



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: Community Services
Department No.: 057
For Agenda Of: December 13, 2016
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from: N/A
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department George Chapjian, Community Services Director (805-568-2467)
Director(s)
Contact Info: Dinah Lockhart, Deputy Director (805-568-3523)
A.J. Quinoveva, Sr. Housing Program Specialist (805-560-1090)
SUBJECT: Update on the 2015-16 El Niño Winter Season Homeless Warming Center and Day Center programs, Modification to Warming Center Activation Criteria, and Increase in Warming Center funding from \$50,000 to \$70,000 (Countywide)

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Modify the Warming Center weather activation criteria for the Warming Centers to only operate when either:
 - i. An overnight temperature of 35 degrees or less is predicted; or
 - ii. There is greater than 50 percent chance of rain predicted for 1 day;
- b) Approve and authorize the Purchasing Agent to execute a First Amendment to the Agreement with the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara (USSB) for its Warming Center program to revise the activation criteria and increase the program budget by \$20,000, for a total of \$70,000 for FY 2016-17 (Attachment B);
- c) Approve Budget Revision #0004833 to increase appropriations of \$20,000 in Housing and Community Development's General Fund for Other Charges funded by savings within Salaries and Employee Benefits. Overall Department budget will remain unchanged. (BJE-0004833 (Attachment C); and
- d) Determine that these actions are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines Section 15061 (b) (3), finding that the execution of these actions are covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment, and where it can be

seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment, the activities are not subject to CEQA (Attachment D).

Summary Text:

The County HCD administers a contract with the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara (USSB) to operate the Warming Centers Program, which provides overnight shelter to homeless persons during inclement weather. The Day Center Program, which provided daytime shelter to homeless persons during inclement weather from January 30, 2016 to April 29, 2016, will not be operated in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016-17. The Warming Centers Program is in addition to the three regional Shelters – Bridgehouse- 90 beds (Lompoc), Good Samaritan- 130 beds (Santa Maria) and PATH Santa Barbara (formerly Casa Esperanza)- 200 beds (Santa Barbara). These shelters normally run at capacity. Anecdotal information indicates Warming Center guests may have been unable to obtain beds at one of the three regional shelters, or they chose not to use a regional shelter. Warming Center sites are community faith-based facilities with volunteer staff.

Agencies involved in the Warming Center program identified rain as a key factor for homeless persons seeking out shelter options, rather than temperature. Based on this information, and the difficulty in weather prediction, staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors modify the current weather activation criteria for the Warming Centers from:

- an overnight temperature of 35 degrees or less; or
- a greater than 50% chance of rain predicted for 2 consecutive days; or
- a greater than 50% chance of rain predicted with temperatures less than 40 degrees.

to:

- an overnight temperature of 35 degrees or less; or
- a greater than 50% chance of rain (for 1 day)

Staff also recommends that an additional \$20,000 be added to the existing contract with USSB (Attachment A) to cover the estimated additional need for the Warming Centers.

Background:

I. FY 2015-16 Homeless Warming Center and Day Center Program Report

The County HCD administers a contract with the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara (USSB) to operate the Warming Centers Program, which provides overnight shelter to homeless persons during inclement weather. The Warming Centers Program is in addition to the three regional Shelters – Bridgehouse - 90 beds (Lompoc), Good Samaritan - 130 beds (Santa Maria) and PATH Santa Barbara (formerly Casa Esperanza) - 200 beds (Santa Barbara). These shelters normally run at capacity.

In FY 2015-16, due to predictions of El Niño weather conditions and increases in shelter uses in the winter season, the Board approved an additional \$37,000 to the existing \$50,000 contract with the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara (USSB) for its Warming Center Program, for a total contract amount of \$87,000. The Board also appropriated \$91,000 in General Fund Contingency funding to provide new temporary day shelter services, with locations in both North and South County, in FY 2015-16; temporary day shelter services will not be provided in FY 2016-17. The City of Santa Barbara also

provided up to \$30,000 to reimburse the County for up to 50% of South County day shelter costs. Utilization figures show the Warming Centers were activated for 48 nights in FY 2015-16, during the regular activation period (November 15, 2015 to March 31, 2016) and the extended activation period (April 1, 2016 to April 29, 2016), and show that 935 unduplicated persons were sheltered for a total cost of \$81,090. Day Center sites in North and South County were activated for a total of 8 days during the activation period (January 30, 2016 to April 29, 2016) and assisted approximately 115 unduplicated persons for a cost of \$28,798.

Table 1: The Warming Center services, November 15, 2015 –April 29, 2016

MONTH	Nights Activated 2015-16	North County Bed Nights	South County Bed Nights	TOTAL Bed Nights	Average Guests/Night	Unduplicated Homeless Individuals provided with Shelter
November	5	205	318	523	105	205
December	17	678	640	1318	78	283
January	11	538	695	1233	112	153
February	3	65	193	258	86	32
March	7	316	322	638	91	67
April	5	301	374	675	135	195
TOTAL	48	2,103	2,542	4,645	102 average	935 total unduplicated

Activated when:

- 1) An overnight temperature of 35 degrees or less is predicted;
- 2) There is a greater than 50 percent chance of rain predicted for two consecutive days; or
- 3) There is a greater than 50 percent chance of rain predicted with temperatures less than 40 degrees.

