



Legislation Text

File #: 71642, **Version:** 1

Fiscal Note

The proposed resolution amends an existing contract with Focus Counseling, Inc. to extend the contract end date from June 30, 2022, to June 30, 2023. The Common Council authorized the original contract as part of the City's efforts to provide alternatives to persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness (RES-21-00770, File ID #68103). Funding for the contract is from the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) allocation of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and is included in the Community Development Division's (CDD) 2022 Adopted Operating Budget. CDD projects that \$250,000 will be unspent at the end of the contract term. Extending the contract will allow the agency to continue services and maximize the number of individuals served. No additional appropriation is required.

Title

Authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to amend an existing contract with Focus Counseling by extending its term through June 30, 2023 to enable the continued provision of housing support services to participants in the City's unsheltered response hotel shelter program.

Body

BACKGROUND

As part of an effort to find safer, and legal, alternatives last fall for persons camping in the City's Reindahl Park, as well as other unsheltered locations, the Common Council authorized the use of ARPA funds to develop and implement a non-congregate shelter alternative for adults experiencing unsheltered homelessness. More specifically, Focus Counseling, Inc. was authorized to secure, arrange and pay for 35 hotel rooms at a designated hotel property in Madison, and provide meals, security and 24-hour on-site supportive services, including housing stabilization services. The contract was authorized through June 30, 2022, after which the use of the hotel would no longer be available.

Since the effort began, Focus Counseling has helped connect participants to housing opportunities but, until last month, had brought new participants into the program as people exited. As of mid-May, there were about 40 individuals in 30 households (20 single persons and 10 couples) residing at the hotel shelter.

In order to maximize the number of participants who can be housed prior to the end of the hotel shelter initiative, the Community Development Division proposes to use approximately \$250,000 of funds awarded to Focus Counseling, which are projected to be unspent on June 30, 2022, to continue its efforts to connect people to housing. The funds would be used for security deposit payments, rental assistance and housing support services. These funds may be supplemented with City-administered, Federal HOME Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) funds, which will be made available through a future Request for Proposals (RFP) process.

ACTION

WHEREAS, on November 16, 2021, the Common Council authorized the Community Development Division to enter into a contract with Focus Counseling, Inc. to provide non-congregate hotel sheltering, including housing support services, as part of the City's efforts to provide alternatives to persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness (RES-21-00770, File ID #68103), with a contract end date of June 30, 2022; and,

WHEREAS, Focus Counseling, Inc. has been providing housing support services to hotel shelter participants

and has helped participants move into permanent housing; and,

WHEREAS, as of May 17, up to 30 households continue to receive shelter and supportive services at the hotel, with the availability of the hotel for this use scheduled to end on June 30, 2022; and,

WHEREAS, approximately \$250,000 of the funds authorized by the Council for use by Focus Counseling is projected to be unspent by the end of the contract end date; and,

WHEREAS, the continued use of these funds to support housing solutions for persons participating in the hotel shelter effort is consistent with the Council's goal in authorizing the contract with Focus Counseling, Inc.; and,

WHEREAS, Focus Counseling, Inc. is prepared to continue its work to connect participants to housing, including by using remaining funds to help make security deposits and rent payments on behalf of participants; and,

WHEREAS, in order to allow Focus Counseling to continue those efforts beyond the June 30, 2022 contract end date, the contract must be amended;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council hereby authorizes the Mayor and City Clerk to amend the existing contract with Focus Counseling by extending the contract period through June 30, 2023, in order to provide continued housing support services and rental assistance for participants in the City's unsheltered response hotel shelter effort.