



Agenda Item:

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COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

City Manager's Office

GENERAL INFORMATION

Agenda Date: 09/27/04
04-488

Communication No.:

Agenda Item Type: Receive and file

Roll Call No.:

Submitted by: Diane Rauh, City Clerk

SUBJECT—

Telephone Language Interpreter Service for City offices.

SYNOPSIS—

The City of Des Moines has contracted with Language Line Services, Monterey, CA, to provide telephone language interpreter service to assist City employees who interact with citizens who have limited English skills. This service can be used whenever a language barrier exists--in face-to-face situations (at a service counter or in the field), or when a telephone call is received. The City Clerk's Office and the Action Center have been the pilot offices for this new project and currently have the equipment installed and functioning. A team of representatives from interested City departments has met and additional departments will be added soon.

FISCAL IMPACT—

\$1.95 per minute used, plus \$3.00 per month for each two-receiver telephone, (where necessary). The Police and Fire Departments used \$4,607 in FY 03/04 and made approximately 20 calls per month. The City qualified for State of Iowa contract pricing, and all initial start-up costs were waived.

RECOMMENDATION—

Receive and file report.

BACKGROUND—

The Police and Fire Departments have used this service for 10 years. This company interprets 150 languages, and normally has an interpreter on the line within 60 seconds. Some of the lesser-used languages may take a little longer.

Polk County, Des Moines Water Works and the State of Iowa currently use this service. The Water Works makes approximately 50 calls per month.

A brief introductory video will be shown at the Council meeting.