

TUMWATER BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING
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CONVENE: 1:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Debbie Sullivan and Councilmembers Michael Althausen, Leatta Dahlhoff, and Eileen Swarthout.

Staff: City Administrator John Doan, Finance Director Troy Niemeyer, Police Commander Jay Mason, and Hanna Miles, Executive Assistant/Deputy City Clerk.

**APPROVAL OF
MINUTES: BUDGET
& FINANCE
COMMITTEE,
OCTOBER 25, 2021,
NOVEMBER 23, 2021
& FEBRUARY 15,
2022:**

MOTION: Councilmember Dahlhoff moved, seconded by Councilmember Swarthout, to approve the minutes of October 25, 2021, November 23, 2021, and February 15, 2022 as published. A voice vote approved the motion.

**2023 COMMUNITY
HUMAN SERVICES
PROGRAM
FUNDING:** Executive Assistant Miles reported the Community Human Services Program 2023 budget is \$15,000. The City received funding applications from six applicants totaling \$28,500. The applicant, Family Education and Support Services, notified the City of its intent to withdraw its application as the organization secured funding from another source. However, the applicant plans to provide an update on the activities of the organization.

**GARDEN RAISED
BOUNTY – GRUB:** Clare Follmann, Grants Coordinator, presented the funding request to support the GRuB Garden Project. Garden Raised Bounty or GRuB is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization. GRuB works at the intersection of food, education, and health systems to grow healthy food, people, and communities. GRuB began in 1993 with the creation of the Kitchen Garden Project providing gardens to low-income households. The Kitchen Garden project evolved into the GRuB Garden Project serving low-income and food insecure individuals and families by providing custom-made home gardens to recipients and ongoing support to ensure successful gardening over the long term. Gardens provide an abundance of benefits extending beyond food grown in the gardens. Since 1993, the GRuB Garden Project has built nearly 3,200 gardens for low-income households. Funds from the City of Tumwater this year supported staff efforts to review garden applications, work with applicants on custom garden builds, coordinate garden builds, and provide classes, training, and

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workshops on gardening. Six custom gardens were completed in Tumwater offering garden recipients vegetable starts, seeds, soil, and tools. Staff connects with all gardeners on a regular basis following the garden build to help address any concerns and answer questions. Staff also conducts evaluations following the end of the growing season to measure success. Over the course of the 2022 garden build season beginning in April through June, staff and military veterans built 45 gardens for low-income households throughout the region. The GRuB Garden Project also helps to support a variety of community gardens. GRuB hosted many workshops and classes teaching gardening tips for gardening success.

Beau Gromley, a military veteran and GRuB employee/volunteer, spoke to the healing benefits of the GRuB Garden Project as it literally saved his life. He shared information on a Tumwater community member's successful garden.

Mayor and Chair Sullivan joined the meeting at 1:37 p.m.

Councilmember Swarthout questioned the potential outcome of garden projects should the organization not receive full funding. Ms. Follmann said the organization continually seeks other sources for funding garden projects. Each year, GRuB applies to over 20 different grant sources. It is likely GRuB would continue the GRuB Garden Project if the City of Tumwater did not provide funds; however, the number of gardens could be reduced in Tumwater.

**DISPUTE
RESOLUTION
CENTER OF
THURSTON
COUNTY:**

Elizabeth Drake, Facilitation and Grants Contract Manager, introduced Jody Suhrbier, Executive Director. Ms. Drake reported the organization offers conflict prevention services to include large group facilitation and training, conflict resolution through the resource line offering reconciliation, negotiations, and referral for mediation services, and other special services, such as youth services and restorative justice dialogues. In 2021, the Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) served 6,500 people in Thurston County and south Mason County through mediation, conflict coaching, and information and referral. Most of the calls were received by the resource line. DRC served approximately 700 eviction resolution cases affecting 1,600 people in Thurston County. DRC services help save local courts and taxpayers from more expensive costs as people through the court system. The DRC hosts a community of 160 volunteers to include 100 certified mediators who donated 7,000 hours of service last year. The conflict resource line is available to the public from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each weekday. Conciliators are able to coach people through a conflict at no cost to the parties. DRC services are offered on a sliding scale based on the ability to pay. Mediation occurs when a conflict has not been resolved. DRC operates from a diversified source of funds from

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grants and contracts, donations from individuals and organizations, state and county court funding, and fees from services. DRC is currently conducting a capacity building campaign to improve and enhance equity and access to services. Ms. Drake invited questions.

