

## Department of Community Services CBAC

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TO: Chair Deborah Kafoury and County Board of Commissioners (3) pages

FROM: Department of Community Services (DCS) CBAC

DATE: 4/3/2019

SUBJECT: Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) Report & Recommendations

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Department of Community Services (DCS) Community Budget Advisory Committee (CBAC) has identified three funding priorities from among the out-of-target program offers. In addition, the CBAC provides comments on emerging issues and budget considerations for future discussions. As we addressed these requests and offers we also identified several overriding concerns we will also present as recommendations at the end of this report. We believe that transparency and public feedback could result in additional support for County programs and a better understanding of what should be prioritized. The professionals working in the DCS programs are clearly dedicated and hardworking people and we appreciate all they have done for our communities.

### **PROCESS**

In order to evaluate the specific budget actions for FY 2020, the DCS staff planned and organized several information sessions so that members could engage with department staff to discuss the broader organizational needs and functions of the department's programs. The Director and Deputy Director of the DCS presented a broad overview, and this was followed-up with information sessions with Land Use Planning, Transportation, Animal Services, and Elections. Department Directors provided written and formal presentations explaining department operations, budgets, goals, needs and budget requests. Presentations were augmented by onsite tours of Animal Services and Elections facilities. Following these, CBAC members debated the merits of each proposal and developed prioritized recommendations. DCS staff were available to clarify issues, answer questions, and provide technical, logistic, and clerical support.

After meetings with all key department leadership, we developed criteria to use while evaluating program offers. Criteria for evaluating program offers include:

1. Prioritize the services that benefit the most and broadest array of community members

# (Department) CBAC

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2. Strive for stability in how financials revenues are managed and reinvested back into the departments providing public services
3. Support the physical infrastructure of county operations
4. Engaging with the wider community on a long-term plan to be financially sustainable and responsive

## EMERGING ISSUES & CHANGES

Revenue came to be an emerging (and growing) issue for this committee starting with the Budget Office CBAC Orientation Presentation, presented by Mike Jaspin, County Budget Director. Director Jaspin painted a bleak picture; the immediate need to trim two percent (2%) from the coming year's budget, further constraints in years to come, and no accommodations for new needs, expanding service expectations, growing population, or increased social service demands. Employing a narrow view of the CBAC process we could ignore this as none of our business, beyond the purview of our committee, presume our departments will somehow tighten their belts year after year, seeking efficiency in some areas, shifting and dividing resources. However, the questions emerged: what is the plan to increase revenue? Or at the very least, at what point does the County establish a responsible minimum expectation of service?

With regards to revenue we discussed what options were not currently on the table. First, revenue may be increased through expanded use of extant fees, fines, and other charges. Second, enhancing public confidence in Multnomah County government in general such that proposals for new income streams, bond measures, taxes, etc. will be judged worthy and appropriate. Crucially, this support must be earned from the public at large, not just current service consumers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

We acknowledge there needs to be a balance between looking at progressive opportunities and maintaining the foundational need of ensuring services are provided to the public, and we know that this creates a tension will continue to reveal itself. How the County establishes a responsible minimum expectation of service delivery as well as expanding to meet new needs continues to be a critical issue, with constrained revenue.

Our specific budget recommendations are as follows, in priority order:

- 1. 91010B-20 Elections Strategic Plan **\$150,000****

Elections are integral to the integrity of any democracy. Multnomah County Elections department faces growing challenges from burgeoning voter rolls, an increasingly diverse and diffuse electorate, and expanding security needs. Preparing to meet these numerous challenges will call for an integrated long-term view of department resources and needs.

## (Department) CBAC

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### **2. 91006B-20 Animal Services Field Services Animal Control Officer \$88,325**

We recommend funding this program offer from Animal Services. The Animal Control Officer position as a public health and safety officer provides positive visibility and public service to all in the county.

### **3. 91005B-20 Animal Services Field Services License Compliance \$80,454**

We also recommend funding the Animal Services License Compliances Services position not only for the health and protection of the animals in Multnomah County but simultaneously a position that supports the general fund outside of direct taxes.

#### **OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:**

##### **Equity and Organizational Culture Manager**

Ensuring equity and diversity in the workplace and in delivery of services is a responsibility shared by each county department and employee. As we evaluated our spending priorities for this fiscal year, we focused on expenditures for services that by their very nature provide DCS employees the opportunity to deliver and share a work ethic that includes, supports and provides opportunities for all employees. We feel that a county-wide diversity program is best an expenditure from the county general fund, rather than just dependent on DCS cutting their public services to find enough funds for the position.

Several departments within DCS generate revenue through fees for the department's services. We feel that the county might consider a cost recovery ratio policy for these departments that would serve to incentivize proper fee levels and collection, maintain affordability, and improve public services that charge fees.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS –**

Tom Hansell, Manager of Business Services

Kim Peoples, Director of DCS

Jamie Waltz, Deputy Director of DCS

Jackie Rose, Director of Animal Services

Ian B. Cannon, P.E., Transportation Director and County Engineer

Michael Cerbone, AICP, Planning Director

Tim Scott, Director of Elections

Ben Duncan, Director of Office of Equity and Diversity

**ADDENDUM** - No supporting materials or references are attached