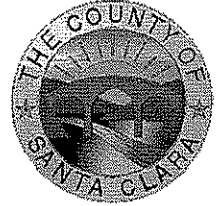


County of Santa Clara
Board of Supervisors
Supervisorial District Three
Supervisor Dave Cortese

Inventory Item
#7




BOSD301-060209

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DATE: June 2, 2009

TO: Supervisor Ken Yeager, Chairperson
Supervisor Dave Cortese, Vice Chair
Finance & Government Operations Committee

FROM: 
Dave Cortese
Supervisor, District 3

SUBJECT: Budget Inventory Add Back: Office of Human Relations, Office of Women's Policy

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Consider recommendations relating to Office of Human Relations for FY 2010

Possible actions:

- a. Maintain the Office of Human Relations and the Office of Women's Policy as stand alone departments.
- b. Delete 4 positions (5 deletions, one added) to support the stand alone Office of Human Relations.
- c. Reduce object 2 funding for the Office of Women's Policy by \$42,000.

- d. Immediately initiate hiring process to find a permanent manager for the Office of Human Relations, with a goal of filling the position within 90 days of adoption of the budget.
- e. Immediately upon completion of (b), embark on a visioning process with the OAH, OWP and OHR, under the County Executive's guidance, to look at ways to: share administrative functions and grant writing expertise, and collaboration both externally and internally as ways to achieve common goals and further reduce expenses.
- f. Report back to FGOC in December 2009 on the implementation plan of the visioning process.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

This proposal would have an immediate net reduction of 4 positions (5 deleted, one added) plus the reduction in object 2 costs, resulting in a savings of \$559,788. Further reductions are anticipated as a result of the visioning process outlined in above, which will be brought to the Board no later than the mid year budget process.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Human Relations has a long history as a valuable resource to the community of Santa Clara County. Their influence has been felt in many areas. They were the first to work with the Board of Supervisors in 1980 to pass an ordinance prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation. At the same time the office implemented the Homeless Concerns Initiative. They have, in their history, listened to the community and been a strong advocate and voice for diverse constituencies.

In order to continue their ground breaking work, it is important that they maintain a separate identity and integrity. At the same time it is important to provide them a link to other departments of the County in this budget environment. In a shared support environment they can utilize effective administration support which saves cost and provides opportunities for collaboration. The synergy created with this move will strengthen OHR and provide additional funding opportunities by utilizing grant writing specialties and a more focused and accountable management plan.

BACKGROUND

The County Executive's Proposed Budget for FY 2010 contained a proposal merging the Office of Human Relations into the Office of Affordable Housing. This proposal was heard at the April FGOC, where significant concerns were raised by the community. FGOC expressed their reservations about such a merger and how it might dilute the important work initiated by

Jim McEntee.

The Office of Human Relations has had a difficult year as they have not had a permanent director since the retirement of the last director. With a focused management approach and measureable goals the office will operate more efficiently and become an even greater resource for the community.

We have held meetings with community stakeholders, OBA, the Office of the County Executive, the Office of Women's Policy and the Office of Human Relations. Out of these sessions this proposal has been crafted.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

If the budget proposal brought forth by the Acting County Executive is approved the long history of OHR's connection to the community may be diminished. One of the many legacies this Office has provided is the link to its first Director, Jim McEntee. The community has been supportive and proud of the work done throughout the years.

