

**CITY OF ALBANY
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Date: December 19, 2011
Reviewed by: BP

SUBJECT: Contract for services with Today in America Television Show

REPORT BY: Penelope Leach, Community Services Director

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That Council authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with Today in America with Terry Bradshaw for \$24,800 for the production of a television segment pertaining to community, sustainability, and economic development in Albany to be aired nationwide, with licensing rights granted to the City.

BACKGROUND

The City of Albany has been approach by the producers of the “Today in America” television show offering to produce a segment for the City of Albany as part of their, “Hidden Gems to Live, Work, and Play” for their "Re-Discovering America" series. The producers seek out communities that are less well-known in an effort to do just as the title indicates; find hidden gems to live, work and play for families and businesses looking for a special place to relocate.

The production company films interviews of officials, locals with success stories, and other parties as well as capture views and other scenes to project the flavor of the community. The production company looks for communities that place a high value on family, education, and building community. Moreover, the production company highlights and promotes sustainability, energy conservations, culture, arts and education. After the footage is collected, the editors create a five minute segment. An example of a video is available at www.todayinamericatv.com. The featured city is Fayetteville, Arkansas.

The show was created exclusively for Terry Bradshaw to host. The purpose, according to the show’s creators, is to capture the era of the changing economic times. “Today in America successfully blends business news stories, lifestyle features and in-depth interviews with doctors, scientists, inventors, business owners, philanthropists and newsmakers from a variety of industries. Today in America is the first show of its genre hosted by Terry Bradshaw that’s geared towards the educated, affluent viewer. Based on viewer feedback, the show has spawned interest, inquiries and practical applications.”

After the video is finalized, the segment will air one (1) time nationally on Discovery Channel, and thirty-four (34) times regionally on CNN Headline News through regional cable operators and/or Regional News Networks, in many of the top 100 markets nationwide based on viewer demographics, interests and distribution checklist. Today in America and its programs have no direct affiliation with the networks on which it airs.

The featured city receives 100% licensing rights to show the film for its own purposes including web sites and other economic development or outreach efforts.

DISCUSSION

Mayor Javandel and/or staff have conducted two conference calls with the producers of the show to ask questions and gather information, and have also exchanged information via email. Additionally, Albany staff interviewed the Communications and Marketing Director from the City of Fayetteville, Arkansas to get a better understanding of their experience with the production company and how they have used the video. The City of Fayetteville approved the “Today in America” project in July 2010 and has been quite pleased with the production and the responses they have received from the video. Since the show was aired they have received calls from all over the nation regarding the video including many new business inquiries. Although there is no way of directly linking the airing of the show with Fayetteville’s increase in new jobs, Fayetteville has had an increase of more than 800 new jobs in the last year according to the Communications and Marketing Director.

The program segment relates industry trends and how certain cities are helping to address these specific trends. In choosing Albany, “Today in America” was particularly interested in the location, the size, the emphasis on education, sustainability, and sense of community.

The producers are focused on making a segment that is educational, informative, visually appealing, and entertaining. The producers are also very proud to have Terry Bradshaw host and provide the voice over for the segments.

The producers include the City every step of the way and the City has to sign-off on the final product before the segment is aired. “Content includes, but not limited to: educate viewers on a city with a small town feel, good sense of community, and a high quality of life that is experiencing growth and prosperity; inform viewers on the unique aspects of city; make viewers aware of the people, places, and things to do in surrounding area; discuss growth potential and opportunities; visuals to include lifestyle footage that supports content, on camera interviews, and third party interviews, if available.” Please see the attached agreement for more details.

ANALYSIS

In this economic climate, staff encourages the City to communicate with a broader audience, an audience particularly targeted to potential businesses that can bring job growth and retention to Albany. The Today in America show is making every effort to help cities and businesses accomplish that goal.

The cost of \$24,800 was investigated and evaluated by staff. Considering that the cost includes mobilizing the film crew, editing the film, writing the script, delivering the video with 100% licensing rights to the City, airing the video nationwide in multiple spots, as well as having celebrity Terry Bradshaw perform the voiceover and host the show, staff believes the cost is a real value.

Marketing and outreach are among the objectives adopted by the City Council towards achieving its economic development goals. A professionally produced video that highlights the best of what Albany has to offer prospective businesses and residents, shown around the country, would be an excellent tool in helping the city meet its marketing and outreach objectives.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

There is the possibility that by producing and airing the video on National networks as well as persistently distributing the video locally it would entice businesses and families to inquire about moving to Albany. The Today in America show promotes sustainability, energy conservations, culture, arts and education and endeavors to attract these types of businesses to the featured cities.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds are available in Economic Development and Reinvestment Agency budgets.

Attachments:

1. "Today in America" agreement
2. For more info: www.todayinamericatv.com