CITY OF
LONG BEACH

Memorandum

Date: August 31, 2020

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager

From: John Gross, Director of Financial Management

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Response to Questions from the August 18, 2020 City Council Budget Hearing**

During the Budget Hearing held on August 18, 2020, the Public Works, Library Services and Police Departments provided presentations on their Departments' Proposed FY 21 Budgets. This memorandum provides responses to questions raised by members of the City Council during that time that were not fully addressed on the floor or need further clarification.

1. **Please further describe how the Public Health Professional positions or grant funded positions in Library Services will be used, particularly during the pandemic.**

   The Library Services Department's (Library) six-month Social Work Pilot Program ended with the beginning of the pandemic in March. During the pilot, the Library stationed two graduate student Master of Social Work (MSW) interns, overseen by Health and Human Services Department Public Health Professionals (PHPs), at the Billie Jean King Main Library and Mark Twain Neighborhood Library. The MSW interns connected people to much needed social services such as food security assistance, housing assistance, employment assistance and substance abuse rehabilitation. In some cases, the MSW interns also assisted Library staff with deescalating problematic patron situations and processing potentially traumatic patron interactions. Ultimately, the interns helped bridge the gap and build trust with people experiencing homelessness and mental illness in a way that goes beyond what Library staff are able to traditionally offer within their job classification. While the interns did not engage in direct case management, they provided a level of public health expertise that is greatly needed in today's urban libraries to assist those most vulnerable in our Long Beach community. See Attachment for the Library's Social Work Pilot Program key findings.

   The implementation of PHPs in the libraries is not recommended during the pandemic mainly due to Library closures. The Library intends to continue offering this service when grant funding, in partnership with the Health and Human Services Department, is made available and live/in-person library services are deemed safe to resume, as human contact/interaction is essential for this type of service. When and if this program can continue, the MSWs will conduct direct intervention with persons experiencing mental health and housing and substance abuse challenges, many of whom regularly attend the libraries.

2. **How does the loss of JetBlue fines/revenue impact Library's funding?**

   The Long Beach Public Library Foundation receives annual revenue, through a consent decree, from JetBlue for fines issued to JetBlue for violating the City's noise ordinance.

The revenue received is not structurally budgeted, as the amount each year has been unpredictable, and funding is not guaranteed. Therefore, the Library does not rely on this funding for structural services. JetBlue fines have supplemented the Library's structural $677,000 book and online materials budget. The current materials budget is about a quarter of what it ideally would be for a city the size of Long Beach, and so the funds received from JetBlue have been an important source of supplemental funding. While it is good the violations are no longer occurring, the loss of these funds will result in less book and online materials purchased for Library patrons. It may also limit the number of eBooks and Audiobooks for patrons to check out and place on hold at once.

3. **Please further describe changes to the Air Support Program in the Police Department and fuel and maintenance costs. Should we look at smaller helicopters and reduction on fuel?**

   The anticipated FY 21 cost to operate the Air Support Unit with six sworn positions (pilots and tactical flights officers) was projected to cost $1.3 million in personnel costs, $164,320 in helicopter fuel costs, and $1.1 million in helicopter maintenance costs, totaling $2.6 million annually. The Police Department operates 2 helicopters and 520 flight hours per unit, totaling 1,040 total flight hours per year. The Air Support Unit provides approximately 2.8 hours of flight time per day, which can fluctuate based on daily field activity. The FY 21 Budget proposes staffing the Air Support Unit with two civilian pilots instead of six sworn positions and supplementing special detail budgeted officers to fulfill Tactical Flight Officer duties.

   The Department is currently researching alternative options for smaller helicopters and will conduct a feasibility study.

4. **Were the Mental Health Evaluation Teams (MET) and other homeless services in other departments supposed to be transferred to the Health Department?**

   As part of the budget development process, various operational changes were evaluated to assess for any improvements, efficiencies, and cost savings. As part of this effort, the City's two HEART team units are being restructured from the use of sworn firefighter to civilian positions in the Health Department. The restructured HEART team will be staffed with the addition of three civilian positions along with one grant-funded Public Health Nurse position. Additionally, the Health Department is currently hiring an Everyone Home Plan Coordinator who will focus on equity in homeless service and housing access.

   Staff does not recommend that all homeless-related services be centralized and reallocated to the Health Department. For example, the Quality of Life (QoL) teams and Mental Health Evaluation Teams (MET) are staffed by sworn Police Officers, and are recommended to stay in the Police Department, with continued coordinated work with the Health Department as part of a citywide outreach team addressing homelessness issues. Additional study on how best respond to various calls for service to address homelessness and mental health issues is underway and the City intends to continue efforts to have a multi-departmental approach to homelessness centered around response coordination from the Health Department.

