

City Council – Action Request Form

Date: September 15, 2020

To: Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

From: Tasha Logan Ford, Assistant City Manager
Marla Y. Newman, Community Development Director

Council Action Requested:
Resolution Ratifying Continuation Of A Temporary COVID-19 Shelter For Persons Who Are Experiencing Homelessness And Medically Fragile, And Funding Not To Exceed \$188,500 Per Month To Support The Operation Thereof

Strategic Focus Area: Livable Neighborhoods
Strategic Objective: No
Strategic Plan Action Item: No
Key Work Item: No



Summary of Information:
 Through a collaborative process, the City, Forsyth County, and the United Way (UW) Continuum of Care (CoC), established a COVID-19 action plan to provide support to persons experiencing homelessness who may be either COVID-impacted or medically fragile and at higher risk of death if exposed to COVID-19.

Pursuant to the plan, the County opened an isolation facility for COVID-impacted persons on April 16th, and closed the facility on June 15th. During its operation, a total of 13 individuals were isolated at the shelter pending COVID-19 test results.

The City opened a temporary medically fragile shelter on April 27th, consisting of 60 hotel rooms, with an option to increase to 80 rooms. Priority for rooms was based on first removing medically fragile persons from the congregate setting of area mass shelters, and then moving the non-sheltered who are self-isolating in tents. The shelter was to operate for 90 days.

Committee Action:

Committee	CDHGG 9/15/2020	Action	Approval
For	Unanimous	Against	
Remarks:			

Operation of the medically fragile site has been managed by United Way, Bethesda Center for the Homeless, and City with Dwellings. Services include:

1. 3 meals a day provided by Samaritan Ministries;
2. Regular medical checks for overall well-being, including temperature checks, and referral to external medical providers should the need arise;
3. Scheduled mental health and substance abuse care;
4. Case management for each individual to plan for transition from temporary shelter to permanent housing or return to the existing sheltering system; and
5. Additional supportive services to ensure a continuity of care.

Additional support for the medically fragile shelter is provided by Forsyth County Public Health, including Mobile Integrative Health, and the Department of Social Services. In rotating shifts, 11 staff are onsite 24 hours per day. Two sworn law enforcement personnel are also on site 24 hours a day. These staffing levels are maintained 7 days a week.

Over the course of facility operation, 15 out of 70 guests have moved to permanent housing, with another 15 expected to obtain housing by September 11th, and 25 exiting to other places. With the decline in the number of hotel guests, staff has reduced the number of hotel floors from 3 to 2—now 40 rooms—and adjusted average monthly operational costs, not to exceed, as follows:

Shelter Operator (BCH & CwD)	\$48,500.00
Hotel	\$68,664.00
Security	\$65,000.00
Bio-Hazard Cleaning	\$3,000.00
Laundry	\$3,000.00
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	\$188,500.00

The City has the opportunity to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with North Carolina Emergency Management (NCEM) to continue operation of the medically fragile shelter and obtain direct and full reimbursement from the State, dispensing with the need to seek reimbursement from FEMA. The MOA with NCEM will remain in effect until the Federal Government stops approving non-congregate sheltering activities, until Governor Cooper rescinds his State of Emergency declaration, or for one (1) year, whichever date comes first. Staff seeks approval to operate the medically fragile shelter as set out in the MOA with NCEM, with an end date of March 31, 2021, or until the Federal Government stops approving non-congregate sheltering activities, or Governor Cooper rescinds his State of Emergency declaration, whichever date comes first.