



**Item Number: 19**

**City Council / Board of Directors**

**Written Communications**

**Meeting of: June 6, 2023**

**Submitted By:**

Scott Webb, City Planner

**Subject:**

Consultant/Professional Services Provider Agreement with Hope the Mission as Shelter Operator of the Wellness Center

**Recommendation:**

That the Honorable City Council:

- 1) Approve a Consultant/Professional Services Provider Agreement with Hope the Mission, for an initial twenty-three (23) month term through June 30, 2025, to provide the Shelter Operator services at the Wellness Center in an amount not to exceed \$6,254,296.57; and
- 2) Authorize non-substantive changes to the Consultant/Professional Services Provider Agreement, if necessary, as agreed upon by the City Manager and City Attorney.

**Fiscal Impact:**

The initial 23-month term of the Consultant/Professional Services Provider Agreement ("Agreement" – Attachment A) will be funded from a Homekey Round 2 operational subsidy (Account 2700011-52300-97063), the City's annual Permanent Local Housing Allocation (Account 2704020-52300-20494), and revenue received as program income from the Wellness Center Wraparound Services (WCWS) Provider. Measure P funds (Account 1054020W 52300) will serve as a backstop to fund any unrealized revenue from the WCWS Provider.

**Strategic Plan Goal:**

This project aligns with Goal D, Strategy 1 in the 2020 Strategic Plan, "Reduce Homelessness" and "Establish a wellness and recuperative care center as a navigation resource and shelter for homeless and at-risk populations".

**Background:**

Governments, at various levels, across the entire country are struggling to address the increasing number of unsheltered and at-risk individuals who are living precariously and without stable housing. A variety of factors have contributed to the situation, including, but not limited to, economic factors, lack of affordable housing, lack of mental health services, a rise in substance abuse, and a wide range of other contributing factors.

Homelessness in the state of California has significantly increased over recent years and as of 2022, approximately half of the nation's unsheltered homeless population reside in the state. According to the 2023 Point-In-Time Count (PITC) Report, the County of San Bernardino saw a 26% increase in homelessness from the prior PITC, with a total count of 4,195 homeless adults and children counted during the 2023 survey. More than one-third (39.9%) of unsheltered adults and children counted as homeless became homeless for the first time during the 12 months prior to the homeless count, and 44.1% of adults experiencing homelessness were chronically homeless, meaning they have been homeless for a year or more and have a disabling condition such as mental illness, a chronic health condition or a physical disability.

In 2023, Victorville remained the city with the second highest homeless population in the County at 607, second only to the city of San Bernadino at 1,502. Specific to Victorville's homeless population, 19% were incarcerated during the last 12 months, 19.8% have a mental health disorder, 10.4% have a physical disability, and 33.5% have a substance use disorder.

Guided by our Homelessness Solutions Task Force, the City continues to address the homeless challenge within our community. Specific to our Homelessness Solutions Strategic Action Plan, the 4.5 acre, 170-bed Wellness Center currently under construction at 16902 First Street will provide an innovative, enhanced shelter model that will utilize a housing first approach to increase the number of beds available to our unsheltered population. This approach helps manage the impacts of homelessness while complying with Federal court determinations from Martin v. Boise<sup>1</sup> which limits enforcement of illegal camping on public property to those times during which shelter beds are available to accommodate the City's unsheltered population. Furthermore, our recuperative care model will provide a safe place to discharge homeless patients when they no longer require hospitalization but still need to heal from an illness or injury. Our Wellness Center will allow individuals to continue their recovery and receive treatment for minor illnesses while case managers facilitate access to primary care, behavioral health services and other supportive social services, such as transportation, food, and housing. Recuperative care saves taxpayer dollars, costs significantly less than extended hospital stays, and leads to fewer hospital re-admissions. Clients served are also more likely to find permanent housing.

In May 2022, High Desert Homeless Services (HDHS) was awarded the contract to replace Illumination Foundation as the Lead Operator of the 92-bed Interim Shelter,

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<sup>1</sup> City of Boise v. Martin (2019) 920 F.3d 584.

located at Westwinds Sports Center 18241 George Blvd., and assumed operations on July 1, 2022.

After a six-month review of HDHS's progress as the Interim Shelter Lead Operator and in assessing the capacity needed to meet the level of care for the projected 170 clients at the Wellness Center, staff felt it was appropriate to pivot from the typical single organization led shelter operation to a multi-organizational approach, seeking operators that specialize in shelter and/or supportive services, particularly medical services. Ultimately, the model that was deemed most appropriate was one in which an organization with expertise in shelter operations and one with expertise in wraparound services would be selected simultaneously. These two entities will work with City staff in a collaborative partnership designed to reduce and address homelessness utilizing evidence-based practices.

### **Discussion:**

#### **Request for Proposal (RFP) Process**

On March 14, 2023, staff issued a Request for Proposal (RFP), pursuant to Section 2.28.280 of the Victorville Municipal Code, to solicit a Wellness Center Shelter Operator to perform and provide shelter operations, coordinate services with other entities, and work in tandem with the City at the Wellness Center once the facility is completed. Four (4) Wellness Center Shelter Operator applications were received.

