THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

Staff Report

Council Meeting Date: February 23, 2021

Subject: Code Purple Emergency Shelter

Staff Resource(s): Sam Powers, Director of Community and Economic Development
Emily Ball, Homeless Services System Performance Lead

Action(s) Requested: Adoption of: 1) a resolution authorizing the City Manager's execution of a contract amendment with Western Carolina Rescue Ministries, Inc. to add $50,000 to the existing contract (currently $80,000, with $40,000 from the City and $40,000 from Buncombe County) in order to extend provision of Code Purple emergency shelter; and 2) approval of a budget amendment in the City's Special Revenue Fund in the amount of $50,000 using pay-go funding previously approved to support affordable housing.

Background:

- Code Purple is a longstanding practice where homeless shelter providers exceed regular capacity and waive regular rules on nights when the temperature or windchill are at/below 32 degrees in order to ensure survival of people experiencing homelessness.
- Code Purple is a community-led initiative that has primarily been coordinated by agencies in the Homeless Coalition.
- COVID-19 has created many challenges for homeless service providers and therefore, no emergency shelters were able to participate in Code Purple this winter at their facilities.
- Western Carolina Rescue Ministries, Inc. agreed to operate Code Purple in an off-site location.
- In order to meet these extraordinary circumstances, on December 1, 2020, the City of Asheville entered into an administrative agreement with Western Carolina Rescue Ministries, Inc. in which they provided up to 50 Code Purple beds at First Congregational United Church of Christ for the month of December.
- Funding for this first month of operations came from Coronavirus Relief Funding (CRF) previously approved by the City Council.
- On January 12, 2021, City Council ratified a new agreement with Western Carolina Rescue Ministries, Inc. to continue providing Code Purple shelter, with a not-to-exceed amount of $80,000.
- Funds for this contract were provided by $40,000 of pay-go funding previously approved to support affordable housing and $40,000 of funding from Buncombe County for this purpose.
- Additional funding is needed to ensure continuation of Code Purple for the remainder of the winter season.
- This contract amendment will add $50,000 for a not-to-exceed amount of $130,000.
- City staff have requested funding from other community partners to support this initiative.
- This amendment will encumber $50,000 of City funding to ensure no interruption of services while those decisions are pending.

Council Goal(s):

- A Well-Planned and Livable Community
- A Connected and Engaged Community
- A Financially Resilient City

Committee(s):

- None

Pro(s):

- Continues the essential operation of Code Purple

- Supports survival for vulnerable community members
- Addresses public health and safety

Con(s):
- None

Fiscal Impact:
- As noted above, December costs were funded with Coronavirus Relief Funding (CRF).
- The City-funded portion of the current contract is $40,000.
- Buncombe County funded $40,000 of the origins; $80,000.
- The contract amendment will encumber an additional $50,000 of City funding.

Suggested Motion(s):
- Motion to adopt (1) a resolution authorizing the City Manager's contract amendment with Western Carolina Rescue Ministries, Inc. in the amount of $130,000 for the ongoing provision of Code Purple emergency shelter; and (2) approval of a budget amendment in the City's Special Revenue Fund in the amount of $50,000 to add pay-go funding previously approved to support affordable housing.

Attachment(s):
- Resolution
- Budget Amendment

RESOLUTION NO. 21- _____

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER'S EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT AMENDMENT WITH WESTERN CAROLINA RESCUE MINISTRIES, INC. TO PROVIDE CODE PURPLE EMERGENCY SHELTER

WHEREAS, people experiencing homelessness are particularly vulnerable to both COVID-19 complications and exposure to the elements; and

WHEREAS, traditional Code Purple emergency shelter options have been unavailable due to the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville has executed an agreement with Western Carolina Rescue Ministries, Inc. to provide Code Purple emergency shelter at an alternate location; and

WHEREAS, additional resources are required to meet this critical need; and

WHEREAS, the parties have agreed to continue this essential operation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

City Council hereby authorizes the City Manager's execution of a contract amendment with Western Carolina Rescue Ministries, Inc. to provide additional Code Purple emergency shelter funding of $50,000, for a total contract cost not to exceed $130,000.

Read, approved, and adopted this 23rd day of February, 2021.

_____ _____

CITY CLERK MAYOR

Approved As To Form:

_____

CITY ATTORNEY

ORDINANCE NO. _____

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

That the City of Asheville Fiscal Year 2020-21 Budget Ordinance be amended to add an appropriation of $50,000 to the project budget for Code Purple emergency shelter contract as follows:

SPECIAL REVENUE FUND

Revenues:

Transfer from General Capital Fund	$50,000
Total Revenues	$50,000

Appropriations:

Contracted Services	$50,000
Total Appropriations	$50,000

That this ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon the date of final passage.

Read, approved and adopted this 23rd day of February, 2021.

_____ _____

City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

_____

City Attorney