



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
September 15, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Submitted by: Lisa Warhuus, Director Department of Health, Housing and Community Services

Subject: Memorandum of Understanding with Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services for Wellness Center operations

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager or her designee to adopt a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Berkeley and Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services (ACBHCS) for the term July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021 for an expenditure of up to \$775,000 to fund the operational costs of a Mental Health Wellness Center (Wellness Center) located in the City of Berkeley.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The execution of this MOU will result in the transfer of a portion of the City of Berkeley's Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Community Services and Supports (CSS) funding allocation to Alameda County BHCS so that funds may be leveraged for operational costs of a Wellness Center. The total amount of money to be expended on the Wellness Center operational costs from the City of Berkeley would be \$775,000 (\$387,500 per fiscal year); ACBHCS will also contribute an identical \$775,000 for operational costs, for a total outlay of \$1,550,000 combined. The MOU is the mechanism that defines the terms of the fiscal relationship between the City and the County and will enable the transfer of funds.

The State of California MHSA provides funding for local mental health services and supports. City of Berkeley MHSA Three Year Program and Expenditure Plans (Three Year Plans) and Annual Updates, details the uses of local MHSA funds. Development of local MHSA Three Year Plans and Annual Updates require community program planning, writing a draft plan, providing a 30-day public review, and conducting a public hearing at the Mental Health Commission.

The development of the MHSA FY20/21 – 22/23 Three Year Plan is currently underway and will be on the City Council Agenda in October 2020. The proposed Three Year Plan will include continued funding for Wellness Center operational costs.

Given unforeseen delays due to Covid-19, that have occurred (and may likely continue to occur in the near future), approval of this Council Item will enable contract amendments to be executed and payments to be made in a timely manner. The City and County have been in negotiations around a revised overall contract, and this delayed the process of finalizing this contract around the Wellness Center. This will assist Contractors who may be experiencing financial hardships during this time as a result of Covid-19. Funding for these services and supports has been included in the FY21 Budget in ERMA GL Code 315-51-503-525-2020-000-451-636110-.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

On October 13, 2015, via Resolution No. 67,228-N.S., City Council approved an MOU with ACBHCS to implement, manage, and evaluate a Mental Health Wellness Center. On January 29, 2019 via Resolution No. 68,749-N.S., City Council approved an MOU with ACBHCS for the construction of a Wellness Center. The Mental Health Division and ACBHCS decided to mutually end the previous contracts and enter into negotiations for a new MOU for Wellness Center operations exclusively, which is the subject of this report. The Wellness Center is currently conducting both groups and providing services to the community via telehealth and telephone. They are prepared to provide in-person services when the Covid-19 pandemic allows.

Bonita House is the vendor who is contracted by ACBHCS for the operation of the Wellness Center, located at 1909 University Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94704. Bonita House has cost estimates of \$775,000 in operational costs per year for fiscal years 2020 and 2021. This MOU will allow MHSA CSS funding to be spent on operating the Wellness Center, and a new agreement is beneficial to all parties involved to allow for enhanced contractual oversight and accountability.

BACKGROUND

The City of Berkeley is partnering with Alameda County to fund continued operation of a Wellness Center for residents of Berkeley and Albany. The Wellness Center is modeled after existing Wellness Centers in other parts of Alameda County and provides three level of services. First, the Wellness Center is open to anyone in the community who either needs support or connection to the mental health system. This is the largest level of service and is primarily staffed by individuals with lived experience with mental health illness. Second, for a smaller cohort, the Wellness Center provides short term case management with a licensed clinician. This level of service allows people who are not otherwise connected to care, and who use the Wellness Center, to receive some targeted support for a wide variety of issues. Finally, the Wellness Center has some capacity to provide psychiatry and medication services for individuals not otherwise connected to care.

On October 13, 2015, via Resolution No. 67,228-N.S., City Council approved an MOU with ACBHCS to implement, manage, and evaluate a Mental Health Wellness Center. On October 30, 2018 via Resolution No. 68,639-N.S., City Council approved the MHSA FY 2018-2019 Annual Update, which included funding for Wellness Center operations. The Wellness Center has been in operation since late fall of 2019, and has continued to provide services via tele-health since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Bonita House will continue to operate and support the goals of the Wellness Center. ACBHCS will utilize the funding provided by the City of Berkeley to pay for approved charges for this project. Previous contracts for the Wellness Center were mutually ended by the Mental Health Division and ACBHCS and new terms were negotiated for an MOU for Wellness Center operations exclusively, which is the subject of this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Providing this funding will support the ability of the vendor to operate a Wellness Center in Berkeley, which provides a needed expansion of the system of care for individuals with mental health issues in Berkeley and Albany.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

The City could decide not to fund the operational costs for the Wellness Center. This would either lead to the closing of the Wellness Center or greatly complicate its capacity to exist in its current form.

CONTACT PERSON

Conor Murphy, Assistant Management Analyst, HHCS, (510) 981-7611
Steven Grolnic-McClurg, Mental Health Manager, HHCS, (510) 981-5249

Attachments:
1: Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH ALAMEDA COUNTY BEHAVIORAL
HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR WELLNESS CENTER OPERATIONS

WHEREAS, as part of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), the State of California designated a process for all mental health jurisdictions for expenditures from Community Services and Supports (CSS); and

WHEREAS, on October 13, 2015, via Resolution No. 67,228-N.S., City Council approved an Memorandum of Understanding with Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services to implement, manage, and evaluate a Mental Health Wellness Center; and

WHEREAS, on January 29, 2019, via Resolution No. 68,749-N.S. City Council approved funding the construction of a Wellness Center located in Berkeley in partnership with Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services; and

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has an approved FY 2021 Program and Expenditure Plan that designates \$775,000 a year from CSS to fund operational costs for a Mental Health Wellness Center (Wellness Center); and

WHEREAS, a Memorandum of Understanding will provide the mechanism whereby the City of Berkeley Mental Health Services Act CSS funds can be transferred to the lead agency, Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services, to be utilized for the operational costs of the Mental Health Wellness Center; and

WHEREAS, funds are available in the FY 2021 budget code 315-51-503-525-2020-000-451-636110- in the MHSA fund received from the State of California.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager or her designee is authorized to adopt an MOU between the City of Berkeley and Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services for the term July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021 for an expenditure of up to \$775,000 to fund the operational costs of a Mental Health Wellness Center (Wellness Center) located in the City of Berkeley.