

Mayor and Council Communication

DATE: 06/13/23

M&C FILE NUMBER: M&C 23-0460

LOG NAME: 19AMENDMENTS TO TWO HOMELESS SERVICE AGENCY AGREEMENTS

SUBJECT

(ALL) Authorize Execution of Amendment to Contract with the Presbyterian Night Shelter of Tarrant County, Inc., to Increase the Contract Amount by \$280,000.00 for a Total Contract Amount of \$1,058,373.00 and Authorize Execution of Amendment to Contract with Tarrant County Homeless Coalition to Increase Contract Amount by \$50,568.00 for a Total Contract Amount of \$400,568.00 for the Continuation of Directions Home Initiatives; Find that Amendments Serve a Public Purpose and that Adequate Controls are in Place

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Authorize the City Manager or his designee to execute an amendment to agreement with The Presbyterian Night Shelter of Tarrant County Inc., in the amount of \$280,000.00 for a total contract amount of \$1,058,373.00;
 2. Authorize the City Manager or his designee to execute an amendment to agreement with Tarrant County Homeless Coalition in the amount of \$50,568.00 for a total contract amount of \$400,568.00;
 3. Authorize the City Manager or his designee to amend the agreements if necessary to achieve program goals provided the amendment is within the scope of the program and in compliance with City policies and applicable laws and regulations; and
 4. Find that such amendments serve a public purpose and that adequate controls are in place.
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DISCUSSION:

In 2019, the City of Fort Worth (City) introduced a rapid exit program to the homeless system. Rapid exit provides brief rental assistance and case management to help quickly house households who do not need ongoing rental assistance or case management. The City contracted with Presbyterian Night Shelter of Tarrant County, Inc. (PNS) to provide rapid exit and diversion services. Diversion in the local homeless system means exiting someone back to housing within 14 days.

Even those households who are employed or have benefits rarely have \$3,000.00 or more saved to lease an apartment. This program allows people who are employed to quickly get off the street or out of the shelter by paying for fees associated with move-in in addition to one to three months rent. This reduces the person's time in homelessness and also frees up emergency shelter beds. Since 2019, PNS has moved 873 households including 597 children into housing through the rapid exit program. For households who exited the program, the rate of return to homelessness was 11% (the national goal is less than 15%).

In its 2023 State of the Homeless Report, Tarrant County Homeless Coalition (TCHC) announced a 22% increase in overall homelessness and 27% increase in family homelessness compared to 2020. Family shelters in Fort Worth are overcapacity and many families can exit homelessness with short term assistance. The City can respond to an immediate need by allocating more funding to the rapid exit program which has prioritized housing families.

Besides the PNS's diversion and rapid exit program, the other major diversion program is the Direct Client Service Fund administered by TCHC and funded by the City. This program removes barriers to housing by paying required fees other programs cannot pay and also providing one time assistance to clients who need very limited help in exiting homelessness. Many homeless service providers access these funds to assist them in housing clients. Staff is recommending increasing this contract by \$50,568.00 to a total of \$400,568.00 to enable more clients to be housed.

By increasing funding to diversion and rapid exit programs, the City is responding to an identified system need that will better position the community to reduce homelessness. By approval of this Mayor and Council Communication, the City Council finds that the increased funding for these two critical services serve the public purpose of reducing homelessness and increasing the health and wellbeing of Fort Worth residents and that adequate controls are in place through the two contracts to ensure the public purpose is carried out.

Funding is budgeted in the Other Contractual Services account of the Neighborhood Services Department's General Fund.

Directions Home services and programs are available in ALL COUNCIL DISTRICTS.

FISCAL INFORMATION / CERTIFICATION:

The Director of Finance certifies that funds are available in the current operating budget, as previously appropriated, in the General Fund to support the approval of the above recommendations and execution of the agreement. Prior to any expenditure being incurred, the Neighborhood Services Department has the responsibility to validate the availability of funds.

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