Expenditure: Not to exceed \$17,682.58

RECOMMENDATION

The Community Services Director recommends that the City Council accept and appropriate a grant from the Friends of the Torrance Library in an amount not to exceed \$17,682.58 for the purchase of two Canon MS-300 digital microfilm/fiche reader-printer scanners and two PC work stations for the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library (FEAP-634).

Funding

Funding is available from the Friends of the Torrance Library.

BACKGROUND

The Torrance Public Library has a large collection of microfilm and microfiche that includes contemporary as well as historic periodicals such as the *Torrance Herald* newspaper. While many newspapers and magazines have migrated to a digital format, older editions of the periodicals are still only available in microform. These materials are accessed daily by students, independent researchers, and genealogists. Staff uses these resources as well for research and obituary retrievals. Currently, the only way to view the materials is through 20 year-old microfilm/fiche reader/printers subject to frequent breakdowns due to age and constant use. Oftentimes, the machines produce poor quality, barely readable reproductions.

The vendor responsible for servicing the Library's reader/printers has experienced difficulty maintaining the units due to age and unavailability of parts. It is not financially expedient for the vendor to replace the machines because cost of replacement outweighs the revenue received from the Library. The Library's limited equipment and furnishings budget precludes staff from replacing the units with budgeted funds.

ANALYSIS

Library staff investigated several options for improving microform readers and printing capability including changing copier vendors and repairing the current microform reader/printers. Unfortunately, these options were neither viable nor effective in providing adequate service. Staff researched potential replacement machines by contacting microform reader-printer manufacturers and then communicated with personnel from other public libraries soliciting recommendations for specific models and/or desirable features. The results of the research suggested the acquisition of two Cannon MS-300 digital microfilm scanners used in tandem with conventional PCs.

The proposed new units are designed to be used with PCs to retrieve microform images and convert them into digital files for printing, e-mailing, faxing, or storage. The MS-300 offers step-by-step tutorial videos in English, French, or Spanish through an easy to use touch-screen interface. Informative video tutorials guide users through everything from film-loading to image clean-up, and saving or e-mailing images. Because the devices scan to file and print to standard computer printers, there is less maintenance involved. Supply costs will also be less expensive because the machines will not require special paper, toner, or replacement parts. Personnel from the Communications and Information Technology Department have been consulted and are supportive of the technology selected.

Staff presented a proposal for funding the purchase of the recommended Canon MS-300 model to the Friends of the Torrance Library Board at their meeting of November 14, 2006. The Board voted unanimously to provide a grant of up to \$25,000 to cover the cost of two digital microform reader-printer scanners, the two PC work stations, necessary software, delivery, installation, and service, as well as an annual maintenance agreement on the new equipment.

The purchase of new microform reader-printers will provide improved access to the Library's unique microfilm and microfiche resources including historical newspapers, as well as enable viewed materials to be printed directly from the microform reader to a local printer, or e-mailed or saved to a file for later use. Acceptance of this generous grant will provide the Library with state-of-the-art devices that greatly enhance public service.

Respectfully submitted,

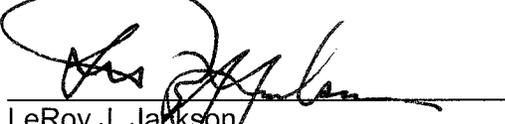
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