

**CITY OF MIAMI BEACH  
COMMISSION ITEM SUMMARY**



**Condensed Title:**

Request for approval to award a contract to TM Systems, LLC., as the sole source provider for Spanish language translation and subtitling services at an estimated annual cost of \$100,000.

**Issue:**

Shall the City Commission award a contract to TM Systems, LLC. for Spanish language translation and subtitling services?

**Item Summary/Recommendation:**

The Administration recommends approving the award.

**Advisory Board Recommendation:**

On February 9, 2004, the Hispanic Affairs Committee was asked to review and comment on both the real-time SAP translation and subtitling translation. As a result of the Hispanic Affairs Committee survey, the Administration will review the real-time English to Spanish interpreter service.

**Financial Information:**

Source of Funds:		Amount	Account	Approved
<input type="checkbox"/> Finance Dept.	1	\$100,000	City Clerk's Office Budget	
	2			
	3			
	4			
	<b>Total</b>	\$100,000		

**City Clerk's Office Legislative Tracking:**

Robert E. Parcher, City Clerk

**Sign-Offs:**

Department Director	Assistant City Manager	City Manager

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AGENDA ITEM C2A  
DATE 12-8-04

# CITY OF MIAMI BEACH

CITY HALL 1700 CONVENTION CENTER DRIVE MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA 33139  
www.miamibeachfl.gov



## COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mayor David Dermer and  
Members of the City Commission

**Date:** December 8, 2004

**From:** Jorge M. Gonzalez  
City Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jorge'.

**Subject:** **REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO AWARD A CONTRACT TO TM SYSTEMS, LLC., AS THE SOLE SOURCE PROVIDER FOR SPANISH LANGUAGE TRANSLATION AND SUBTITLING SERVICES AT AN ESTIMATED COST OF \$100,000 FOR FY 2004/2005.**

### ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION

Approve the award.

### AMOUNT AND FUNDING

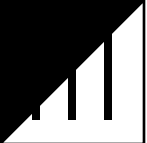
\$100,000 Funding is available in the City Clerk's Office Budget.

### ANALYSIS

In September 2002, the City of Miami Beach awarded a contract to Language Speak, Inc., pursuant to Bid No. 42-01/02 for simultaneous Spanish language interpreters. The interpreters translate in real-time and is available to the TV viewing public via the Second Audio Playback (SAP) feature which is available on most TV sets. Public feedback regarding the quality of the translation has varied. It is extremely difficult for one translator to translate in real-time, the Mayor and six Commissioners, the City Manager and City Attorney, the City Clerk, and other speakers. In addition, the English words used in transacting government business can be difficult to translate if given an adequate amount of time. Having to translate the words almost instantaneously is, at best, extremely difficult.

As a way to improve communications between the City and its Spanish speaking residents, the Administration, beginning with the Commission meeting in October 2003, tested TM Systems services which utilizes its Emmy Award-winning technology to translate the City Commission meeting from English to Spanish and provide the City with a digital version of the meeting with Spanish subtitles. The technology is the only one of its kind that provides the ability to translate and to subtitle large volumes of dialogue and text in minimal turnaround time with accuracy and efficiency. TM Systems digitizes the City's Commission meeting videos, translates all voices, subtitles the translations, and returns a complete subtitled video within 48 hours.

On February 9, 2004, the Hispanic Affairs Committee reviewed and commented on both the real-time SAP translation and subtitled translation. Two evaluation tapes of an actual Commission meeting were produced. One tape contained the translation using the real-time SAP and the other tape contained the subtitled translation.



Before viewing the evaluation SAP tape, seventy-five percent (75%) of the Hispanic Affairs Committee indicated they have used the SAP feature to view live Miami Beach Commission meetings. When asked if the SAP translation provides an accurate translation of the Commission meeting, fifty percent (50%) indicated "some of the time." After viewing the evaluation tape with the SAP Spanish language real-time translation, fifty percent (50%) rated the comprehension as poor and the other fifty percent (50%) rated comprehension below average. Regarding accuracy of the real-time translation, fifty percent (50%) rated it poor, and fifty percent (50%) rated it below average. The comments of the Hispanic Affairs Committee on the SAP translation were: "The translation was slow, difficult to follow and inaccurate. It is a valuable thing to have; however, it must be accurate, animated and easy to follow. The City discontinued this service.

Before viewing the subtitled evaluation tape, one hundred percent (100%) of the Hispanic Affairs Committee members responded that the Spanish language subtitling was very valuable. After viewing the subtitled evaluation tape one hundred percent (100%) rated the comprehension of the subtitling as very good and one hundred percent (100%) rated the accuracy of the translation as very good. The Committee's comments on the subtitling were: "The replay translation is difficult to read, perhaps another font or color is recommended for ease on the eye. They like the idea of reading the translation over the voice because it can help those that are learning Spanish too since they get both at one time."

The cost to digitize, translate, subtitle, and provide the City with a subtitled tape is \$11 a minute. An average nine hour City Commission meeting will cost \$5,940. In any year there are between 14 and 16 scheduled Commission meetings. The annual expenditure using the average of a 9-hour Commission meeting will be between \$84,000 and \$95,000, not including special Commission meetings. The project will be funded out of the City Clerk's budget.

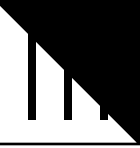
As a result of the Hispanic Affairs Committee survey, the Administration will review the real-time English to Spanish interpreter service.

## **CONCLUSION**

Pursuant to Section 2-367(c) of the City Code, the Administration recommends approval to award a contract to TM Systems, LLC, in an amount not-to-exceed \$100,000 for FY 2004/05.

JMG:REP

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Ken Lorber  
CEO

December 2, 2004

Robert Parcher  
City of Miami Beach  
1700 Convention Center Drive  
Miami Beach, FL. 33139

RE: Ongoing subtitling services for City meetings

It has been a pleasure to provide Spanish subtitling services, for rebroadcast of City Commission meetings over the past year. This is a service that can only be provided by TM SYSTEMS, utilizing its trademarked Emmy Award Winning technology. This technology remains the only one of its kind, providing the ability to translate and subtitle large volumes of dialogue and text in minimal turnaround time.

TM SYSTEMS will continue its arrangement to pick up meeting videotapes directly from City Hall, digitize those videos to CD and translate all voices, subtitle the translations and return the completed subtitled video within 48 hours, returning the videos directly to City Hall for broadcast. Only the technology offered by TM SYSTEMS could allow for such quick turnaround, with accuracy and efficiency that never before has been available.



Additionally, since all the work is digitized it can be saved on your in house server and maintained as an asset indefinitely for the City, its residents and its businesses.

Since October of 2003, when “tests” were conducted for the project, the City has had the ability to regularly advertise and market the second language rebroadcasts on a regularly scheduled basis.

The City of Miami Beach was the first city in the country to offer exact translation of its Commission meetings to its constituents, utilizing the TM SYSTEMS technology.

Again, it has been a pleasure to serve the City of Miami Beach in offering the unique TM SYSTEMS technology, now a worldwide industry standard.

Sincerely,

Ken Lorber