A total of 935 unduplicated persons were provided shelter at the Warming Centers in both North and South County.

“Bed Nights” are the number of total sleeping spaces occupied per night. This number includes returning guests resulting in duplicate figures. Because of the Warming Center’s use of community faith based facilities, the sleeping spaces are not actual beds but easily movable cots or blankets.

Of the 4,645 bed nights during the FY 2015-16 winter season, 2,103 (45%) were in North County and 2,542 (55%) were in South County. December and January saw the greatest number of activation nights and average guests per night remained relatively constant. While the El Niño weather event did not occur as expected, there were still over 600 bed nights provided during the extended activation period (April 1, 2016 to April 29, 2016).

Table 2: The Day Center services, January 31, 2016 to April 29, 2016

MONTH	North County Guests	South County Guests	TOTAL Guests	Average Guests/Day	Days Activated 2015-16
March	186	132	318	64	5
April	103	108	211	70	3
TOTAL	289	240	529	67 average	8

Activated when:

- 1) A day temperature of 35 degrees or less is predicted; and/or
- 2) There is a greater than 50 percent chance of rain predicted for one day

Table 3: Warming Center/ Day Center Programs - Summary of Expenses

Program	Expenditures	Total Days/Nights of Operation	Cost per Day/Night	Total Bed Nights/Guests
Warming Center	\$81,090	48	\$1,689	4,645 Bed Nights
Day Center-North	\$17,000	8	\$2,125	289 Guests
Day Center- South	\$11,798	8	\$1,474	240 Guests
TOTAL	\$109,888			

*Day Centers provided at least one meal per guest and shelter from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

II. Revisions to Weather Criteria

HCD Staff consulted with representatives of the Unitarian Society and Good Samaritan Shelters Inc. The representatives noted that during Warming Center activations, homeless persons were more likely to seek shelter when rain was predicted rather than lower temperatures. Additionally, the USSB was more likely to call for Warming Center activations when one day of rain was predicted, as predictions of two (2) days of rain were more difficult to predict 48-72 hours in advance. Early predictions are necessary to alert the Warming Center locations on potential uses of their facilities and scheduling of volunteers.

HCD staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors modify the current weather activation criteria from:

- an overnight temperature of 35 degrees or less; or
- a greater than 50% chance of rain predicted for 2 consecutive days; or
- a greater than 50% chance of rain predicted with temperatures less than 40 degrees.

to:

- an overnight temperature of 35 degrees or less; or
- a greater than 50% chance of rain (for 1 day)

III. Contract Amendment

Staff recommends an increase of \$20,000 to USSB’s contract, for a total of \$70,000. Based on last year’s number of Warming Center activation days and cost of operation, staff estimates it cost the County \$1,689 per night to operate the Warming Centers (\$81,090 /48 activation nights). If there is similar number of activation nights this winter season, and resumption of the normal activation eligibility period of November 15, 2016 to March 31, 2017, the current \$50,000 contract will be insufficient to fund the estimated number of 42 potential activation nights. Staff recommends the one time use of salary savings to fund any additional nights needed. County funds are provided on a reimbursable basis and any funds not used will be returned to the General Fund.

Performance Measure:

The County currently has a contract with the Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara (USSB) for \$50,000 to operate the Warming Center Program in South and North County, utilizing the current activation criteria for the contract season of November 15, 2016 –March 31, 2017. County staff collects data on the uses and costs of the program as shown in the tables above.

HCD staff will monitor the program to ensure that expenses are eligible. The County will reimburse the USSB for eligible expenses on a reimbursement basis. Expenses are supported by invoices and verification of weather activation criteria.

HCD staff will monitor the program and collect data on the uses of the program to help determine if community needs are being met.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts: \$81,090 was expended from the County’s FY 2015-16 \$87,000 Warming Center Contract. The balance of \$5,910 was returned to the fund balance. The USSB had estimated 65 activation nights with an actual number of 48 nights - a 78% increase over the prior year (27 nights).

The Board also approved Day Center shelter service funds to be utilized for two locations, the Santa Maria National Guard Armory operated by Good Samaritan Shelter in North County and a meeting room at the Earl Warren Showgrounds operated by USSB in South County. Both Day Center sites were open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. during inclement weather. A total of \$28,798 was expended from the County’s \$91,000 Day Center Contract, leaving a balance of \$62,202. The Day Centers were activated for 8 days. The total unused balance for both Warming Center and Day Center was \$68,112, which was returned to the fund balance.

Funding Sources	Current FY Cost:	Annualized On-going Cost:	Total One-Time Project Cost
General Fund		\$ 50,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
State			
Federal			
Fees			
Other:			
Fiscal Analysis: Total	\$ -	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 20,000.00

\$50,000 in General Funding has already been budgeted within the Operating Budget. The request to re-allocate \$20,000 in salary savings, if approved, will allow for an increase to the annual contract to \$70,000. The funding will be disbursed on a reimbursable basis, with any unspent appropriations being returned to fund balance. Overall Department budget will remain unchanged.

Special Instructions:

Please email an electronic copy of the Minute Order to A.J. Quinoveva at aquinoveva@co.santa-barbara.ca.us.

Attachments:

- A. Agreement with USSB (current)
- B. First Amendment to the Agreement with USSB
- C. Budget Revision #BJE-0004833
- D. CEQA NOE