THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

Staff Report

Council Meeting Date: January 12, 2021

Subject: Code Purple Emergency Shelter

Staff Resource(s): Sam Powers, Director of Community and Economic Development
Emily Ball, Community Development Analyst

Action(s) Requested: Adoption of: 1) a resolution ratifying the City Manager's execution of a contract with Western Carolina Rescue Ministries, Inc. in the amount of $80,000 to extend provision of Code Purple emergency shelter; 2) a resolution ratifying the City Manager's execution of a cost-sharing agreement with Buncombe County for Code Purple emergency shelter; and 3) approval of a budget amendment in the City's Special Revenue Fund in the amount of $80,000 to establish a project budget for this contract to be funded with $40,000 from Buncombe County and $40,000 from 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 agreement with Western Carolina Rescue Ministries, Inc. to provide 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.
- City staff have been in discussions with Buncombe County and other non-profit organizations to discuss cost-sharing for the extension of the Code Purple shelter.
- Buncombe County has agreed to provide up to $40,000 of funding to assist in keeping the shelter operational this winter.
- The additional funding of $40,000 needed for the contract will come from previously budgeted affordable housing pay-go funding in the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP).
- Operational costs will be reimbursed at a flat rate of $2,130.00 for each night Code Purple occurs. The contract provides funding for up to 37 nights, in an amount not to exceed $80,000.00, and may be extended if additional need and additional funds are identified.
- A new agreement is required to meet this critical need for the duration of winter.

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):
- Requires the reallocation of a portion of the City's affordable housing CIP budget.
- Additional funding will be needed if Code Purple exceeds 37 nights.
- Staff is talking to other agencies to obtain additional funding if needed.

Fiscal Impact:
- As noted above, December costs were funded with Coronavirus Relief Funding (CRF).
- The City-funded portion of the estimated cost after December will be funded by reallocating pay-go funding previously planned to support affordable housing to meet potential shelter costs for 37 nights.
- Beyond that, additional funding and partners are required.

Suggested Motion(s):
- Motion to adopt (1) a resolution ratifying the City Manager's executed agreement with Western Carolina Rescue Ministries, Inc. in the amount of $80,000 for the ongoing provision of Code Purple emergency shelter; (2) a resolution ratifying the City Manager's execution of a cost-sharing agreement with Buncombe County for Code Purple emergency shelter; and (3) approval of a budget amendment in the City's Special Revenue Fund in the amount of $80,000 to establish a project budget for this contract to be funded with $40,000 from Buncombe County and $40,000 from pay-go funding previously approved to support affordable housing.

Attachment(s):
- Resolution
- Resolution
- Budget Amendment

RESOLUTION NO. 21- _____

RESOLUTION TO RATIFY THE CITY MANAGER'S EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT 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 for the month of December 2020; 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 ratifies the City Manager's execution of a new agreement with Western Carolina Rescue Ministries, Inc. to provide Code Purple emergency shelter, for a total cost not to exceed $80,000.

Read, approved, and adopted this 12th day of January, 2021.

_____ _____

CITY CLERK MAYOR

Approved As To Form:

_____

CITY ATTORNEY

RESOLUTION NO. 21- _____

RESOLUTION TO RATIFY THE CITY MANAGER'S EXECUTION OF A COST-SHARING AGREEMENT WITH BUNCOMBE COUNTY FOR CODE PURPLE EMERGENCY SHELTER

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville and Buncombe County have a mutual goal of supporting Code Purple emergency shelter; and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville and Buncombe County mutually agree to share in the costs associated with Code Purple in response to the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the City has committed to provide at least $40,000.00 toward the cost of Code Purple emergency shelter, which will be provided through a contract with Western Carolina Rescue Missions, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Buncombe County has also committed to contribute up to $40,000.00 toward the cost of these Code Purple emergency shelter operations; and

WHEREAS, the County shall make payment directly to the City in one lump sum and the City will then allocate these funds to the services provided by Western Carolina Rescue Missions, Inc.;

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

City Council hereby ratifies the City Manager's execution of a cost-sharing agreement with Buncombe County for Code Purple emergency shelter.

Read, approved, and adopted this 12th day of January, 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 provide an appropriation of $80,000 to accept a payment from Buncombe County and to establish a project budget for Code Purple emergency shelter contract as follows:

SPECIAL REVENUE FUND

Revenues:

Restricted Intergovernmental Payment	$40,000
Transfer from General Capital Fund	$40,000
Total Revenues	$80,000

Appropriations:

Contracted Services	$80,000
Total Appropriations	$80,000

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

Read, approved and adopted this 12th day of January, 2021.

_____ _____

City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

_____

City Attorney