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DELEGATE AUTHORITY TO THE DISTRICT
PRESIDENT TO NEGOTIATE TERMS OF A
POTENTIAL NEW CONTRACT WITH
SPRINT/CLEARWIRE FOR THE LEASE OF PCC-
OWNED EDUCATIONAL BROADBAND SPECTRUM

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APPROVED BY: Dr. Preston Pulliams, District President

REPORT:

Certain portions of the “communications” spectrum are reserved by the Federal Communication Commission for educational use. In the 1980s PCC was licensed to operate four channels in the Portland metro area for video delivery of instruction and services. As both educational use and technology have developed the FCC has allowed excess capacity on these channels to be leased for other than educational uses. Educational institutions can now meet their educational obligation required by the license through such partnerships that will increase broadband access in the community. The Board approved such a lease of PCC excess spectrum to American Telecasting (95-103 on 18 May 1995). This lease was modified in 2002 when American Telecasting was acquired by Sprint. This lease remains in effect with Clearwire Corporation through a partnership with Sprint until 2015.

Clearwire has approached the College about renegotiating and extending the current lease in order to support their wireless broadband service (WiMax) in the Portland area. Advances in technology and new regulations by the FCC now make these channels more valuable to wireless providers and educational institutions as broadband spectrum that can provide high-speed, mobile internet access superior to other mobile phone services. Clearwire, through its partnership with Sprint and other communications companies is the only company currently building these 4 G networks.

PCC Staff has engaged college counsel and specialized appraisal services to gain insight about the risks and benefits of a potential renegotiated leased. Staff believes that there may be benefits to the College in a renegotiated lease agreement after analyzing and understanding the potential risks of such a long term arrangement.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board of Directors delegate its authority to the District President or his designee to negotiate the terms and conditions of a potential lease renewal/extension for PCC-owned broadband spectrum, and to consummate such a lease if appropriate, subject to the concurrence of College counsel.