



City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve

Office of Tonia Reyes Uranga
Council Member, Seventh District
Memorandum

NB-28

Date: June 1, 2010

To: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

From: Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske, Fifth District 
Council Member Tonia Reyes Uranga, Seventh District 
Councilwoman Rae Gabelich, Eighth District /s/

Subject: AGENDA ITEM: Request a resolution expressing support for preserving funding for services provided by the Guidance Center

BACKGROUND

The City of Long Beach and the Long Beach Unified School District relies on a number of social service provider to deliver mental health programs for residents and students. For over 60 years, the Guidance Center has provided critical mental health services to children and their families throughout Long Beach. The Center's four Long Beach Clinics offer a broad array of service such as outpatient service, intensive mental health treatment and school based services. These services are now facing severe funding cuts from the State's proposed budget.

DISCUSSION

The Guidance Center has a unique history in providing services to Long Beach since 1946 when a pioneering group of school teachers and counselors established a not-for-profit center called the Greater Long Beach Child Guidance Center to address learning disabilities and other often misunderstood behavioral problems of school children. Prior to establishment of the GLBCGC, virtually no research or efforts were made to address learning disabilities or behavioral problems of school children which often resulted in a lack of educational opportunities, stigmatization, and the worsening of problems that could have otherwise been easily treated through early intervention.

Currently, The Guidance Center serves as a major community mental health service provider employing more than 150 mental health professionals, support staff, administrators, and interns. The Guidance Center provides services to school children and families at six sites within Long Beach and surrounding communities. The Guidance Center consistently partners with government agencies working within and outside of the City. Examples of this not-for-profit partnership with government agencies includes The Guidance Center staffing over 20 schools within the Long Beach Unified School District with mental health professionals and support staff to assist school children.

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The Guidance Center is also utilized for child mental health support by local law enforcement agencies such as the Long Beach Police Department. The Guidance Center is often times a resource of last resort, without which, low-income children who have been traumatized by abuse and neglect would otherwise not receive service and therefore increasing the probability of homelessness and substance abuse. The Guidance Center has adopted an approach that addresses issues associated not only with the child but the child's family as well through the use of job referrals, and mental health education for parents or other care takers.

With the down-turn in the economy, the demand for The Guidance Center's services have surged to dramatic levels. For example, due in large measure to budget cuts, The Guidance Center now has a waitlist with over 100 children requiring care. The Guidance Center is heavily dependent on public funding including funds issued through Medi-Cal and Mental Health Services Act dollars. Over the course of the past several years, funds from Medi-Cal have been drastically cut. There are three elements of the Governor's proposed state budget for fiscal year 2010-2011 that on a practical level would decimate The Guidance Center's already strained ability to provide services.

- The proposed State budget includes the elimination of Healthy Families and CalWORKs, both of which are critical health care and social service programs for the working poor.
- The budget further includes additional cuts to Medi-Cal managed care, which would result in cuts in funds to The Guidance Center from Los Angeles County.
- The loss in LA County support would trigger the loss in matching federal funds.

The City Council of Long Beach should express its support for The Guidance Center and to urge the Southern California federal and state legislative delegation to refrain from imposing any additional cuts, whether direct or indirect, to The Guidance Center's services.

RECOMMENDATION

We are requesting the City Attorney to draft a resolution expressing support for the Guidance Center and calling upon the Southern California State and Federal Legislative Delegation to support efforts to preserve funding for services provided by the Guidance Center. We would also like to direct the City Manager to communicate the City's desire to preserve funding for the Guidance Center to our legislative delegation.



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REQUEST TO ADD AGENDA ITEM

Date: May 28, 2010
To: Larry Herrera, City Clerk
From: Council Member Tonia Reyes Uranga
Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske
Councilwoman Rae Gabelich
Subject: Request to Add Agenda Item to Council Meeting of June 1, 2010

Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 2.03.070 [B], the City Councilmembers signing below request that the attached agenda item (due in the City Clerk Department by Friday, 12:00 Noon) be placed on the City Council agenda under New Business via the supplemental agenda.

Subject: Request a resolution expressing support for preserving funding for services provided by the Guidance Center

Recommendation

Approve request for the City Attorney to draft a resolution expressing support for the Guidance Center and calling upon the Southern California State and Federal Legislative Delegation to support efforts to preserve funding for services provided by the Guidance Center. We would also like to direct the City Manager to communicate the City's desire to preserve funding for the Guidance Center to our legislative delegation.

Council District	Authorizing Councilmember	Signed by
7	Tonia Reyes Uranga	See Agenda Item
5	Gerrie Schipske	See Agenda Item
8	Rae Gabelich	See Agenda Item