City of Palo Alto

MEMORANDUM

TO: Finance Committee

DATE: May 4, 2017

SUBJECT: Transmittal of HSRAP Staff Report to HRC (4/25 Meeting)

This memorandum transmits the Human Resources Allocation Process (HSRAP) Contract Recommendation for Fiscal Year 2018-19 staff report that was discussed at the April 25, 2017 Human Relations Commission Meeting. The HSRAP allocation process will be discussed in as part of Item #5 at the Finance Committee Budget Hearing to be held on Tuesday, May 9, 2017 during the Community Services Department discussion. The staff report is also available online at http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/57250. The full meeting agenda for the April 25, 2017 Human Relations Commission Meeting, including attachments to the staff report, is available at http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/57256.

DEPARTMENT HEAD: LALO PEREZ
Director, Administrative Services/CFO


5/4/2017
Community Services Department

STAFF REPORT

TO: Human Relations Commission

FROM: Minka van der Zwaag
Manager, Office of Human Services

DEPARTMENT: CSD

DATE: April 23, 2017


Executive Summary:

This report transmits the proposed Human Services Resource Allocation Process (HSRAP) funding recommendations for a partial allocation of the total HSRAP funding available for Fiscal Years 2018-19 (Attachment A) made by the Human Relations Commission’s ad hoc HSRAP Selection Committee, the HSRAP Priority of Needs for Fiscal Year 2018-19 (Attachment B), and the proposal summaries (Attachment C) submitted for funding consideration. This initial partial funding recommendation will provide $347,654 to fourteen agencies for Fiscal Year 2018 with an option to renew for Fiscal Year 2019.

Late in the review process, staff and the Selection Committee were informed by Adolescent Counseling Services that they were withdrawing their funding request for the on campus counseling program portion of their funding proposal. In light of the timing of this situation and the City’s longtime support of the on campus counseling program on Palo Alto Unified School District Secondary School Campuses, the Selection Committee is recommending that the HSRAP process be reopened for a second round for the distribution of these funds (see “Report from Ad hoc HSRAP Selection Committee” below for more details.)

Action at this meeting:

The Human Relations Commission is being requested to review and take action on the recommendations listed below and forward to City Council for final consideration and approval.

1) Recommend the Fiscal Year 2018-19 HSRAP partial funding recommendations (Attachment A) in the amount of $347,654 to fourteen agencies be forwarded to City Council for consideration and approval.

2) Recommend that the City Council re-open the HSRAP process to receive applications for consideration for the unallocated HSRAP funding of $111,559.
Background:

Since 1983, the HSRAP Process has identified community service needs to determine City funding for human services (CMR:147:83). The City’s Human Relations Commission (HRC) participated in identifying human services needs through information provided by the community at the HRC’s monthly meetings and findings from the extensive research it conducted for the Human Services Needs Assessment report completed in 2012, and supplemental needs assessments conducted in 2014 and 2016. These needs assessment activities assisted in establishing biennial priorities of human services needs for the Palo Alto community.

HSRAP and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) processes were coordinated to maximize resources and streamline the City’s human services funding approach. Coordination involved specifying what funding request each fund would entertain, adopting the same request for proposal schedule, conducting a joint bidder’s workshop on December 15, 2016 for interested providers, and, for the third time, a separate ad hoc Section Committee including HRC commissioners reviewed and made funding recommendations for both HSRAP and CDBG.

Report from Ad hoc HSRAP Selection Committee:

The HSRAP Ad hoc Selection Committee (Selection Committee) was composed of three HRC Commissioners: Theresa Chen, Jill O’Nan and Shelly Gordon Gray. They met on three occasions to review and analyze the merits of the funding requests submitted and have provided funding recommendations based on the established funding criteria and the biennial priority of needs. The Selection Committee’s recommendations are now presented to the full HRC for their review and will then be forwarded to Council through the Finance Committee for consideration and approval.

Funding requests exceeded funding available by $121,975. The proposed budget for FY2018 is $459,213 (baseline budget of $448,013 plus a proposed Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase of 2.5% - $11,200.) In addition, one former grantee, Community Technology did not re-apply, for a total of $8,565.

In regards to the Selection Committee’s proposed Fiscal Year 2018-2019 HSRAP funding recommendations, there was a strong commitment from the Selection Committee to continue funding for current HSRAP grantees and to provide them with a pro-rata share of the proposed CPI increase. There was extended review and deliberation regarding the proposals of two new applicants; Kara and Community Working Group (CWG).

The Selection Committee felt that both Kara and CWG submitted well-crafted proposals. Kara requested funding for programs and staffing, which are typical categories for HSRAP applicants. CWG’s request was somewhat unusual and disparate in that it requested funding for operational expenses only such as utilities and janitorial services. The amounts requested were also disparate: Kara asked for $30,000 while CWG requested $84,000.
The Selection Committee reviewed both proposals carefully in the hope of being able to add two new agencies to the HSRAP program. However, once the proposed 2.5% CPI increase was distributed across the existing agencies that left only $8,565 available for allocation.