5. **Are there Mental Health Services Act funds from the County that we can get?**

   The City does not directly receive Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funds, but does receive significant services from these funds. Those funds are received by Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH), and they serve the City of Long Beach by providing direct services and funding organizations across the City to provide mental health services for different populations. In addition, DMH co-locates a person at the Multi-Service Center for the Homeless (MSC) one day per week; funds the mental health support for the MET team; provides mental health support to the QoL teams; and funds an SB 82 team (psychiatric mobile response and field based triage team for people with serious and persistent mental illness), and Full Service Partnership beds to serve homeless individuals in Long Beach who have severe mental illness. DMH also funds the Behavioral Health Urgent Care Center (BHUCC) located on Long Beach Boulevard, which is open 24 hours a day, 7 days per week to serve people in mental health crisis. The City does not receive a share of mental health dollars specifically; however, the Health Department is on their master agreement list and when specific funding becomes available, the City would be eligible to apply.

6. **Can Police combine Sexual Predator and Warrant Teams? With the current proposal, how will PD continue Sexual Predator monitoring?**

   The Police Department is not planning to combine the Violent Sexual Predator Unit (VSPU) and Warrant Team. Combining the teams does not result in any efficiencies.

   The Department's FY 21 proposal reduces two police officer positions in the VSPU that conduct this work and onboard a civilian Police Investigator Non-Career to work in tandem with two Assistant Administrative Analysts assigned to the Warrant Detail to perform these functions. Due diligence checks of warrants and sex registrant checks will be coordinated by the Warrant Detail Sergeant using existing patrol resources.

7. **Are we cutting K-9 service dogs in the Police Department?**

   The Patrol K-9 Detail is currently budgeted with 10 sworn positions of which 9 police officers and corporals who may be assigned a maximum 2 service dogs, totaling 18 patrol service dogs. The proposed reduction would decrease the Patrol K9 Detail to 5 officers and 1 corporal position, allowing for maximum operation of 12 service dogs, which represents a 25 percent reduction.

   Any K-9 Officer who retires, promotes to another rank, or is assigned to a non-K-9 function will have their service dogs reassigned to another patrol K-9 handler or have the service dog separated from LBPD K-9 service, depending on the age of the canine. LBPD's current K9 staffing includes 1 police officer vacancy and 8 filled police officer positions who operate 15 service dogs. One police officer is a candidate to promote to a higher rank and their 2 service dogs can be reassigned to the K-9 sergeant who oversees the detail. The third position reduction would result in reassigning the most junior officer to a non-K-9 function. This employee operates one service dog that would be returned to the K-9 Officers Association, a nonprofit organization that purchases and donates service dogs to the LBPD.

8. **What are we doing to fill vacancies in Public Works Department, particularly in the Clean Team?**

   Due to the pandemic, the Public Works Department has been working hard to minimize the impacts caused by the pandemic. During the pandemic, refuse service requests increased dramatically and some refuse routes saw a 25 percent increase in refuse collected, including dumped items and special requests. Along with these issues, staff have also been advised to stay at home when sick to prevent the spread of COVID-19, thus creating a shortage of team members available to perform the required refuse collection.

   The Environmental Services Bureau (ESB) has three Refuse Operators going through the hiring process right now and is also conducting weekly interviews to fill other vacant Refuse Operator positions in both the residential/commercial side and the Clean Team. In total, the Clean Team Division has approximately 26 vacant positions, including Refuse Operator, Motor Sweeper Operator, and Parking Control Checker. Due to the City's fiscal situation, certain positions are being held vacant to accommodate for potential layoffs. Hiring will resume right after budget adoption and placement of potentially affected employees. Finally, the Department just completed a second round of interviews for a Refuse Superintendent and will be making a recommendation to the Director to fill that position this week. In addition, the Department is working with Civil Service to prioritize job classifications that do not have active lists.

9. **What do other cities do with civilianizing police positions and how does it work there?**

   The proposal to civilianize certain police functions is based on research from other cities. For example, the proposal to utilize Community Services Assistants is a model that is used in neighboring cities such as Lakewood, Cerritos and Downey, which supplement Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD) sworn services. Several police departments and sheriff departments also use civilian helicopter pilots combined with sworn tactical flight officers as a cost-effective measure to operate Air Support programs. The Baltimore City Police Department was a leader in converting sworn positions to analyst positions, which is also part of the proposed FY 21 Police Department plan. Large agencies such as the City of San Francisco and the Department of Justice have prepared multiple studies and initiatives to civilianize the police workforce. It is important to note that civilianization specific to Long Beach Police Department operations will require implementation planning and coordination with the Civil Service and Human Resources Departments to onboard and hire within these new civilian classifications.

10. **What happened with adding Bike Officers in the FY 19 budget and how were Measure A funds involved?**

    In the Adopted FY 19 Budget, the City Council requested that staff identify offsetting revenue to fund a Community Rapid Response Bike Team of six new police officers, as well as funding for Fire Engine 17. At the end of deliberation, the City Council approved one-time Measure A funds to operate Engine 17 on overtime for two years and the six

police officers in the Community Rapid Response Bike Team were never added to the budget, as there were no available funding sources.

