

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

DATE: JUNE 26, 2006

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT TO ALLOW FOR A TWO-MONTH EXTENSION, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2006, OF THE INFANT AND TODDLER PROGRAM AT WASHINGTON SCHOOL CHILD CARE CENTER.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that City Council:

1. Authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement with Pasadena Unified School District to identify potential options for continuing operation of the PUSD Infant and Toddler Program operating at Washington School Child Care Center program or, if no such options are available, provide assistance in the transition and relocation of current Program enrollees to alternate affordable services; and
2. Authorize staff to use available funding from the After School Playground program (budget account 101-642730) in an amount not-to-exceed \$25,000 to address the estimated funding gap for this two month extension. In FY 2006, funds for PUSD were identified in the after school playground program and are still available.

BACKGROUND

The Washington School Child Care Center is one of several such centers operated by the Pasadena Unified School District and funded by the State Department of Education to serve limited-income families. The Washington Child Care Center is the only PUSD center that serves infants (up to 18 months) and toddlers (18 to 36 months). According to PUSD financial reports, the expenses for the infant and toddler program have exceeded the amount of reimbursement from the State Department of Education, so the program has required an annual subsidy from other PUSD funding sources. Due to current budget constraints, PUSD can no longer allocate funding to subsidize this program, so closure of the infant and toddler program has been tentatively scheduled for June 30, 2006. While the program capacity is 12 infants and 18 toddlers, at present the enrollment is approximately at 50%; however, due to the shortage of subsidized center-based child care programs serving infants and toddlers in Pasadena, parents of currently enrolled children are having great difficulty securing alternate care.

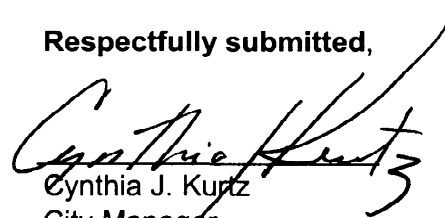
The City recognizes the scarcity of licensed, center-based, subsidized care for infants and toddlers in Pasadena, and is committed to working in partnership with PUSD to explore all options to potentially continue this valuable service at the Washington School location. Such options may include an alternate provider of the service at this location, utilizing a modified operating plan, or related changes. To prevent closure on June 30, 2006 of this valuable service to the local community and to allow sufficient time to secure an alternative operating plan or, should that not be possible, to allow for a reasonable period of transition and placement of the currently-enrolled infants and toddlers to other accessible and affordable locations, PUSD has indicated a willingness to continue operating the program for two months but does not have the discretionary funds to continue to financially support the shortfall between the State-reimbursed amount and the actual program operating expenses.

It is recommended that the City commit up to \$25,000 to fund the gap between the program operating expenses and the amount reimbursed by the State Department of Education for the Washington Child Care Center infant and toddler services, for the period July 1 through August 31, 2006. If approved, City staff would work with PUSD and the local child care community to identify options to continue the infant and toddler program at the Washington School location within the available resources, for implementation in September, 2006. Should no such viable alternatives be secured, City staff would work with PUSD, the local child care community and the currently enrolled families to secure other child care arrangements that are accessible and affordable.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Sufficient funds are available in budget account 101-642730 to address this recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



Cynthia J. Kurtz
City Manager

Prepared and Approved by:



Patricia A. Lane, Director
Human Services and Recreation Dept.