



Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Meeting Date: December 20, 2011

Prepared By/Phone Number: Melissa Velasquez, Judge's Office, x49555

Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head: Samuel T. Biscoe, County Judge

Commissioners Court Sponsor: Samuel T. Biscoe, County Judge

AGENDA LANGUAGE:

Consider and take appropriate action regarding Interlocal agreement with Clean Air Force.

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:

Travis County's agreement with Clean Air Force was not funded during the FY12 budget process. Clean Air Force has sent Travis County an invoice for FY12 to provide services.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

Should the Court choose to receive services from Clean Air Force, an amendment to the interlocal agreement, PS980170JJ will need to be approved.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

n/a

FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Contract amount is \$10,000 annually. There is no funding for this agreement; it was not included in TNR's target budget for FY12.

Cc: Sydnie Crosbie, TNR
David Walch, Purchasing
Adele Noel, TNR

AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE: All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to Cheryl Aker in the County Judge's office, Cheryl.Aker@co.travis.tx.us by **Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m.** for the next week's meeting.

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COUNTY JUDGE'S OFFICE

November 23, 2011

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County Judge Samuel T. Biscoe
314 W. 11th St., #520
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Judge Biscoe:

I have recently learned that the Travis County Commissioners Court eliminated funding for the CLEAN AIR Force of Central Texas (CAF) in FY 2012. You may be as surprised as I am that the vote that eliminated funding for the CAF which Travis County has supported financially since 1983 was taken without a Commissioner's Court agenda item that mentioned CAF. Such a process did not give you a chance to make a choice and it also gave no warning to our Board Members, including me, or our staff to answer any questions you might have had about whether to continue funding the CAF.

While this may have been a Travis County staff oversight, this process offered no opportunity for public discussion at a critical time for air quality in our region. As you know, Central Texas is currently on the cusp of exceeding EPA's federal ozone standard of 75 ppb and is in violation of the standard of 70 ppb that will likely be adopted in 2013. Now is not the time to reduce funding to our region's leading public, private non-profit that is actively working to reduce ozone levels across all five counties in Central Texas.

As you are already aware, the CLEAN AIR Force is a 501(c)(3) organization with over 18 years of experience uniting businesses; academic institutions; local and state governments; and health and civic organizations in the common goal of finding workable solutions for improving air quality in the five-county region of Central Texas (Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis and Williamson). Our Board consists of 38 members, public and private, many of whom are air quality experts in their fields, and our mission is to more deeply engage our communities on a larger scale and emphasize the urgency of action needed from Central Texans to protect public health and to avoid designation as a nonattainment area, a stigma that CAF has successfully fought to avoid for 18 years now. It has taken all five counties working together to achieve this on a public and private level. Cutting funding at this critical juncture in our region's air quality future may encourage other counties to reduce their funding, so your budget could have a compound effect on reducing environmental protection in the region.

It should also be noted that despite being the largest contributor to ozone formation in our region, Travis County has been paying much less on a per-capita basis than the other four county governments, and especially so since 2006 when Travis County was, and continues to be, the only county to cut its annual contribution to CAF in half. Although I would note, the City of Austin makes up some of this by being the largest donor of the CAF. The leverage that Travis County gets for its taxpayers from its minimal annual contribution to actively engage with our