Councilmember Dahlhoff conveyed her support of DRC having utilized the services herself.

Councilmember Swarthout asked whether DRC would be impacted if the City was unable to fund the entire request. Ms. Drake advised that DRC receives funding from other sources that include the City of Lacey, Thurston County, as well as the City of Tumwater. DRC would be able to move forward as the organization has strived to diversify its source of funds through the capacity building initiative to avoid those issues in the future.

**BIG BROTHERS BIG
SISTERS OF
SOUTHWEST
WASHINGTON:**

Jeff Engle, Executive Director, reported last year, the organization experienced some issues and was unable to submit its application before the City's deadline.

Mr. Engle shared a slide presentation and explained how Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Washington is a mentoring organization serving one youth at a time by creating and supporting one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth. The vision of the organization is to ensure all youth achieve their full potential. As a Big Brother for over 12 years, Mr. Engle described his experience with the program. He currently mentors a 10-year old boy. The organization offers a variety of programs to include a site-based program operated from the Tumwater Boys and Girls Club. High school mentors (Bigs) meet with Littles at the club. The program will be offered at Peter G. Schmidt Elementary School for site-based mentoring. Participants meet for approximately one hour each week to engage in different activities. The community-based program enables mentors and Littles to meet and access community activities or visit sites. A STEAM lab is also available at the Tumwater Boys and Girls Club offering educational activities to Bigs and Littles. A new program is the career exploration mentoring program. The program was offered last year with TS Architects. TS Architects provided the mentors. This year, the program is working with Naked Prosthetics. The company develops prosthetics for different body parts through 3D printing. The organization is working with Tumwater High School to recruit students for the program. Participants meet monthly for approximately 90 minutes exploring all facets of the business. The program provides industry mentors. Three of the youths participating in the program last year expressed an interest in pursuing an architecture career and three of the mentors in the program continued to serve as mentors in the community-based program. Tumwater's

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community-based program goal this year is to achieve six matches serving six youths in the Tumwater area. The site-based program works with the Tumwater Youth Coalition with 10 youths participating. The coalition connects with other students to increase diversity and community to prevent youth substance abuse. Together, the programs are anticipated to serve 25 or more Tumwater youths. The funding request of \$5,000 would fund 10 site-based matches for the 2022-2023 school year. The funds are used to complete background checks, train mentors, complete match paperwork, and meet with Bigs, Littles, and their parents once a month to ensure the match is a safe and constructive match. He invited questions from the committee.

Councilmember Dahlhoff said she has been a fan of the mentoring programs. She spoke to the importance of youths having access to the programs as the programs provide a positive pathway for youth. She asked about recruitment efforts expanding to include first responders, trades, or even personnel at the LOTT Clean Water Alliance to expand the demographics of Bigs. Mr. Engle explained that first responders have served as Bigs in the past but because of time constraints of many first responders, the organization has expanded efforts with businesses. The career exploration program resulted in 10 staff members from TS Architects serving as mentors. The organization is working closely with the business community to recruit adult mentors. Males are the most difficult mentors to recruit.

Councilmember Swarthout asked whether the organization would be impacted should the City not fully fund the request. Mr. Engle said the organization would continue to provide programs as the organization is growing and expanding programs in Tumwater. Four new staff members recently joined the organization following the pandemic. Funds would assist in funding personnel because resources are necessary to build and expand mentoring programs to ensure youths are safe and the matches are appropriate and beneficial to participants.

