THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

STAFF REPORT

Council Meeting Date: June 23, 2020

Subject: Mills River Partnership Agreement

Staff Resource(s): David Melton, Water Resources Department Department
Elise Ayers, Budget Revenue Manager

Action Requested: Adoption of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a multi-year general services agreement with the Mills River Partnership, Inc., for the Mills River Watershed Best Management Practices project for a not-to-exceed amount of $180,000 over three (3) fiscal years contingent upon funding each year. The level of participation recommended is an amount up to $60,000 per fiscal year with the understanding that funding is project-specific and subject to the appropriation of funds.

Background:

- On November 12, 2016, City Council authorized a three-year agreement between the City of Asheville Water Resources Department and the Mills River Partnership (MRP) for a not-to-exceed amount of $180,000 [$60,000 per fiscal year; approximately $0.01 per centum cubic feet (CCF) system-wide] to provide financial support of projects intended to protect and/or improve water quality in the Mills River Watershed. The department desires to continue to partner with the MRP to help fund water quality projects in the Mills River Watershed.
- The Water Resources Department is willing to provide cost-share funding for projects that are directly related to water quality protection and/or improvement.
- These activities include;
    - selection and installation of best management practices to control contamination of the river from storm runoff,
    - stream bank restoration,
    - planting trees to protect the river buffer zone, educational materials and activities that involve working with agriculture farms to develop buffer zones.
- These projects maintain the water quality of the river and thereby reduce water treatment costs & protect the environment of the watershed.
- The City of Asheville has an ongoing interest in watershed management. Water quality in the upper watershed continues to be excellent and overall water quality indices have improved during the past ten years. The strategy is to continue focusing on efforts to protect and improve water quality.
- Funding initiatives are to be considered with an understanding of their long-term impact on water quality.

Vendor Outreach Efforts:

- This is a continuation of contracted services with a vendor that has a unique and singular focus, with no comparable vendors/non-profits. As such, no additional outreach has been conducted.

Council Goal(s):

- This project aligns with the City Council 2036 Vision of providing A Clean and Healthy Environment.

Committee(s):

- None

Pro(s):

- Opportunity to partner with the Mills River Partnership to strategically address areas of concern in the Mills River watershed.
- Funding from the City of Asheville could make some water quality projects feasible.
- Funding from the City of Asheville could support public education efforts related to water quality protection.
- Projects in the watershed could improve source water and drinking water quality.
- The City of Asheville Water Resources Department wants to maximize benefits to water quality.

Con(s):

- If the City does not participate in the funding of specific water quality projects, these projects may not occur and there could be potential negative impacts on water quality.

Fiscal Impact:

- The full amount needed for the three year agreement is currently allocated within the Water Resources Operating Fund for Fiscal Year 2020-21. The total not-to-exceed contract amount of $180,000 will be encumbered upon City Council approval, even though the MRP will only be allowed to request a not-to-exceed amount of $60,000.00 per fiscal year for the next three years.

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a multi-year general services agreement for the entire agreement with the Mills River Partnership, Inc., for the Mills River Watershed Best Management Practices project for a not-to-exceed amount of $180,000 over three (3) fiscal years contingent upon funding each year. The level of participation recommended is an amount up to $60,000 per fiscal year for a maximum of three fiscal years with the understanding that funding is project-specific and subject to the appropriation of funds.

Attachment(s)

- Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 20-____

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE MULTI-YEAR GENERAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE MILLS RIVER PARTNERSHIP, INC., FOR THE MILLS RIVER WATERSHED BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES PROJECT

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 160A-312, the City of Asheville has authority to operate a public enterprise; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 160A-20.1, the City of Asheville may enter into contracts with private entities to carry out any public purpose the City is authorized to engage in; and

WHEREAS, the Water Resources Department has an opportunity to partner with the Mills River Partnership to strategically address areas of concern in the Mills River watershed;

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

The City Manager, on behalf of the City of Asheville, is hereby authorized to execute the contract with multi-year general services agreement for the entire agreement with the Mills River Partnership, Inc., for the Mills River Watershed Best Management Practices project for a not-to-exceed amount of $180,000 over three (3) fiscal years contingent upon funding each year. The level of participation recommended is an amount up to $60,000 per fiscal year for a maximum of three fiscal years with the understanding that funding is project-specific and subject to the appropriation of funds.

Read, approved, and adopted this 23rd day of June 2020.

_____ _____

City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

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City Attorney