



Office of the Mayor

CONSENT CALENDAR

November 9, 2021

To: Honorable Members of the City Council

From: Mayor Jesse Arreguín

Subject: Berkeley Holiday Fund: Relinquishment of Council Office Budget Funds to General Fund and Grant of Such Funds

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution approving the expenditure of an amount not to exceed \$500 per Councilmember including \$500 from Mayor Arreguín to the Berkeley Holiday Fund's annual campaign with funds relinquished to the City's general fund for this purpose from the discretionary Council Office Budgets of Mayor Arreguín and any other Councilmembers who would like to contribute.

BACKGROUND

The Berkeley Holiday Fund has helped make the holiday season happier for hundreds of Berkeley's neediest residents for 108 years. An all-volunteer organization, the Berkeley Holiday Fund has been partnering with 29 Berkeley service agencies, such as the Center for Elder Independence, the YMCA, Berkeley Food and Housing Project, and the Berkeley Health Department. By keeping operating costs to a minimum, the Berkeley Holiday Fund ensures that all contributions go directly to help those who need it the most. Last year, they were able to bring a little cheer into the lives of over 1,000 Berkeley citizens distributing over \$92,000. Over the past two years as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, they have expanded their Emergency Fund to offer cash assistance to families and individuals that their partner agencies have identified as suffering financial hardship due to COVID-19. Last year, the Emergency Fund raised almost \$48,000 which was distributed among over 340 families and individuals.

The Mayor's office has actively participated in this program for over 25 years by providing application cards and first class postage to Berkeley Holiday Fund recipients. This year the Berkeley Holiday Fund anticipates distributing approximately 1,200 request forms. This item requests the City Council approve an expenditure, not to exceed \$500 of funds from the from the Mayor's office budget to cover reproduction costs and postage.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No General Fund impact. \$500 is available from the Mayor's office budget discretionary account.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with adopting this recommendation.

CONTACT PERSON

Mayor Jesse Arreguín 510-981-7100

Attachments:

- 1: Resolution
- 2: Letter from Berkeley Holiday Fund

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

BERKELEY HOLIDAY FUND 2020

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Holiday Fund has been making small grants to Berkeley's neediest citizens for 108 years; and

WHEREAS, last year, the Berkeley Holiday Fund distributed about \$92,000 to over 1,000 Berkeley residents, in addition to raising \$48,000 for their COVID-19 Emergency Fund that was distributed to over 340 families and individuals; and

WHEREAS, Berkeley Holiday Fund partners with 29 Berkeley service agencies including the Center for Elder Independence, the YMCA, Berkeley Food and Housing Project, and the Berkeley Health Department; and

WHEREAS, this year, the Berkeley Holiday Fund has expanded their Emergency Fund to offer cash assistance to families and individuals that their partner agencies have identified as suffering financial hardship due to COVID-19 and the Shelter in Place Orders; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Mayor's Office has supported the Berkeley Holiday Fund's efforts for over 25 years by reproducing request forms and providing first class postage costs; and; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Arreguin has surplus funds in his office expenditure account; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Holiday Fund seeks funds in the amount of \$500 to provide application cards and first class postage to Berkeley Holiday Fund recipients; and

WHEREAS, the provision of such services would fulfill the following municipal public purpose of providing services to low income residents of the City of Berkeley.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that funds relinquished by the Mayor and Councilmembers from their Council Office Budget up to \$500 per office shall be granted to the Berkeley Holiday Fund for providing application cards and first class postage to Berkeley Holiday Fund recipients.

BERKELEY HOLIDAY FUND

Post Office Box 9779 ♦ Berkeley, California 94709

www.BerkeleyHolidayFund.org

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September 12, 2021

The Honorable Jesse Arreguin

Mayor of Berkeley

2180 Milvia Street

Berkeley, CA 94704

Dear Mayor Arreguin:

On behalf of the Board of the Berkeley Holiday Fund, I want to thank the Mayor's office for its continuing, generous support for the Fund's annual disbursement of holiday gifts to Berkeley's neediest citizens. And to you personally for serving as the Honorary Chair Person of the Fund. For 108 years the Fund has solicited donations from the citizens of Berkeley and now partners with more than thirty local social service agencies to identify Berkeley citizens in need of help during the holidays.

Last year, with your help, we were able to offer much needed cheer during the holiday season by sending checks totaling almost \$92,000 and to more than 1,000 individuals and families in Berkeley. In addition, we launched a special appeal to our donors to support a Covid-19 Emergency Fund which when combined with our emergency funds allowed us to distribute almost \$48,000 to over 340 families and individuals.

We are requesting that you continue your longstanding support for our efforts. For at least the last twenty-five years the Mayor's Office has aided the Holiday Fund. We are grateful for your support of the Berkeley Holiday Fund as our Honorary Chairman and the support of the City Council members as Sponsors.

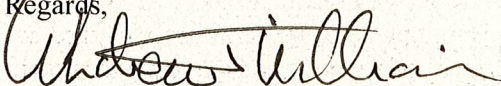
This year we anticipate distributing approximately 1,200 checks to individuals and families, While we fund every request we receive, the number of requests from agencies varies from year to year, and we only send one check to individuals or families recommended by multiple agencies.

Since this expenditure requires Council approval, we are formally requesting \$500 in support and are asking for your help in obtaining that approval.

In past years some council members have added funds from their office accounts. We deeply appreciate their support.

Thank you again for all the support and encouragement you have provided in the past to this truly unique Berkeley institution.

Regards,



Andrew T. Williams

Co-Chairperson