11. How many Quality of Life Officers do we have?

There is a total of seven Quality of Life Police Officers. There are four assigned to each division, plus two assigned and funded by the Los Angeles Metro contract. A seventh Officer is assigned to the Multi-Service Center and is funded by a County grant via the Health and Human Services Department.

If you have any questions, please contact Budget Manager Grace H. Yoon at (562) 570-6408.

ATTACHMENT

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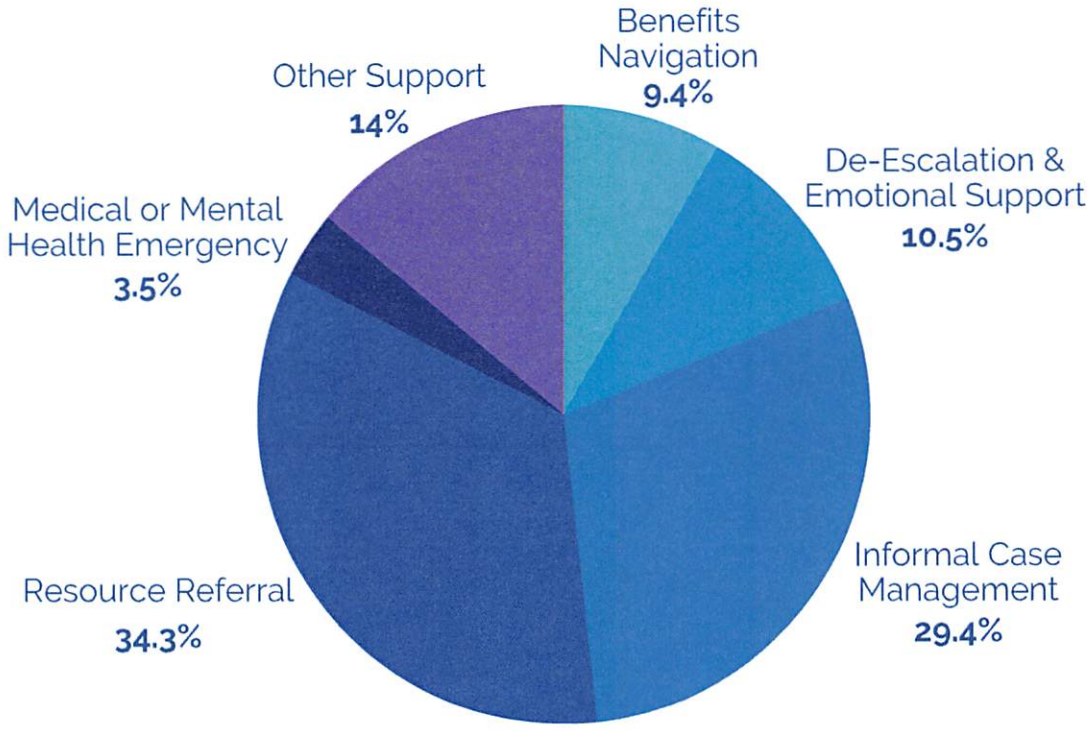
PUBLIC LIBRARY

SOCIAL WORK PILOT PROGRAM KEY FINDINGS

143
PATRON INTERACTIONS

From September 11, 2019 to March 4, 2020, Social Work Interns have had 143 interactions resulting in library patrons receiving one or more types of support and referrals.

TYPES OF PATRON INTERACTIONS



LIBRARY STAFF TESTIMONIALS

"Librarians are not...social workers. Having a social worker in the library has helped **bridge that gap** and allows us to **better serve the people** that come in to the library."

"I have noticed patrons being a lot more **comfortable asking for help** and feeling more **excited to utilize the resources** that are being provided to them."

"There is a bit of **calmness** that comes with having our intern here **providing information and conversation** with both patrons and staff."

42%

OF PATRONS RETURNED FOR HELP

Close to one-half of the patrons who received help from a Social Work Intern came back to the library one or more times for additional support.

PATRON TESTIMONIALS

"The first time I came to the library, I was **feeling pretty stressed**. The Social Work Intern could tell, and she asked if I needed anything. **She sat with me for close to an hour just listening.** Since then she's helped me apply for CalFresh, Medi-Cal, and helped with housing."

"I came to the library to file for unemployment. The Social Work Intern not only helped me with that, but she also **offered me resources** for utility assistance and benefits. **I am so grateful** that I came to the right library and found someone who was so **supportive and patient**."

MOST COMMON REFERRAL TYPES

Housing
50%

Mental Health
21%

Employment
19%

LIBRARY STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

(N=28)

100% agree or strongly agree that the pilot has had a positive effect on library patrons.

93% agree or strongly agree that the pilot has had a positive effect on their work life.

97% agree or strongly agree that Social Work Interns should continue to be placed at the library.

The Long Beach Public Library Social Work Pilot is a collaboration between the Long Beach Public Library and the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services. The program is part of the Trauma- and Resiliency-Informed Long Beach initiative, which aims to promote healing and wellbeing in communities impacted by persistent trauma.

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HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES