



City of Largo Agenda Item 2

Meeting Date
06/12/18

Presenter: Matthew Anderson, Housing Manager

Department: CD – Community Development

TITLE:

FUNDING FOR PINELLAS COUNTY HOMELESS LEADERSHIP BOARD

The Community Development Department and the Community Development Advisory Board recommend \$10,000 for funding from the General Fund in FY 2019 for the Pinellas Homeless Leadership Board (HLB) as part of the FY 2018-2019 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Action Plan review. This Work Session item will include a discussion on the reason for the request. Susan Myers, CEO of the Pinellas County Homeless Leadership Board will provide an update on their initiatives and how these initiatives benefit Largo.

For the past several years, the City has supported the HLB through the CDBG Program. Recent changes in the CDBG program have made it increasingly difficult to conform the services provided by the Homeless Leadership Board into eligibility and reporting requirements for CDBG. For this reason, Pinellas County and the Cities of Clearwater, Pinellas Park and Tarpon Springs contribute to the Pinellas County Homeless Leadership Board administration through their General Funds.

The HLB serves as the federally-designated Continuum of Care (CoC), which is the lead agency for homeless service coordination and delivery in Pinellas County. Rather than providing a host of services directly, the HLB works with a network of homeless and related agencies to achieve the goal of making homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring. As the CoC lead agency, the HLB applies for and distributes approximately \$5 million annually from federal and non-federal resources to homeless shelters, rapid re-housing, transitional housing, and homeless prevention programs. In turn, the agency plans, develops and implements strategies to improve system coordination, effectiveness of resources, and outcomes of the programs supported through this funding and other local funding sources. The oversight and coordination provided through the HLB is critical to addressing homelessness.

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Budgeted Amount: \$0.00 **Budget Page No(s):** N/A **Available Amount:** \$0.00 **Expenditure Amount:** \$0.00

Additional Budgetary Information: Proposed \$10,000 in General Fund for FY 2019 Budget (annually)

Funding Source(s): General Fund **Sufficient Funds Available:** Yes No **Budget Amendment Required:** Yes No **Source:** N/A

City Attorney Reviewed: Yes No N/A **Advisory Board Recommendation:** For Against N/A **Consistent With:** Yes No N/A **Not Applicable**

Potential Motion/Direction Requested: DOES THE CITY COMMISSION SUPPORT FUNDING FOR THE HOMELESS LEADERSHIP BOARD OF \$10,000 FROM THE GENERAL FUND?

Staff Contact: Matthew Anderson, Housing Manager 727.586.7489 maanders@largo.com

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The 2018 homeless Point-in-Time count has not yet released final data. The 2017 Point-in-Time count showed 38 homeless individuals/families reported their last place of residence was in Largo. However, Largo Police and Fire/EMS service call data indicate a higher prevalence of homelessness in Largo and within unincorporated service areas served by these agencies than the Point-in-Time count captured. Homelessness touches many of the City services from the City's parks system, the library, housing programs and emergency services. In 2016, police responded to 2,179 homeless-related calls in Largo and the Largo Fire Department responded to 583 calls to Safe Harbor emergency shelter in the unincorporated Largo Fire District. Although calls do not translate into a non-duplicated count of homeless people served, the data indicates that homelessness is a community issue that impacts the City.

HLB services provided to the homeless population in Largo include, but are not limited to:

- *Coordinated Entry:* Interviewing and collecting data on homeless individuals; prioritizing them for housing based on their vulnerability levels and type of housing best suited to them; and pairing the homeless individuals and families with the appropriate provider to stabilize them and help them obtain permanent housing.
- *Provision of Cold Night Shelters:* The HLB organizes and facilitates the cold night shelters throughout Pinellas County when the temperature drops below 40 degrees.
- *Point-in-Time Count:* This annual census of the street homeless population not only provides data on the number of homeless, but it also provides indicators of the causes of homelessness. This information is important to help develop homeless prevention strategies.
- *Rapid Re-Housing/Transitional Housing/Shelters:* Although Largo does not have shelters in the City, the agency applies for funding that helps support such facilities used by Largo's homeless population. The new rapid re-housing initiative, funded through Pinellas County and St. Petersburg General Funds, is pairing housing locators and case managers together with homeless individuals and families to get them stabilized in permanent housing. These programs are utilized countywide, regardless of the place where the homeless clients last resided.

Requested funding from Largo would be used toward the costs of managing the Coordinated Entry System, the provision of cold night shelters, and costs associated with the Point-in-Time Count.

Next year's initiatives by the HLB will focus upon:

- Rapid Re-Housing (continue to focus on making homelessness brief and non-recurring);
- Homeless Prevention (implement/improve system-wide programs to prevent homelessness before it occurs); and
- Family Bridge Housing (provide safe locations from the day/night a family becomes homeless to when they can be placed back in permanent housing).

The services that the HLB provides and the funding they are able to leverage to support homeless initiatives not only impacts Largo emergency services, but also provides a support system for Largo residents if they are faced with homelessness.

The request for funding is recommended as an annual allocation, subject to funding availability, to support the countywide goal to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring. The Community Development Advisory Board supported funding \$10,000 from the General Fund at its March 26, 2018 meeting as part of their overall review of subrecipient applications included in the Annual Action Plan. If their funding is provided, the HLB would provide Largo with quarterly and annual performance reports on the overall CoC outcomes.