

County of Santa Clara

Office of the County Executive



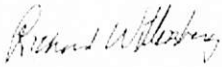
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DATE: June 10, 2002

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: 
Richard Wittenberg
County Executive

SUBJECT: Revisions to FY03 Recommended Budget – Office of Human Relations

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Consider recommendations relating to revisions to the FY03 Recommended Budget for the Office of Human Relations under the County Executive Office (BU 107) related to the Youth Advisory Task Force Program and the Dispute Resolution Program Services.

Possible actions:

- a. Reduce General Fund revenues and reimbursements to be offset with expenditure reductions totaling \$89,500 in the Office of Human Relations budget (Index 5700), which includes the elimination of all staff and fiscal support for the Youth Advisory

Task Force Program.

- b. Delete 1.0 FTE Human Relations Coordinator I (B18, filled) which serves as the Youth Advisory Task Force Program Coordinator in the Office of Human Relations (BU 107), to be included in the final salary ordinance amendment to be considered by the Board of Supervisors on June 14, 2002.

It should be noted that a separate referral for \$66,500 in one-time funds for the Youth Advisory Task Force program has been forwarded from the Health and Hospital Committee to the Budget Inventory without a recommendation.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no net fiscal impact to the General Fund. The proposed actions are in response to recent revisions to the estimated revenues and reimbursements included in the FY03 Recommended Budget for the Office of Human Relations (OHR). These revisions include a reduction of revenues from the District Attorney Office's Alternative Dispute Resolution Trust Fund in the amount of \$30,000, and the expected recommendation for zero funding to be proposed by the Public Health Department's Violence Prevention Program for the Youth Advisory Task Force (YATF) Program, which was originally estimated at \$59,500. These revisions will result in a total revenue/ reimbursement shortfall of \$89,500 in the FY03 Recommended Budget.

As a result of these revisions, OHR has no choice but to eliminate all staff and fiscal support for the YATF Program in order to offset the direct loss of revenues/reimbursements that is currently included in their budget. The proposed actions will delete 1.0 FTE Human Relations Coordinator I position (filled) valued at \$56,162 that serves as the YATF Program Coordinator. In addition, the proposed actions will reduce Object 2 Services & Supplies appropriations by \$33,388 for the balance of the shortfall. The Object 2 reductions will include elimination of the mini grant funding to various community groups and other support costs under the YATF Program, as well as reducing training, education, conference, and other support costs for the Dispute Resolution Program Services.

These proposed reductions will fully offset the projected revenue/reimbursement shortfall, resulting in no net fiscal impact to the General Fund. If the Board elects to approve the Budget Inventory request for the YATF program, the position and related support costs can be maintained for another year.

CONTRACT HISTORY

Not applicable.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

When the contract positions in the YATF Program (1.0 FTE) and the Dispute Resolution Program Services (3.5 FTE's) were converted to permanent coded positions in FY02, the costs for these grant funded positions became a part of the FY03 base budget. Consequently, the associated grant funding that supports these positions were also assumed to be ongoing as well under County budget policy, despite the fact that both programs were subject to a new Request For Proposal (RFP) process for FY03 funding. Unfortunately, the RFP process for both programs did not occur until the month of May, after the FY03 Recommended Budget was developed and presented to the Board.

For the YATF program, OHR was notified in late May that their proposal did not receive a high enough ranking by the evaluation committee and was therefore being recommended for no funding in FY03. The Violence Prevention Task Group is scheduled to meet later this month to review the committee's recommendations and could still change the final recommendations to the Board for allocation of Violence Prevention Program funding. However, those recommendations are not expected to be presented to the Board until August or September. The FY03 Recommended Budget did anticipate continued funding for the YATF program and included \$59,500 in budgeted reimbursement from the Violence Prevention Program. Although the funding decision has not been finalized, the assumption is that the funding will not be available.

OHR was also notified in late May that the RFP evaluation committee for the District Attorney Office is recommending an award of \$170,000 to the Dispute Resolution Program Services for FY03. This award is a reduction compared to the estimated amount of \$200,000 included in the FY03 Recommended Budget that was based on the current year award. The reduced award is primarily due to an overall decrease in the total amount of funds available in the Alternative Dispute Resolution Trust Fund for allocation next fiscal year.

