



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: Public Health
Department No.: 041
For Agenda Of: April 10, 2012
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Takashi Wada, MD, MPH, Director and Health Officer
Director(s) Public Health Department
Contact Info: Susan Klein-Rothschild, 681-5435
Assistant Deputy Director – Community Health
SUBJECT: Grant Agreement # 11-459-550 for Ocean Water Quality Monitoring & Public Notification Services

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Other Concurrence: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve and authorize the Public Health Department Director and Health Officer to enter into a Grant Agreement (Number 11-459-550) with the State of California to provide public beach water quality monitoring and public notification services in the amount of \$25,680 for the period April 1, 2012 through June 30, 2012.
- b) Determine that these activities are exempt from California Environmental Quality Act review per CEQA Guideline Section 15061(b)(3), since it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activities may have a significant effect on the environment.

Summary Text:

The California Health and Safety Code requires public beaches be sampled at least once a week during the period of April 1 – October 31. As a mandated local program, the California Constitution requires that the State reimburse local jurisdictions for the cost of performing this water quality monitoring. As a result of State budget shortfalls, money from the State's General Fund for this program has been eliminated. As a stop-gap funding mechanism, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) is providing money for ocean water monitoring.

The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department and the SWRCB seek to enter into a grant agreement, whereby the SWRCB will reimburse the County, up to the limits of this agreement, for the

cost of monitoring, cleanup, abatement activities and the reporting of water quality at public beaches from April 1 – June 30, 2012.

Background:

In July 1999, Assembly Bill 411 revised the California Health & Safety Code to require that coastal jurisdictions monitor the quality of the water adjacent to public beaches. The statute and the ensuing regulations developed pursuant to the statute, stipulated that public beaches, as defined, were to be sampled for bacteria at least weekly between April 1 and October 31. The results of the weekly monitoring were to be made available to the public by various methods. Beaches that did not meet the water quality standards specified in the regulations were to be posted with warning signs or closed if deemed necessary by the local Health Officer.

As a mandated program, the California Constitution requires that the State reimburse local jurisdictions for costs incurred due to ocean water monitoring and public notification during these months. As a result of the ongoing State budget shortfalls, funding for the ocean water monitoring program through the State's General Fund was eliminated. In response, the SWRCB has backfilled this funding gap with grant money to cover the cost of local programs from April 1 – June 30, 2012.

Funding for ocean water testing beyond July 1, 2012 is unclear. The Federal government has proposed cutting funding to the State for the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Act (BEACH) program. Santa Barbara County has received this BEACH grant since 2003 and it has been used to fund testing during the non-mandated winter months. The SWRCB is expected to make another disbursement of AB 411 replacement funding for summer month testing in FY 12-13; however, this is not confirmed. We expect the funding picture for FY 12-13 to become clearer in the coming months.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Approval and acceptance of these funds from the SWRCB to Santa Barbara County Environmental Health Services will provide beach water quality monitoring and public notification services from April 1, 2012 thru June 30, 2012. The \$25,680 is included in the Public Health Department's Fiscal Year 11-12 Adopted Budget. There is no projected use of General Fund dollars for this project.

The approval of the recommendations will neither decrease nor increase current staff levels. No additional facilities would be needed as a result of entering into this agreement.

Special Instructions:

Please email an electronic copy of the Minute Order to PHD Contracts Unit at: PHDcu@sbcphd.org

Attachments:

State of California Funding Agreement # 11-459-550

Authored by:

David Brummond, Supervising Environmental Health Specialist, Environmental Health Services