On April 5, 2023, a selection committee comprised of City staff evaluated the proposals submitted in response to the RFP in accordance with the following criteria:

- Organizational Experience;
- General Program Overview;
- Levels and Types of Services;
- Community Service Partners;
- Client Selection and Service Delivery;
- Participation in Coordinated Entry System;
- Annual Operating Budget; and
- Connection to and Knowledge of the Local Community.

Based on the above evaluation criterion, staff is recommending that Hope the Mission serve as the Wellness Center Shelter Operator. Hope the Mission has agreed to provide the core services outlined in the Services Agreement (Attachment A). These services include but are not limited to services necessary to maintain the day-to-day operation of the shelter component of the Wellness Center, which will include facility maintenance, security, meals, laundry, intake coordination, animal kennel and pet care assistance, exits/removals, transportation, and coordination with other service providers to achieve wellness for persons experiencing homelessness who are being housed at the Wellness Center.

### **Transition from Interim Shelter to Wellness Center**

Although City staff have not selected HDHS as the top choice for the Wellness Center Shelter Operator, HDHS staff remain committed to providing shelter services at the Interim Shelter until all the clients transition to the Wellness Center. City staff still value our relationship with HDHS and will continue to seek ways to partner with and support their organization in the future.

As provided for in a separate agreement for the WCWS Provider and an amended agreement with HDHS, the WCWS Provider will assume all supportive services at the Interim Shelter with the addition of recuperative care on August 1, 2023. The WCWS Provider will coordinate services with HDHS at the Interim Shelter and with the proposed shelter operator, Hope the Mission, at the Wellness Center. Hope the Mission's Agreement (Attachment A) designates a site Program Manager who will acclimate themselves with the Interim Shelter operations and begin operational and logistical planning for the Wellness Center starting on August 1, 2023. This will ensure continuity of care and consistency for all current clients. Occupancy of the Wellness Center is expected to take place in the Fall of 2023.

### **The History of Hope the Mission**

Established in 2009, Hope the Mission, previously known as Hope of the Valley Rescue Mission, has quickly become a leading provider of housing and homeless services in the Greater Los Angeles County Area. Hope the Mission's mission is to prevent, reduce, and eliminate poverty, hunger, and homelessness. They accomplish this by offering immediate assistance and long-term solutions without discrimination. Hope the Mission takes a holistic approach to full rehabilitation based on the emotional, physical, relational, occupational, spiritual, and financial needs of each client. Their two-pronged approach starts with crisis intervention and then bridges clients, when they are ready, into long-term services that address chronic obstacles. Hope the Mission is an independent 501 (c)(3) inclusive faith-based nonprofit organization that does not discriminate based on gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, or lack thereof. Their services are grounded in a deep respect for the dignity inherent in every human being.

In 2009, Hope the Mission began as a small program run out of San Pablo Lutheran Church in Sun Valley where volunteers cooked and served hot meals to homeless men, women, and children. Hope the Mission has since expanded to 15 shelters with over 1,360 beds. Additional information about Hope the Mission's organization can be found in Exhibit "A-2" of the Agreement.

Hope the Mission is committed to expanding to the County of San Bernardino as they were also recently awarded a new contract with the City of San Bernardino. They will be conducting outreach services and development with the goal of being the shelter operator of San Bernardino's forthcoming Navigation Center.

Hope the Mission is currently looking for a Regional Director to engage with the Continuum of Care (CoC), Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH), and local leaders

to ensure responsive services for the City of Victorville and other organizations they are contracted with. Hope the Mission will begin these county efforts with a Regional Director and intends to expand designated administrative staff to San Bernardino County based on contractual needs to ensure program management is effectively conducted.

### **Hope the Mission Staffing**

Once the Wellness Center is operational, Hope the Mission will maintain on-site staffing levels necessary to meet the level of care for clients and has agreed to interview and/or consider hiring existing staff employed by HDHS to staff some of their positions. The staffing proposed by Hope the Mission includes the following:

<b>Staffing for Wraparound Service Provider</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Program Manager	1
Program Coordinator	1
Intake Specialist	2
Client Service Monitor	21
Data Coordinator	1
Driver	2
Kitchen Manager	1
Lead Chef	1
Kitchen Staff	4.2
Security Guards	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>

Hope the Mission's operational model focuses on partnerships with the community, donations, volunteerism, operating local thrift stores, advocating for funding, and overall building of capacity. City staff anticipate that Hope the Mission will successfully supplement some of the shelter costs associated with operating the Wellness Center.

### **Term**

The term of this Agreement shall commence on August 1, 2023, and will continue for twenty-three months (through June 30, 2025), as further detailed in Section 6 of the Agreement. The term of this Agreement may be extended for three (3) successive one-year terms upon mutual agreement of the parties.

### **Recommendation**

Given the pressing need to address homelessness within the community and ensuring that our unsheltered and sheltered residents are provided the highest level of care, staff is recommending that the City Council approve the Agreement with Hope the Mission in an amount not to exceed \$6,254,296.57 to administer the shelter operations of the Wellness Center for an initial term through June 30, 2025.

City staff and representatives from Hope the Mission will be available at the meeting for any questions the City Council may have.

**Attachments:**    A. Hope the Mission Professional Services Agreement