



Susan Wengraf
Councilmember District 6

CONSENT CALENDAR
July 25, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Wengraf (author), Councilmember Harrison (co-sponsor), Councilmember Hahn (co-sponsor), Mayor Arreguin (co-sponsor)

Subject: Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the 1923 Berkeley Fire: Relinquishment of Council Office Budget Funds from General Funds and Grant Such Funds

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution approving the expenditure of an amount not to exceed \$500 per Councilmember or Mayor, including \$500 from Councilmembers Wengraf and Harrison, to support the City's Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the 1923 Berkeley Fire with funds relinquished to the City's general fund. The relinquishment of funds from Councilmembers Wengraf and Harrison's discretionary Council Office Budgets and all other Councilmembers and Mayor who would like to contribute will support a community fair with family friendly activities, including historical and educational displays and activities for the 1923 Fire Commemoration on September 17, 2023.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No General Fund impact: up to \$500 is available from contributing Councilmember's and the Mayor's Office Budget discretionary accounts.

BACKGROUND

On September 23, 1923, a grass fire on the eastern slope of the Berkeley hills spread quickly as it was fueled by Diablo winds, destroying 640 structures, including 584 homes on the northside of the UC campus. When the winds finally calmed down the fire was contained at the corner of Shattuck and Hearst. Embers from the flames created smaller fires throughout the downtown and western area of Berkeley. As a result, thousands of residents became homeless including 1,000 UC Berkeley students.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of this devastating fire, several COB departments and external grassroots organizations are working together to plan a day of activities and learning opportunities. The groups involved in planning the event include Councilmembers Hahn, Harrison and Wengraf, COB Fire, COB Parks, Berkeley Historical Society, BAHA and Berkeley Path Wanderers, FireWise groups and the Berkeley FireSafe Council.

The proposed community fair at Live Oak Park will include family friendly activities for children, an exhibit, a walking tour of homes that survived the fire, an evacuation exercise, interactive games with firefighters, exploring the paths in the burned area, and booths for organizations to distribute relevant information and educational materials. Fire trucks will be available for young children to sit on for photos.

The commemoration of the 100th year anniversary of the 1923 Fire is an important opportunity and sober reminder of the risks Berkeley faces, as well as an occasion to come together as a community and learn how to become a more resilient and fire safe city.

The fiscal sponsor for these donations will be The Hillside Association of Berkeley, a 501c3 non-profit in the State of California and affiliate of the Berkeley Fire Safe Council.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Wildfire is devastating to the environment, and one of the largest contributors of greenhouse gases. Work towards fire safety supports environmental sustainability.

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Wengraf

Council District 6

510-981-7160

Attachments:

1: Resolution

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

AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF SURPLUS FUNDS FROM THE OFFICE EXPENSE ACCOUNTS OF COUNCILMEMBERS WENGRAF AND HARRISON, OTHER COUNCILMEMBERS AND THE MAYOR FOR A GRANT TO PROVIDE PUBLIC SERVICES FOR A MUNICIPAL PUBLIC PURPOSE

WHEREAS, Councilmember Wengraf and Councilmember Harrison have surplus funds in their office expenditure accounts and will each contribute \$500, and invite the Mayor and other Councilmembers to join them in contributing; and

WHEREAS, a California nonprofit tax-exempt corporation, The Hillside Association of Berkeley, affiliate of the Berkeley Fire Safe Council, will receive funds in an amount up to \$500 per contributing Councilmember's and the Mayor's discretionary accounts; and

WHEREAS, these funds will go towards Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the 1923 Berkeley Fire, to include a community fair at Live Oak Park with family friendly activities, educational information and historical displays about the September 17, 1923 fire; and

WHEREAS, the provision of such funds would fulfill the municipal public purpose of honoring the devastation the community and city endured from the 1923 fire, and coming together as a community to learn how to become a more resilient and fire safe city.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that funds relinquished by the Mayor and Councilmembers from their Office Budgets, up to \$500 per office, shall be granted to the Hillside Association of Berkeley, affiliate of the Berkeley Fire Safe Council, to fund the Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the 1923 Berkeley Fire on September 17, 2023.

