



Legislation Text

File #: 21-0479, **Version:** 1

Library Department recommending the Board approve and authorize the Chair to sign Agreement with Califa Group, a California public benefit corporation, for a term beginning July 1, 2021, with provisions for automatic annual renewal thereafter, for high-speed broadband Internet service to the County's libraries in an estimated annual amount of \$45,000 (\$4,500 after estimated E-rate discounts).

FUNDING: 48% General Fund, 52% Library Special Revenue Funds and Library Fees.

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

The Library has been selected to continue to participate in the state-subsidized, high-speed broadband program entitled the California Public Library Broadband Project. This program is being managed by Califa, a library nonprofit funded partially by the California State Library.

The Library Director recommends the Board approve this Agreement with Califa Group for the provision of ongoing high-speed Internet services for each of the County's six (6) library branches.

In 2014 the California State Legislature approved funding for a three-year project to connect California public libraries to the California Research and Education Network, CalREN. CalREN is a high-capacity fiber optic network operated by the Corporation for Education Network Initiatives in California (CENIC). CalREN has over 20 million users, including the majority of K-12 schools, community colleges, and California universities. In addition to connecting libraries to CalREN, the State Legislature also approved \$4 million for grants to purchase equipment needed for important upgrades to library infrastructure. Working with CENIC and Califa, the El Dorado County Library has the opportunity to upgrade and become a key resource for researchers, business people, students, and entrepreneurs.

CENIC benefits its partners because of its bargaining power across the state. It is able to negotiate favorable contracts with Internet Service Providers as well as hardware providers. CENIC also benefits the County through its ability to file for federal E-rate discounts for libraries as a California Library Consortium. All libraries are currently receiving these discounts without having to go through the complicated process of filing themselves. E-rate discounts significantly reduce the cost of providing internet service to libraries across the County.

The Califa Group, acting as the administrative arm of the California State Library for this project, develops contracts with participating libraries for data circuits and use of the CalREN high-capacity fiber optic network. Califa is a nonprofit library consortium of over two hundred libraries in California. They pioneer technology projects, negotiate discount rates for technology purchases on behalf of member libraries, and manage statewide projects on behalf of the California State Library.

On February 23, 2016, the Board approved Agreement #345-S1611 with Califa Group to connect all six libraries to the education network CalREN, managed by CENIC as part of the state-subsidized, high-speed broadband program entitled the California Public Library Broadband Project.

On May 17, 2016, the Board accepted a \$30,000 grant from the State Library for networking equipment and approved Agreement # 468-F1611 with Southern California Library Cooperative for the purchase of Cisco routers and firewalls. The actual cost of the equipment was \$35,389, and the Library reported that the additional cost would be absorbed by one-time salary savings.

On October 25, 2016, the Board approved Amendment I to Agreement 345-S1611 with Califa Group to provide a no-cost circuit at the Placerville Library and to drop the Georgetown circuit due to the withdrawal of the Comcast bid.

On November 15, 2016, the Board accepted a \$60,000 grant award from the State Library to allow the Library to purchase racks, wire management, power protection, switches, and to pay the CENIC fee for routers at three libraries. The Board also accepted a \$5,000 grant award from NorthNet Library System allowing the Library to offset the \$5,389 charge for equipment that exceeded the \$30,000 award in Agreement #468-F1611 with the Southern California Library Cooperative.

On February 28, 2017, the Board approved Amendment II to Agreement 345-S1611 with Califa Group, replacing Appendix #1A with Appendix #1B, to add the Georgetown Library back into the original agreement due to a new bid from AT&T.

Services: Under the proposed Agreement, Califa will provide high-speed Internet services using the CalREN network and pricing that has been negotiated by CENIC with the telecommunications providers. The annual undiscounted cost for all six library branches is approximately \$43,666.80; however, CENIC will apply for federal E-rate discounts and California Teleconnect Fund (CTF) discounts on the Library's behalf that will be applied after June 30 each year. CENIC has estimated the discounts for El Dorado County at approximately \$40,000 per year, resulting in a net cost of approximately \$4,366.68 per year. As the numbers are estimates, the Library is requesting that the Board approve this agreement for \$45,000, \$4,500 after e-rate discounts, in case there is a variance between the estimates provided and actual invoices provided.

ALTERNATIVES

If the Board declines to approve the Agreement, the El Dorado County Libraries will lose the E-rate discount for all six library sites and will incur additional costs of approximately \$40,000 per year, which is not currently included in the Library budget allocation.

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

Library staff has worked closely with County Information Technologies to set up this program, and IT fully supports continuing it.

CAO RECOMMENDATION

Approve as recommended.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no change to Net County Cost. The cost of agreement has been included in the Library's Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget request.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

1. Clerk of the Board to obtain the signature of the Chair on two (2) originals of each Agreement.

2. Clerk of the Board to return one (1) fully executed Agreement to the Department.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Healthy Communities, Infrastructure, Good Governance, Economic Development

CONTACT

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