



Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Meeting Date: 01/10/12

Prepared By/Phone Number: Caryl Colburn, CES Director, 854-4618

Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head: Roger Jefferies, Justice and Public Safety County Executive, 854-4759

Commissioners Court Sponsor: Judge Biscoe

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. Jefferies", is written over the text of the "Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head" line.

AGENDA LANGUAGE: CONSIDER AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION ON NEXT STEPS FOR THE OFFICE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, SAFE HAVENS - SUPERVISED VISITATION AND SAFE EXCHANGE GRANT:

- A. UTILIZE THE 1101 NUECES ST. BUILDING FOR THE PLANETSAFE SUPERVISED VISITATION AND SAFE EXCHANGE CENTER BY PROJECTED DATE OF MAY, 2012;**
- B. RELOCATE THE COUNSELING AND EDUCATION SERVICES NUECES STAFF TEMPORARILY TO 1010 LAVACA, 2ND FLOOR IN FEBRUARY, 2012;**
- C. DISCUSS FUNDING OPTIONS FOR MOVE AND RENOVATIONS.**

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:

Travis County has successfully applied for and received two Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Grants from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women (OVW). The overall goal of Safe Havens grants is to provide an opportunity for communities to support supervised visitation and the safe exchange of children by and between parents in situations involving domestic violence while also protecting children and adult victims from further trauma or violence. The Counseling and Education Services (CES) department has applied for and administered the grants. Travis County is slightly over one third of the way through its second Safe Havens grant which is for the development and implementation of a supervised visitation and safe exchange center. Following is a summary of what has been accomplished in the planning and development phases and a request to approve implementation of the next steps.

Travis County fulfilled the deliverables of the first OVW award, a Safe Havens Planning Grant of \$200,000 from October, 2008 until September 30, 2010. The FY08 grant's focus was to receive input from the community on planning a supervised visitation and safe exchange center in Travis County. A Collaboration Team of stakeholders was established and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was approved by the

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Commissioners Court and a part-time Grant Director and Office Specialist were hired. Collaboration Team members attended numerous OVW trainings to learn about policies and procedures and how others around the country have implemented their supervision centers. During the FY08 planning grant the team identified past barriers to services through several focus groups of past Kids Exchange clients and determined how to overcome these with the new center. Policies and procedures were written and the broader based Consulting Committee was created to oversee the creation of these, as well as, begin planning for sustainability of the center. SafePlace, the domestic violence and sexual assault center for Travis County and major partner of the grant, was selected by the team to be the agency that will sub-contract with the county to administer the Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Center. In July, 2010 a name was selected for the center, "PlanetSafe". Several sites for the center were also identified and toured by the team including the county building at 1101 Nueces St.

A second Safe Havens Grant was applied for in March of 2010 and received from OVW for \$400,000 over a three-year period from October, 2010 until September 30, 2013. The current award supports a one year development component for a supervised visitation and safe exchange center and a two year implementation component. As with the first grant, there is no financial match required of Travis County.

Several major goals for the three year development and implementation grant are as follows:

Year 1: Oct. 2010 through Sept. 2011

- 1) Travis County to contract with SafePlace as sub-recipient of the Safe Havens grant in order to co-direct the management of the grant during the development phase (first year) and transition into the lead agency by the end of the grant cycle.
- 2) To identify and secure a building and location that meets the safety and occupation standards established by the Collaboration Team.

Year 2: Oct. 2011 through Sept. 2012

- 1) To open the supervised visitation center.
- 2) To implement the referral system and identify gaps by problem solving with staff and Consulting Committee members.
- 3) Create a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with stakeholders for this grant.

Year 3: Oct. 2012 through Sept. 2013

- 1) Add a satellite safe exchange center site(s).
- 2) Transition SafePlace as the sub-contractor for all services.

Staff and the Safe Havens Collaboration Team have completed work on the first year's developmental goals. Once they are approved by the Commissioners Court, we will be ready to move into the implementation phase. The contract for SafePlace to become a sub-recipient of the Travis County Safe Havens Grant has been completed by County Attorney's Office, and is currently being reviewed by Auditors and Purchasing. This contract should be coming before the Court in one to two weeks from the Purchasing Office. Staff recommends the approval of this contract as SafePlace has been working in the capacity of co-directing the developmental phase of this grant.