First time grants for new HSRAP recipients are typically awarded in the $5,000–$10,000 range. In comparing the Kara and CWG proposals, the Selection Committee concluded that the relatively small amount available for allocation would better serve as a starter grant for Kara, which had requested significantly less funding overall than had CWG. The $84,000 requested by CWG is well beyond the available HSRAP budget for this funding cycle, and the Selection Committee remained concerned that a small starter grant would do little to ameliorate the agency’s need. Further, the funding categories in Kara’s proposal are scalable, meaning that even without the full amount requested, the agency can serve the needs of some Palo Alto residents. In contrast, CWG’s operational expenses must be met in full or the facility may not be able to offer services at all. This indicates a need for significant, long-term sustainable funding that currently is not available through HSRAP.

Therefore, while both agencies put forth strong proposals for HSRAP funding, the Selection Committee believed that Kara’s funding request better aligns with limited amount available for allocation during FY 2018–19.

Also raised during the Selection Committee’s deliberations was a discussion regarding the City’s historically higher funding support of PAUSD’s on-campus counseling program (currently provided by Adolescent Counseling Services) than the District. The Selection Committee encourages the City to enter into dialogue with PAUSD in regards to taking on greater funding responsibility for this service in the future.

POST NOTE: After the Selection Committee made their recommendations, Human Services staff was informed that PAUSD had decided to issue a new Request for Proposal (RFP) for the on-campus counseling program historically provided by Adolescent Counseling Services (ACS). Staff subsequently learned that ACS decided not to respond to the school district’s RFP, and has therefore withdrawn its application for HSRAP funding for the on-campus counseling program. ACS’s Outlet program, however, is not affected by this withdrawal and the Selection Committee currently recommends funding in the amount of $10,000 plus a proposed CPI of 2.5% for that program, for a total of $10,250.

The Selection Committee met again briefly to discuss the withdrawn application by ACS. Due to the late and sudden nature of this withdrawal, and the City’s longtime (30 plus years) support for mental health services on PAUSD campuses, the Selection Committee is reluctant to immediately reallocate these newly available HSRAP funds. Also, given that a new on-campus counseling program provider will not be named until late spring, the Selection Committee would like to provide an opportunity for that agency to apply for HSRAP funding, if it so chooses. Further, the Selection Committee believes that the HSRAP process should be re-opened for new proposals; from current HSRAP grantees who initially submitted modest funding requests and may appreciate the opportunity to apply for additional grants now that a much more substantial amount is potentially available for reallocation and from other social service providers in the community.
Therefore, in light of this unprecedented situation, the Selection Committee is requesting that the HRC review and take action on the recommendations listed below and forward to City Council for final consideration and approval.

1) Recommend the Fiscal Year 2018-19 HSRAP partial funding recommendations (Attachment A) in the amount of $347,654 to fourteen agencies be forwarded to City Council for consideration and approval.

2) Recommend that the City Council re-open the HSRAP process to receive applications for consideration for the unallocated HSRAP funding of $111,559.

While this two-pronged approach will add to the administrative burden of staff and the HRC, the Selection Committee believes it offers the best chance for an optimal distribution of HSRAP funds.

Agencies being recommended for funding:

The following agencies are recommended for HSRAP funding in Fiscal Years 2018-2019:

1. Abilities United provides a wide range of support services to people with disabilities. These services include day center support services, child care for developmentally delayed children, employment services for the disabled, a creative recreation program and therapeutic aquatic program for youth.

2. Adolescent Counseling Services provides comprehensive counseling services to students and families in the Palo Alto Unified School Districts’ secondary schools. The Outlet Program provides crisis counseling and sensitivity training services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Teens. The program targets Palo Alto teens in Palo Alto Unified School District schools.

3. Downtown Streets Team, Inc. provides job training and job opportunities for homeless individuals.

4. Dream Catchers provides afterschool tutoring for middle school students.

5. Kara provides comprehensive grief support, crisis intervention and education to individuals and organizations facing the difficult realities of grief and loss.

6. LifeMoves provides food to low income and homeless residents of Palo Alto at their site and at offsite meals programs as well as an extensive array of other services at their main Palo Alto location.

7. La Comida de California provides hot meals for seniors. The agency provides hot lunches at the Avenidas and Stevenson House, an affordable senior housing complex in South Palo Alto. La Comida also provides hot lunches every Wednesday as part of Senior Friendship day Program (a co-sponsored city program) at Cubberley Community Center.

8. May View Community Health Center provides medical and mental health care services to Palo Alto’s homeless and very low-income residents.
9. Momentum for Mental Health provides a homeless outreach program in Palo Alto. The outreach program provides emergency on-call services to City departments, libraries, community centers and homeless service providers.

10. Palo Alto Housing Corporation provides an afterschool program for youth who live at their housing sites, summer enrichment program, an entrepreneurial program for middle school students, and digital leader’s intern program for high school students.

11. Peninsula Health Care Connections (PHC) provides case management to Palo Alto homeless individuals through outreach and keep them connected to the medical and psychiatric services available at PHC.

12. Senior Adult Legal Assistance provides Palo Alto seniors with legal advice counseling sessions at Avididas and at Stevenson House.

13. Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired provides outreach efforts to educate seniors about eye health, common eye conditions that affect the elderly, and training those with vision loss to carry out activities of daily living.

14. Youth Community Services provides community services opportunities for youth in the community and also with local non-profit agencies.

Attachments
Attachment A: 2018-19 HSRAP Selection Committee funding Recommendations
Attachment B: HSRAP Priority of Need FY 2018-19
Attachment C: HSRAP Proposal Summaries