



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: CEO
Department No.: 012
For Agenda Of: 4-5-11
Placement: Departmental
Estimated Tme: 30 minutes
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Chandra L. Wallar, County Executive Officer 568-3404

STAFF CONTACT: Jeri Muth, Interim Human Resources Director 568-2816

SUBJECT: **Creation of the Community Services Department**

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors direct the County Executive Office to:

1. Eliminate the Parks Department and the Housing and Community Development Department;
2. Create a new Community Services Department that contains: Parks, Housing and Community Development, Animal Services, the Library Advisory Committee, Human Services Commission, and the Arts Commission;
3. Transfer Animal Services from Public Health to the Community Services Department; and
4. Launch an executive search for a Community Services Department Director.

Summary:

The recommended actions would streamline County government by reducing the number of County departments, eliminate duplicative positions/services, and provide a department

focused on the delivery of key community services such as: parks and beaches, housing and community development, animal services, libraries, human services, and the arts.

Background:

In the fall of 2010, the Board directed the County Executive Officer to seek means for restructuring County government to maximize resources and reduce operating costs while continuing to provide essential public services. Subsequently, the County Executive Officer charged the interim Parks and Housing and Community Development Directors to work with key County department heads to review their respective departments to determine if the departments should:

- 1) Remain a standalone department and hire a permanent Director;
- 2) Consolidate the department with another County department;
- 3) Outsource some or all of the department; and/or
- 4) Recommend other organizational structures.

The interim department heads worked with a team of executives whom they identified as those they interacted with most frequently. In January, the teams provided their analysis and recommendations to the County Executive Officer.

Following a review, further analysis, and internal discussion regarding the recommendations, the County Executive Officer is recommending that the Parks and Housing and Community Development department be merged into a new Community Services Department that will provide the following services to the community:

- County parks, open spaces, recreational areas and beaches;
- Housing and community development;
- Animal services (currently assigned to the Public Health Department)
- Library Advisory Committee (currently assigned to an Assistant CEO);
- Human Services Commission (currently assigned to Public Health); and
- The Arts Commission (currently assigned to the Parks Department).

The following provides an overview of each of the areas identified above and the reason it has been identified as appropriately placed in the Community Services Department:

Parks Department

The current Parks Department (Parks) operates a system of regional parks, neighborhood parks, open spaces, beaches, preserves, and camping parks. It is also responsible for the oversight of the Arts Commission and supports or collaborates with 11 advisory committees and non-profit organizations and provides arts and cultural development countywide through the Arts Commission. It is a General Fund Department that also receives funding from fees and concessions that is approximately 62% of its budget. Its mission is to preserve natural and cultural resources and provide outdoor recreation and leisure services to the Santa Barbara community and, therefore, appears appropriate for the new Community Services Department.

Housing and Community Development

The current Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) serves as the lead agency for regional partnerships with local cities. In addition, the Department provides some funding for homeless programs to address communitywide homelessness issues; provides fiscal oversight and compliance monitoring for over 400 affordable housing units; and manages emPowerSBC. 86.7% of staffing costs is funded by grants; the remainder is General Fund. The services provided by the current HCD are all community service related and overlaps with Parks, the Human Services Commission, and the Arts Commission.

Animal Services

Animal Services manages the County's three animal shelters and provides animal control services to the community; it is currently assigned to the Public Health Department. The function is funded via licensing fees, contracts with various cities, and the General Fund. Placing Animal Services in the new Community Services Department will further unify a broad array of community services in a single department.

Human Services Commission

The Human Services Commission is appointed by the Board of Supervisors to gather and analyze information regarding ongoing and unmet human services needs in the County and to make recommendations for grants to help fill those needs. It is overseen by the Public Health Department and receives approximately \$1.2M in County General Funds each year which are then awarded to a variety of grantees. In Fiscal Year 2010-2011, the Human Services Commission was funded with one-time funds. A strong majority of the non-profits funded by the Commission are also funded by HCD. Combining these programs would create an opportunity to improve coordination among public agencies receiving money, while also leveraging staffing and administrative expertise.

Arts Commission

The Arts Commission is appointed by the Board of Supervisors, and serves as the regional cultural development agency and an umbrella for County arts projects, funding, and services. Currently the Parks Department manages the Arts Commission. Including it in the new Community Services Department provides an opportunity to build capacity and coalesce art-related funding into one department, eliminating potentially duplicative administrative costs.

Library Advisory Committee

The Library Advisory Committee was created by the Board to ensure coordination and adequate library services and facilities for County and City residents in a shared resource model of service delivery. Given the important role of libraries as an instrument of community identification and public education, especially to youth, seniors, and those with special needs, consolidation into the new Community Services Department will provide an opportunity to marry the function to existing management and oversight of community-based public and human services programming.

Through a strategic merger of the functions identified above, creation of the new Community Services Department is likely to produce annual cost savings in excess of \$500,000, primarily through structural redesign of a consolidated administrative and management function including the elimination of a department head and administrative support positions. An overview of the functional groups proposed for the new Department is shown on the attached chart.

Upon approval by the Board, an immediate search for a Director of the new department will be conducted, and upon his/her hiring the merger would begin. Until that time interim staff will continue to manage the day-to-day operations of Parks and HCD and the other elements of the proposed Community Services Department will remain where they are.

Fiscal Impacts:

Creation of the new Community Services Department is anticipated to result in excess of \$500,000 in annual savings. The savings are primarily derived from a structural redesign and consolidation of administrative and management functions.

cc: Department Heads

Attachments:

Departmental functional group chart