



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 19, 2019

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

DOCKET TITLE:

Consideration of the Release of \$62,600 from Contingent Reserves for the Department of Community and Human Services for the Expansion of Nutrition Assistance Services for Low-Income Residents at Farmers' Markets During FY 2020.

ISSUE: Consideration of the release of \$62,600 from Contingent Reserves for the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) to support Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) outreach and expansion of the Double Dollars program to include the Southern Towers Farmer's Market during FY 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That City Council:

- 1) Approve the release of \$62,600 from the FY 2020 Contingent Reserves to DCHS for SNAP outreach and expansion of the SNAP Double Dollars Program at the Southern Towers Farmer's Market;
- 2) Authorize the increase of the 0.4 FTE to 1.0 FTE (SNAP EBT Coordinator, grade 15) and the addition of a temporary staff (Community Services Specialist, grade 12) to increase capacity for SNAP Outreach and to support the expansion of the Double Dollars Program; and
- 3) Authorize the City Manager to take the necessary actions to implement the recommendations.

BACKGROUND: Through the approval process for the City's FY 2020 Budget, City Council set aside \$62,600 in Contingent Reserves for SNAP outreach and the expansion of the Double Dollars program. The release of these funds required staff to ascertain the operations at Southern Towers, the potential to implement the Double Dollars program and increase the opportunity for additional market vendors at the Southern Towers' market and determine the staffing needs.

DISCUSSION: DCHS staff conducted a series of meetings with a vendor, Farmers Market, Community Food

Works, and Southern Towers management. Additionally, staff gathered information regarding - (1) the process for securing additional vendors, and (2) the types of currency for ease of use in the incentive transactions.

The Southern Towers Farmers Market has served the community since 2013 and has one vendor, Farmers Market, who takes pride in the variety of produce offered and is committed to educating customers on the benefits of healthy eating. The market is open year-round on both Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to dark. The vendor is interested in partnering with the City to participate in the SNAP incentive program.

Community Food Works is the fiscal agent for the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive program (FINI), a federal program that incentivizes the purchase of fruits and vegetables by SNAP recipients. Currently, the City receives up to \$14,000 to operate the program at Old Town Farmer’s Market. Expanding to the Southern Towers market aligns with the mission of Community Food Works to increase access to fresh and healthy food for underserved populations while creating opportunities for local farmers. Thus, Community Food Works will increase the City’s FY 2020 award by \$2,000 to serve an additional market.

Southern Towers owners have an agreement in place, permitting the current vendor to operate the market in the western parking lot of the premises. Also, the management company, Bell Partners, is enthusiastic about partnering with the City to increase food security and healthy choices for its residents and improving the operations at the market. Bell Partners believes that the City’s collaboration in the market operations will solidify the owners’ commitment to continue and expand the market.

To increase the SNAP outreach and expand the Southern Towers Farmer’s Market, it is necessary to increase staff capacity. The SNAP Coordinator position will increase from a 0.4 FTE to 1.0 FTE. The SNAP Coordinator would continue to operate the SNAP incentive program at Old Town Farmer’s Market; increase SNAP outreach to reach more potentially eligible residents; recruit and coordinate volunteers for the Old Town and Southern Towers markets; manage the FINI grant; supervise the temporary staff for the Southern Towers Market; and raise additional funds for the Double Dollars program. The temporary staff will operate the SNAP incentive program at Southern Towers; recruit market vendors; supervise volunteers; and establish a food gleaning program.

Increasing city-wide SNAP outreach and expanding and providing the Double Dollars program at the Southern Towers market will increase food security and offer SNAP recipients healthy food options.

Metrics to determine the efficacy of this initiative will be compiled and reported out quarterly to the City Manager and to City Council.

FISCAL IMPACT: The \$62,600 in funding from Contingent Reserves will enable DCHS to increase staffing, add funds to the incentive program, and purchase necessary items through FY 2020.

Budget \$62,600	Expenses
Increase 0.4 FTE to 1.0 FTE	\$46,000

Hire Temporary Staff	\$13,000
Double Dollar Match Funds	\$2,410
Tokens (7,000)	\$1,190
Total Expenditures	\$62,600

ATTACHMENTS:

None

STAFF:

Debra R. Collins, Deputy City Manager

Kate Garvey, Department Director, Department of Community & Human Services (DCHS)

Morgan Routt, Director, Office of Management & Budget

Lesa Gilbert, Director, Center for Economic Support, DCHS

Raphael Obenwa, Chief Fiscal Officer III, DCHS