**FAMILY
EDUCATION AND
SUPPORT
SERVICES:**

Shelly Willis, Executive Director, reported the organization withdrew its funding application after receiving notification from the Health Care Authority of more funding than anticipated. Since moving to Tumwater over five years ago, the organization doubled its service population from 7,500 people to over 16,000 people each year. Future activities include a two-day virtual Strengthening Families Conference on November 3-4, 2022 for families. A sliding fee for registration includes a no-fee option. It is important for any adult who influences youth to attend the conference. Free suicide prevention classes are offered twice each month in partnership with Choice Regional Health Network. Monthly COVID vaccinations will be offered in addition to flu vaccinations on October 29, 2022 at the Heritage Distilling Company in Tumwater. A health and

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resource fair will be featured to provide health information for families. The organization offers a free parental compass, a podcast offered each month with experts from around the world. The podcast is rated in the top five in Holland. The organization has submitted a legislative funding request of \$2.2 million to assist the organization in remaining at its current location in Tumwater. The regional resource facility has become a hub for many families. The organization is co-located with many other state and local partners.

Councilmember Dahlhoff advised that she is a member of the Board of Director for Family Education and Support Services.

Councilmember Althausen noted that although the legislative funding request is beyond the scope of the application for funding, he questioned the outcome if the Legislature does not approve the capital request of \$2.2 million for facilities. Ms. Willis said should that scenario occur, the organization would strive to secure funding through other resources. The location in Tumwater is important as it provides quick and easy access to other resources for families. To remain at the current location, the organization is required to pay for a 10-year lease. Eventually, the organization plans to pursue a capital campaign to build a facility; however, the legislative request would not cover the cost of a new facility. It is important for the organization be located in close proximity to the Department of Social and Health Service. Tumwater is an ideal location for accessing other communities.

SAFEPLACE:

Esmeralda Triplett, Program Director introduced Diane Barbee, Development Director.

Ms. Triplett reported SafePlace is a non-profit organization working with survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. SafePlace has been in existence for more than 40 years and offers several programs, such as the domestic violence shelter for anyone who is actively fleeing domestic violence. SafePlace employs a screening process. Stays are limited to 60 days with more time possible depending upon the needs of the survivor. The shelter hosts individuals as well as families of all genders. The organization's 24-hour hospital response program assists sexual assault victims at the hospital. SafePlace also offers a program for any incarcerated survivors who are receiving an exam at the hospital. Another program is the domestic violence non-fatal strangulation response to the hospital for any person who was strangled in a domestic violence situation and who wants an exam. SafePlace offers a 24-hour helpline of confidential services for crisis intervention, safety planning, enrollment in the housing program, legal assistance, and referral to support groups.

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SafePlace community services include the housing program offering relocation services for survivors who want to leave the county. Often it may involve placing survivors in hotels for a specific time until they can relocate from the county. Other programs include rapid rehousing and domestic violence and sexual assault support groups at confidential locations with childcare provided for the survivors when required, drop-in services to help those with resources, crisis intervention, safety planning, and grocery and gas assistance. During August 2022, the drop-in service served 90 individuals. SafePlace offers referral services to different therapy services. Outreach within the prevention program includes visiting schools in Thurston County and offering healthy relationship workshops tailored to different age groups.

Previous funding from the City of Tumwater provided service to 15 clients within the housing program for relocation, hotels, and application fees. Recently, funding was received from the state's right-of-way relocation program to outreach homeless encampments in Thurston County. Some survivors from the encampments received hotel accommodations to assist in securing permanent housing. Another program benefitting from Tumwater funds is the legal program enabling more outreach to the Tumwater community. The Tumwater Police Department outreached to SafePlace several times when interactions occurred with survivors of domestic violence to assist survivors in obtaining resources or referral to the legal advocate program. SafePlace also provides training to crisis response units on how to work within a trauma-informed way when approaching a survivor. Funding from Tumwater would assist SafePlace in providing hotel services and other resources.

Councilmember Dahlhoff thanked Ms. Triplett and staff for their efforts to support survivors. She asked whether SafePlace has connected with Homes First for potential rehousing of survivors. Ms. Triplett advised that staff has met with representatives from Homes First. The homes staff toured did not meet the needs of survivors.

