MOTION

Several firms provide mass notification services used by public agencies, including school districts. Mass notification systems enable officials to contact residents and employees in emergency and non-emergency situations using a variety of means, including cell phones, e-mail and text messages. Such a system allows agencies to send out urgent messages regarding fires, earthquakes, evacuation notices, terrorist attacks, HazMat incidents, and missing persons notices. This type of system also allows agencies to send out important community information regarding shelter locations, utility disruption, road and school closures, and contaminated water alerts.
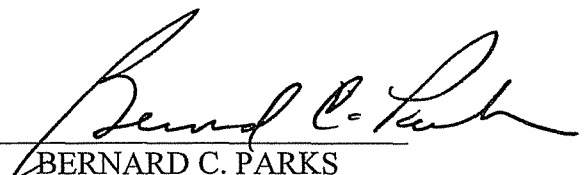
Based on a prior motion (LaBonge – Hahn), there has been discussion about upgrading or expanding the City's current notification system, which is limited in its capabilities. The existing system, operated by the LAFD and the LAPD, is primarily used to notify residents about Red Flag Day restricted parking and to call out City staff in emergency situations, including activation of the City's Emergency Operations Center. The system consists of approximately 70 phone lines and thus does not have adequate capacity to simultaneously notify a significant number of residents in emergencies.

The LAFD presented multiple options to the Council that would add capacity to the City's existing system: a) add additional City phone lines (approximately 2,000); b) outsource the system and make use of a vendor's phone lines; and, c) a hybrid that combines both options. The LAFD estimated that these options would range from approximately $500,000 to $2 million in initial costs, and recurring costs from approximately $400,000 to $700,000, not including the costs of buying telephone numbers from local carriers.

LAFD's proposal would require a significant investment to upgrade the City's existing technology infrastructure, add additional phone lines, and obtain contact information from residents. This is contrasted with the most current mass notification technology which is web-based and requires minimal infrastructure. The newer systems also include easy-to-use technology and allow users to make calls simply using a telephone and a computer. Further, these systems allow agencies to use mapping technology to target call recipients in a specific area.

I THEREFORE MOVE that Council instruct the Chief Legislative Analyst and City Administrative Officer, with the assistance of the Information Technology Agency, Los Angeles Fire Department, Los Angeles Police Department, Emergency Management Department, proprietary departments, and any other department who may use this technology, to report back with an evaluation of mass notification systems, how they are used in other public agencies, and how such a notification system could be applied to City operations other than for emergency situations.
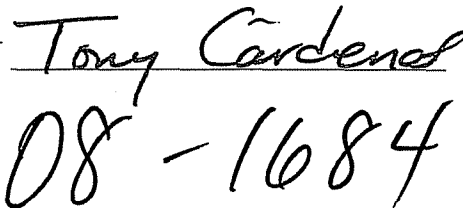
PRESENTED BY _____
BERNARD C. PARKS
Councilmember, 8th District

JUN 2 5 2008

SECONDED BY _Tony Cardenas_

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