



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Inter-Departmental Correspondence
County Manager

Date: September 28, 2015

Board Meeting Date: October 6, 2015

Special Notice / Hearing: None

Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Peggy Jensen, Deputy County Manager

Subject: Supplemental Funding for the PCRC Landlord/Tenant Mediation

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve an allocation of \$20,000 in Measure A funds to increase the County contract with the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center (PCRC) to provide enhanced outreach for the landlord and tenant component of the PCRC community mediation program.

BACKGROUND:

At the August 4, 2015 Board meeting, staff proposed using \$50,000 in Measure A funds to augment the County contract with the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center (PCRC) for enhanced mediation services for landlord and tenant disputes not related to rent increases. At that meeting, your Board asked for additional information on the PCRC program.

DISCUSSION:

PCRC provides community mediation services to all San Mateo County residents. Mediation is available for conflicts between neighbors, landlords and tenants, families, consumers and businesses, work associates and other issues in the community. The County and 12 cities contract with PCRC to provide mediation services at a reduced cost to their residents.

When a person in a dispute contacts PCRC, they receive an orientation to mediation. If the person decides to proceed with mediation, PCRC contacts the other party. If both parties are willing, trained mediators conduct a 2 to 3 hour mediation session held in a neutral location. If mediation is not held, PCRC may refer the individual to other agencies or services for assistance.

In FY 2014/15, PCRC opened 150 community mediation cases for residents of contract jurisdictions. Of the 150 cases, 56, or just over 35% were neighbor disputes. The second largest category was family disputes with 33, followed by 22 landlord and tenant conflicts. The balance of the mediation inquiries were business/consumer disputes and community issues.

Of the 22 landlord and tenant cases last fiscal year, six, just under 30%, went to mediation. All cases that were mediated reached some type of agreement. In the other 16 landlord/tenant cases, the “other parties” declined to participate in mediation or did not respond to calls from PCRC

Given the low number of requests for landlord and tenant mediations, staff proposes to increase the County PCRC contract by \$20,000 to publicize this service the rest of this fiscal year. If the publicity generates additional requests for mediation and an increased number of cases proceed to mediation, then supplemental funds will be requested in the FY 2016/17 budget.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Board of Supervisors approved \$11.5 million in Measure A funds for Affordable Housing projects in the preliminary budget. At this time, the unallocated balance is \$50,000. The recommendation is to allocate \$20,000 to a contract with PCRC and hold the rest of the funds as a reserve for either expansion of the PCRC contract next fiscal year or other projects selected by the Board.