

**CITY COUNCIL  
COMMUNICATION:**

**ITEM \_\_\_\_\_**

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA**

**99-145**

**SYNOPSIS -**

**AGENDA:**

APRIL 5, 1999

A plan for monitoring noise from auto races at the State Fairgrounds was prepared in response to the City Council's request. At its March 22, 1999 meeting, the Council approved the policy and directed staff to prepare language for ordinance changes and requested confirmation that any violations of the Ordinance would be fined at \$500 (March 22, 1999 meeting, Agenda Item 75).

**SUBJECT:**

AMENDMENT TO  
ORDINANCE TO  
CLARIFY  
CALIBRATION  
PROCESS FOR  
NOISE  
MONITORING  
METERS AND  
REPORT ON FINES  
ALLOWED

**FISCAL IMPACT -**

No additional impact over approved budget.

**RECOMMENDATION -**

**Adopt the proposed ordinance change to clarify calibration process for multiple meters used by a Department and receive report regarding fines allowed.**

**TYPE:**

**RESOLUTION  
ORDINANCE  
RECEIVE/FILE**

**BACKGROUND -**

The success of the plan for monitoring noise at the State Fairgrounds is based on frequent and multiple readings of sound generated by the races. The primary noise monitor used by the City costs approximately \$7,000.

**SUBMITTED BY:**

JAMES GRANT  
COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT  
DIRECTOR

The plan proposes moving around the neighborhoods as well as doing trackside measurements with the Des Moines Auto Racing Association, but the staff is concerned with moving the noise monitor around and risking breakage, and the staff has a limited number of meters available.

Due to the changes in technology, the City was able to obtain two digital handheld meters at a cost of less than \$150. These

units have equal specifications and are as accurate as the older style handheld meter previously used. To assure accuracy, each unit will be validated by a single calibration device. The same calibration device is used on the primary meter. The primary meter will be used as the "master" control unit to which all other meters are related. The primary meter has a more sensitive microphone (which relates to its expense).

The purpose of the field meters is to monitor sound throughout the Fairground area. If it is determined that there is a "hotspot" where readings are high (due to weather conditions, grandstand effect, or wind directions), the master unit will be moved to that area.