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Staff and the Safe Havens Collaboration Team has also completed the task of identifying a building and location that meet the safety and occupation standards established by the team. The county building, 1101 Nueces, was identified as the favored site for a temporary location. The Consulting Committee has determined that once established, PlanetSafe will fundraise to purchase/build a permanent center. On-going communication with Facilities Management and the Downtown Central Campus Committee determined that this site would be acceptable as a temporary location, if approved by the Commissioners Court, as there were no future plans for this building for 5 or 6 years. On October 3rd and 4th of 2011, the OVW Safe Havens Program Manager visited Travis County to tour the potential site at 1101 Nueces St. She approved the site whole heartedly, saying it was an excellent location and the building meets all of the structural and safety requirements outlined in the grant from OVW. She also met with Judge Biscoe and the Executive Director of SafePlace.

Clearly, the CES Intake staff, currently located at 1101 Nueces, would have to be re-located before PlanetSafe could inhabit the site. The prime site that CES wants to relocate to is the upstairs of 5501 Airport Blvd. above the rest of the CES department. However, when CES learned from Facilities Management that the build out cost for that space would be \$287,000 of unbudgeted funds, we began looking for alternatives. After several meetings organized by Roger Jefferies, Justice and Public Safety County Executive and input received from other county executives, upper management and the Safe Havens Collaboration Team, several options were vetted.

The option that is being put forth for approval is for the CES Intake staff to move to the 2nd floor of 1010 Lavaca where HRMD used to be located. Facilities has approved this move as the space is vacant with no immediate plans for occupancy. It will meet the needs of the department and the relocation to this space will not be costly to the county. CES and Facilities Management can then request the needed funding for the permanent move to the Airport location in the FY13 budget cycle and go forth accordingly.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) Court approval of the use of the 1101 Nueces St. facility for the PlanetSafe Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Center by the projected startup date of May, 2012.
- 2) Approval for the CES Intake unit to be relocated to 1010 Lavaca, 2nd floor, as a temporary site in February or March of 2012 until funding for a permanent move to 5501 Airport can be allocated through the FY13 budget cycle.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES: CES will contact all referral sources, including the County Courts, about the move. There should be no issues as it is just being relocated down 11th St. All referral sources were previously contacted about the potential move from Nueces to Airport and of a request going to Commissioners Court. All feedback was supportive, including having the supervised visitation center located at 1101 Nueces. CES has also notified surrounding offices and the Regency Apts. about the PlanetSafe Center being at the Nueces location and have not received any negative feedback. CES has been in contact with Facilities Management and Planning and

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Budget (PBO) on the potential move. Both departments are supportive of the CES move to 1010 Lavaca and the move of PlanetSafe into Nueces.

FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING: The only cost which needs to be requested from the Commissioners Court is the renovation cost for 1101 Nueces for PlanetSafe which Facilities Management has estimated at \$15,000. The implementation of PlanetSafe Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Center will be funded by the Safe Havens grant until Sept. 2013 with SafePlace administering it.

The cost to move CES Intake into the 2nd floor of 1010 Lavaca can be covered internally by the Facilities Management and CES departments. CES will use existing funds in their budget to pay for the actual move estimated to cost between \$1,500 and \$2,000. Facilities Management will use internal funding to re-paint and re-carpet the 2nd floor.

REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:

Roger Jefferies, Justice and Public Safety County Executive

Steve Manilla, TNR and FM County Executive

Julia Spann, SafePlace, Executive Director

Roger El-Khoury, Facilities Management Director

Tamara Armstrong, Assistant County Attorney

Gretta Gardner, CES Safe Havens Grant Director

Katie Peterson Gipson, PBO Analyst

Diana Ramirez, PBO Analyst

DeDe Bell, Auditors Office

Janice Cohoon, Auditors Office

David Walsh, Purchasing Office

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