

number nine
MEDIA, INC.

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12/4/12

Socorro Electric Co-op Trustees
Joe Herrera, General Manager & CEO

Re: El Defensor Chieftain Copy Fees

It has come to my attention that SEC has instituted a rate change on fees for copies from .25/page to \$1.00/page during last October's meeting. Also, I have received current and back invoices for requests made under my editor, Elva Osterreich, and former editor, Terry Last. Invoice #907 is being charged \$1/page yet this was months prior to the recent increase at the October meeting... that invoice should be at the old 25 cents/page rate. The purpose of this letter is to point out why .25/page is not reasonable and that \$1/page is exorbitant.

First, let me point out that since Terry Last departed last summer, we have yet to be given a packet for subsequent meetings under my new editor, Elva Osterreich. Obviously, this is unacceptable... we have to be able to inspect records and get agendas/packets in advance at the same time trustees get them so we can disseminate information that the public/member owners need. Your member owners voted overwhelmingly that this body adhere to the Open Meetings Act (OMA) and the Inspection of Public Records Act (IPRA) almost three years ago.

Some background: other Co-ops in the state do not charge for copies. I publish Mountain View Telegraph in Moriarty... Estancia Valley Co-op emails everything to my editor. Kit Carson allows the Taos News to scan documents for free. Jemez and Northern Rio Arriba do similar and on and on. Would you consider any of these options?

Being new to this transparency thing, I will attempt to explain what "reasonable" cost is for copies. With today's technology, most records are in a digital format. All of my newspapers obtain records via email or transfer the files onto a flash drive or CD-ROM at no charge. Here's the good news... it does not burden the records custodian! Other options can be to photograph the documents with a digital camera, using a portable scanner or photocopier. In some cases, we bring a notepad and look at them for free by not getting copies, but this is rare and more cumbersome on the records custodian.

What concerns me most is that the public and member owners will be overcharged for access to their information. As a newspaper, we often do the public's business on their behalf through records requests... it's our watchdog function. The First Amendment freedoms are at the core of what we do. Our founding fathers felt it important enough to make it the FIRST one!

If you still see the need to charge, let me break down the actual cost for copies:

Paper: Box of 10 reams (500 sheets per ream), at \$35.99 = 0.7 cents per page.

Machine: Xerox WorkCentre 5225 costs \$4,299 and produces 75,000 copies a month. Assuming two year life, that's 0.2 cents per page.

Toner: \$172.00 for 30,000 pages, or 0.6 cents per page.

Electricity: Negligible.

Total cost per copy: 1.5 cents. That's reasonable.

If a commercial copy business charges 10 cents a page and makes a profit, then a reasonable cost for SEC should be that or less. I urge you to waive copy fees or at least bring them into a reasonable charge. I would be willing to meet further to discuss this (or any other) matter.

Sincerely,

David B. Puddu, VP/COO
Number Nine Media, Inc.

CC: Elva Osterreich, Gwyneth Doland, Dave Wade c/o SEC, Paul Bustamante, Prescilla Mauldin, Donals Wolberg, Luis Aguilar, Milton Ulibarri, Leroy Anaya, Charlie Wagner, Anne Dorough and Joseph Herrera.