

Memorandum

Date: July 7, 2021

Submitted by: Finance and Technology Department – Information Services Division

Subject: Automated Closed Captioning Service

Staff received a request from the public to provide closed captioning service for Council meetings to support accessibility for hearing impaired residents. Staff reached out to the City's meeting management and streaming partner, eScribe, to research options.

eScribe can provide real-time automated closed captioning service that utilizes artificial intelligence (AI) technologies. The closed captioning service not turned on by default when a member of the public views the video. Viewers would have a "CC" button on the player control panel that can be turned on or off.

The automated closed captioning service would not provide 100% accuracy as it is relying on technology to translate the speech to text. Utilizing deep machine learning system, eScribe's solution provides the ability to "train" the closed captioning engine to master names and particularities of pronunciations that are unique to the City of Port Moody.

Canadian municipalities currently utilizing this service include:

- City of Burlington,
- City of Hamilton,
- City of Mississauga,
- City of London,
- City of Markham,
- City of Nanaimo,
- Regional District of Nanaimo,
- and City of Kelowna.

Providing closed captioning services for Council meetings would align with Council's strategic priority of – Exceptional Service – Ensure our customers are highly satisfied with the quality of our service – Consider cultural differences and accessibility needs when providing service.

To provide real-time automated closed captioning services to all future meetings, year one costs are \$15,650 and \$12,750 in subsequent years. To apply closed captions to historical meeting videos, there is a standard flat fee of \$2,900 (per year of videos). The City has 9 years of Council meeting videos archived. The total cost to apply closed captions to all historical videos is \$26,100. The recommended resolution is:

THAT a budget of \$15,650 for the first year of automated closed captioning service be funded from the Council strategic priority reserve as recommended in the memo dated July 7, 2021 from the Finance and Technology Department – Information Services Division regarding Automated Closed Captioning Service;

AND THAT a budget of \$12,750 for automated close captioning service be included in the 2022-2026 budget request as recommended in the memo dated July 7, 2021 from the Finance and Technology Department – Information Services Division regarding Automated Closed Captioning Service.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Automated Closed Captioning Service.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Jul 12, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Paul Rockwood, General Manager of Finance and Technology - Jul 9, 2021 - 4:17 PM

Dorothy Shermer, Corporate Officer - Jul 12, 2021 - 9:39 AM

Natasha Vander Wal for Rosemary Lodge, Manager of Communications and Engagement - Jul 12, 2021 - 11:29 AM

Tim Savoie, City Manager - Jul 12, 2021 - 2:14 PM