

PALM BEACH COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Meeting Date: November 5, 2019 [] Consent [X] Regular
[] Ordinance [] Public Hearing
Department
Submitted By: Community Services
Submitted For: Division of Human and Veteran Services

I. EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Motion and Title: Staff recommends motion to approve: Three full-time equivalent (FTE) grant-funded positions for Peer Specialists (PG15) for the Division of Human and Veteran Services (Division) in the amount of \$149,007 annually.

Summary: Homelessness issues continue to increase in John Prince and Phil Foster parks. The current waiting list for services at the homeless resource center is 225 persons. The Community Services Department, in collaboration with the Parks and Recreation Department, continue to work together to identify solutions, such as the successful Parks to Work program. A major need identified is the need for additional trained Peer Specialists. The Peer Specialists will maintain a presence in both parks. These positions will be supervised by the Division Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) Supervisor. Peer Specialists are persons with lived experience and are in recovery. The State of Florida provides a certification exam to ensure Peer Specialists are trained and qualified to provide outreach services. The Peer Specialists will assist homeless individuals with sheltering, diversion, family reunification and other needs. Peer Specialists offer a level of acceptance, understanding and validation not found in other professional relationships and are instrumental in helping the homeless take concrete steps towards building new lives. The Division has identified funding for the new positions from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), through an inter-departmental agreement with the Department of Housing and Economic Sustainability. The grant-funded positions will be for the length of the grant and will be eliminated if funding is discontinued. No County Funds are required. (Division of Human and Veteran Services) Countywide (HH)

Background and Policy Issues: Peer Specialist positions are considered a best practice by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) as they report that the addition of Peer Specialist leads to the homeless experiencing increased self-esteem and confidence, increased sense of control and ability to change, raised employment scores and increased sense that treatment is responsive and inclusive of needs. Additionally, emerging research has shown that homeless persons, who have regular interaction with a Peer Specialist, have decrease psychotic symptoms, reduced hospital admissions and decreased substance abuse and depression. The Division coordinates homeless outreach efforts throughout Palm Beach County including those efforts that target County parks. Several initiatives have been implemented to pilot new outreach efforts and include the Parks to Work Program and the Assertive Community Outreach Team in an effort to engage and house homeless individuals encountered on a daily basis. The availability to emergency shelter is an important aspect of outreach particularly when individuals have expressed a desire to engage in services. In addition to mitigating homelessness issues at the Parks, the new Peer Specialist initiative will support Department efforts with the Opioid Response Plan, the Syringe Exchange Program and HIV/AIDS outreach and prevention efforts.

Attachment:

Recommended By: Jane E. Shea 10/22/19
Department Director Date
Approved By: Nancy J. Belbin 10/25/19
Assistant County Administrator Date

II. FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

A. Five Year Summary of Fiscal Impact:

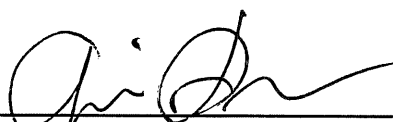
Fiscal Years	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Capital Expenditures					
Operating Costs	149,007	149,007	149,007	149,007	149,007
External Revenue	(149,007)	(149,007)	(149,007)	(149,007)	(149,007)
Program Income					
In-Kind Match (County)					
NET FISCAL IMPACT	0	0	0	0	0

# ADDITIONAL FTE POSITIONS (Cumulative)	3				
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Is Item Included In Current Budget: Yes X No
 Does this item include the use of federal funds? Yes X No

Budget Account No.:
 Fund 0001 Dept. 148 Unit 1221 Obj. Var. Program Code Program Period:

B. Recommended Sources of Funds/Summary of Fiscal Impact:
 Community Services Block Grant (CDBG). This is a re-allocation of existing funds. No additional funds are requested with this item.

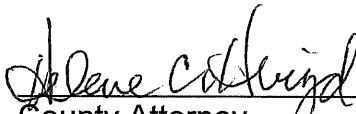
C. Departmental Fiscal Review: 
 Julie Dowe, Director, Financial & Support Services

III. REVIEW COMMENTS

A. OFMB Fiscal and/or Contract Development and Control Comments:

 10/23/11
 OFMB DC 10/23 23 10/23 10/24
 Contract Development and Control
 10/24/19 JD

B. Legal Sufficiency:

 10-25-19
 County Attorney

C. Other Department Review:

 Department Director

This summary is not to be used as a basis for payment.