**FAMILY SUPPORT
CENTER OF SOUTH
SOUND:**

Maija Glasier-Lawson, Development Director, reported the Family Support Center of South Sound offers five programs serving the needs of families and survivors of family violence in Thurston County. The funding proposal is for the Family Resource Services Program (FRS), which serves as the oldest and core program of the organization. The FRS program is an eviction prevention program designed for any family that is not homeless but encountering struggles to remain housed. The program serves many needs and over the last several years has focused on eviction prevention. Each year, the FRS program serves approximately 350 households. An average household includes parents and a child. Approximately 10% of participants are from Tumwater.

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Over the last several years of the pandemic, it has been difficult for many in the community because of sharp increases in rental rates, cost of living increases, and housing costs 9% higher than in other areas. Beginning in 2021, the rent for a two-bedroom apartment increased from \$1288 to \$1585 representing nearly a 23% increase. Wages are keeping pace with the cost of housing creating a disconnect between average wage and rental costs. Consequently, more families are not able to pay their rent.

A recent study reflects that between 2016 and 2020, nearly 31.8% of Tumwater households were paying more than 30% of their income for housing costs. Approximately 14% of Tumwater households were paying nearly 50% of their income for housing. The FRS is designed to help any family struggling to pay rent or to assist in budgeting to help them overcome a crisis. The current housing vacancy rate in Thurston County is .5% limiting options for families to seek lower housing costs and causing more evictions. The FRS supports families through problem solving to the extent possible, as well as providing funding support to prevent eviction. The organization receives pass-through funding from other community organizations. The FRS program receives approximately 25 calls or email each day for assistance.

The organization recently received eviction prevention funding from Thurston County to enable the hiring of an additional FRS navigator. Tumwater funding would help support staffing costs for the FRS program and an existing navigator.

Ms. Glasier-Lawson reported the center recently reopened on September 7, 2022 offering a childcare center and a new affordable development currently in construction. She invited members to tour the facility.

Councilmember Dahlhoff reported she serves on the Board of the Directors for the Family Support Center of South Sound and will abstain from the discussion and voting.

Councilmember Swarthout asked whether the organization would be impacted if it did not receive full funding. Ms. Glasier-Lawson advised that the organization is adaptable if funding was not available. Funding would be utilized from another program with efforts focused on filling the funding gap.

COMMITTEE
DISCUSSION:

City Administrator Doan displayed a spreadsheet of the funding requests by each organization. The budget is \$15,000 with funding requests exceeding the budget by \$8,500.

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The committee discussed the possibility of increasing the budget for the program for future funding rounds. Executive Assistant Miles described the administrative process organizations must satisfy to receive the funds.

Committee members shared their respective recommendations for the allocation of funds and agreed to forward the following funding recommendation to the City Council:

- Garden Raised Bounty – GRuB - \$2,500
- Dispute Resolution Center of Thurston County - \$2,500
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Washington - \$3,000
- SafePlace - \$4,000
- Family Support Center of South Sound - \$3,000

MOTION:

Chair Sullivan moved, seconded by Councilmember Swarthout, to recommend the City Council approve the following Community Human Service Program funding allocations:

- **Garden Raised Bounty – GRuB - \$2,500**
- **Dispute Resolution Center of Thurston County - \$2,500**
- **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Washington - \$3,000**
- **SafePlace - \$4,000**
- **Family Support Center of South Sound - \$3,000**

A voice vote approved the motion. Councilmember Dahlhoff abstained from voting on the funding allocation for the Family Support Center of South Sound.

**2021-2022 BUDGET
3RD AMENDMENT:**

Director Niemeyer reported the proposed budget amendment is the final amendment for the current biennium budget adopted in December 2020. The budget was developed during the pandemic when the City reduced staffing because of uncertainties surrounding tax revenues and the economy during the pandemic. Staff conducted an analysis of budgeted 2021-2022 revenues and expenditures and identified an increase in revenues beyond expectations, which resulted in the first budget amendment restoring some City positions and providing a COLA increase for City employees. Sales continued to outpace forecasts and the City continued to experience record levels of new construction. Additionally, the City received federal CARES funding assisting the City during 2020 and 2021. The prior budget amendment last year afforded the opportunity for the City to fill additional positions, complete additional projects, and provide police reform training. The City subsequently received federal ARPA funds.