As a result of these recent revised estimates, the FY03 Recommended Budget for the Office of Human Relations has a projected total revenue/reimbursement shortfall of \$89,500.

In order to not exacerberate the County's current deficit situation, OHR has been directed to identify expenditure reductions that will offset the projected revenue shortfall. Since these grant sources are specific to the YATF Program and to the Dispute Resolution Program Services, OHR has developed reduction proposals that are tied directly to the reduction or loss

of funding.

Service Impacts

With the proposed elimination of all support for the YATF Program, there will be no staff available to coordinate, recruit, and lead the Youth Task Force in further developing the program and providing advice to the Board of Supervisors on youth related issues. The elimination of the funding support for the mini grants will also reduce the opportunities that are currently provided to youth through various community and school organizations. These opportunities include a Neighborhood Project which teaches youth how to get to know their neighbors and community better, a Future Business Leaders of America project which provides funding for youths to participate in a state leadership competition and conference, and a Martin Luther King, Jr. "Stop the Violence" rally at Evergreen College which provides youth with opportunities to reconnect with community service organizations and businesses to help promote non-violent lifestyles.

For the Dispute Resolution Program Services, the reduction in Object 2 support will result in major reductions to the conference, education, and training opportunities that has previously been available to the staff and the many volunteer mediators and interns that are important to the success of the program. However, these reductions are not expected to have any significant impact on the current level of mediation services provided beyond the deletion of the half-time position that is already included in the FY03 Recommended Budget.

BACKGROUND

Youth Advisory Task Force (YATF) Program

The Youth Advisory Task Force was established in 1999 at the request of the Board of Supervisors to involve youth from all areas of the county to help develop solutions to youth problems. The Task Force currently consists of approximately 18-20 participating youth. The program has been funded through the Public Health Department's Violence Prevention Plan over the past two fiscal years. The first year allocation provided full funding for contract coordinator services and support costs to further develop and implement the YATF Program. In addition, the allocation included funding for mini grants to be made available to community groups who work effectively with youth.

For FY02, the Board approved converting the contract position to a permanent Human

Relations Coordinator I position in order to improve the recruitment opportunities and ensure better retention of qualified candidates for the position. The permanent position would also help to provide better consistency, coordination, and effectiveness of the program. The total FY03 projected costs of the YATF program is estimated at \$66,500, which includes the position, the mini grant funding, and other program support costs. The FY03 Recommended Budget had anticipated continued funding from the Violence Prevention Program in the amount of \$59,500.

Dispute Resolution Program (DRP)

This program has been in existence since 1977 and has grown to become one of the most effective and comprehensive dispute resolution programs in the state. The program provides valuable dispute resolution training, education outreach, and direct mediation services through an extensive network of trained volunteer mediators. The program coordinates with a variety of community and government organizations and serves a variety of dispute resolution needs in the County. These include dispute resolution training and education outreach in the schools, mediation services for the community, small businesses, and Small Claims Court, referrals from the courts and the District Attorney Office, and collaboration with the Probation Department for victim offender mediation services, all of which have proven to save significant dollars for County and Court services that may otherwise be needed.

Currently, the staffing for this program includes 6.5 FTE positions at an annual cost of approximately \$518,000, excluding support services and other overhead costs. Three and a half of these positions were converted from contract services during the last budget hearing. Deletion of a vacant half-time Human Relations Coordinator I/II position valued at about \$37,000 has been included in the FY03 Recommended Budget as part of the County Executive Office's proposal to meet its budget reduction target. The program is funded from a combination of Alternative Dispute Resolution Trust Fund dollars that are generated from court filing fees (\$202,000 for FY02), and from the General Fund for the balance of the program costs.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

The FY03 Recommended Budget will not reflect the latest revised revenue and reimbursement estimates for the Office of Human Relations budget resulting in an overstatement of projected available resources.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

OBA will incorporate the revisions into the Final Approved Budget and into the Salary Ordinance Amendment reflecting all of the position changes that the Board has approved.