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In 2022, the City continues to experience strong new construction and sales tax enabling an overall good financial standing than previously anticipated during the pandemic. Additionally, many of the departments have reduced expenses, as some of the vacant positions have been difficult to fill because of the current labor market. The City continues to deal with supply chain issues and competing with the high demand for contractors.

The proposed amendment is less than \$1 million and serves as a self-correcting amendment based on approved actions by the City. Amendment 3 includes:

- Total all funds: \$973,343; Total General Fund: \$533,282
- Police Compensation - \$325,101 – Labor negotiations resulted in higher payroll and benefit costs
- Water Resources Manager - \$140,279
- Add Department Assistant II; Engineer II & Engineer III - \$208,859
- Add Community Engagement Specialist - \$60,630
- Add Recreation Coordinator from Metropolitan Park District - \$51,223
- Capitol Lake-Deschutes Estuary Long-Term Management - \$13,220

Staff recommends forwarding a recommendation to the City Council to approve the amendment and schedule a public hearing at the November 15, 2022 Council meeting.

Councilmember Althauser questioned how the increased in the general fund would be funded. Director Niemeyer said the amount would be covered from fund balance and sales tax revenue exceeding the forecast. A majority of the increase is attributed to the police compensation contract.

Councilmember Althauser asked whether the amendment affects the ending fund balance for the next biennium budget. Director Niemeyer replied that the draft budget for the next biennium has factored the proposed budget amendment. For example, police compensation was included in the forecasted 2022 ending fund balance.

MOTION:

Councilmember Dahlhoff moved, seconded by Councilmember Swarthout, to approve budget amendment #3 as a committee and move it to a public hearing on November 15, 2022 at the Council meeting. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.

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OTHER BUSINESS: Director Niemeyer referred to the Equipment, Rental, & Replacement (ER&R) fund established in the 1980s to collect payments on equipment and vehicles to provide funds for replacement equipment and vehicles. Currently, the fund includes computers and peripherals. As costs for computers, servers, and laptops comprise a major component of the fund, staff proposes separating those costs from the ER&R for easier management, tracking, and budgeting and creating a new fund designated as ER&R Information Technology.

Director Niemeyer referred to the Law Enforcement Records Management Systems (LERMS), a system for police records. The City collaborates with the cities of Lacey, Olympia, Tenino, and Yelm through a contract with Thurston County. The City of Olympia is the designated lead organization for operation and management of the system. Because of the loss of staff resources, the City of Olympia no longer has the capability to operate the system. The City's Police Department includes staff with the ability and expertise to operate the system. The Police Department has agreed to assume the responsibility to manage the system beginning in 2023. The City proposes including funding for system operation in a separate fund to void co-mingling with City funds. Staff proposes placing the request on the Council's December 6, 2022 consent calendar.

Councilmember Dahlhoff asked whether T-COMM 911 plays any role in the system, as there have been some discussions and concerns about public safety communications using different databases. Police Commander Mason explained that in a perfect world, the systems would be combined with 911 dispatch; however, a new records management system currently in the bidding process includes the addition of the Thurston County Sheriff's Office. The current version of LERMS does not include Thurston County Sheriff's Office, which is why dispatch was not included. T-COMM 911 houses hardware for the system, has some backbone support, and can access parts of the system. At this time T-COMM does not have a direct influence over police records. LERMS 2.0 would include Thurston County Sheriff's Office.

MOTION: Chair Sullivan moved, seconded by Councilmember Dahlhoff, to recommend placement of both funding resolutions (ER&R Information Technology & LERMS) on the December 6, 2022 City Council consent calendar for consideration. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT: Councilmember Dahlhoff moved, seconded by Councilmember Swarthout, to adjourn the meeting at 2:53 p.m.