

**TUMWATER BUDGET & FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**  
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**CONVENE:** 10:00 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Debbie Sullivan and Councilmembers Michael Althausen, Leatta Dahlhoff, and Eileen Swarthout.

Staff: City Administrator Lisa Parks, Finance Director Troy Niemeyer, Community Development Department Director Michael Matlock, Assistant Finance Director Shelly Carter, Planning Manager Brad Medrud, and Communications Manager Ann Cook.

**APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES: BUDGET  
& FINANCE  
COMMITTEE,  
OCTOBER 19, 2022:**

**MOTION:** Councilmember Dahlhoff moved, seconded by Councilmember Swarthout, to approve the minutes of October 19, 2022 as published. A voice vote approved the motion.

**2024 HUMAN  
SERVICES  
PROGRAM  
FUNDING:**

Manager Medrud reported the purpose of the briefing is to forward a recommendation to the City Council for 2024 Human Services Program funding established as a budget reserve of local funds for local organizations providing human services to Tumwater residents.

**REBUILDING  
TOGETHER  
THURSTON  
COUNTY:**

The presentation began with Rebekah Graham, Boardmember with Rebuilding Together Thurston County and transitioned to Boardmember Pete Kmet because of video difficulties encountered by Ms. Graham.

Mr. Kmet reported the request is for funds to complete a project in Tumwater. The organization repairs homes occupied by low-income households of seniors and disabled residents. The organization's efforts revitalize communities and rebuild the lives of the recipients many of which are living in difficult conditions. The organization is a local non-profit but associated with a national network providing technical support. The organization is governed by a voluntary board of directors with an unpaid executive director and part-time staff. Most of the work is completed by volunteers who are skilled with larger projects supported by groups. The organization hires contractors based on funding availability. Funding is provided through a mix of government, private foundations, and community donations. The application is for a manufactured home in a mobile home park in Tumwater occupied by two disabled individuals. Numerous repairs are required for the home; however, the funds would support specific repairs. The individuals live on social security and do not have the ability or the skills to repair their home. The project would fund the construction of a wheelchair ramp to

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enable access, modification of a bathtub, repair leaks and floor damage in the bathroom, and other incidental repairs. The funding request is \$3,000.

**DISPUTE  
RESOLUTION  
CENTER OF  
THURSTON  
COUNTY:**

Elizabeth Drake, Facilitation and Grants Contract Manager, reported the organization offers three primary services of conflict prevention services offering group facilitation and training, conflict resolution through the resource line offering reconciliation, negotiations, and referral for mediation services, and other services, such as youth services and restorative justice dialogues at Thurston County Superior Court. In 2022, the Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) experienced a 40% increase in the utilization of services than in 2021. The Center handled approximately 1,800 eviction resolution cases affecting 5,000 adults and children. Services saved taxpayers and local courts money by avoiding litigation or more formal services through the court system. Approximately 160 volunteers and 100 certified mediators volunteered 7,000 hours last year. The grant application is to fund the Conflict Resolution Resource Line. The line is staffed by conciliators to answer questions through coaching and assisting in identifying conflict solutions, as well as phone negotiations at no cost to callers. The resource line assists in transitioning individuals into mediation or referral to other services. The resource line is open five days a week from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Over the last several years, DRC has been working on capacity building to meet increased demand for services, with demand increasing during the pandemic because of housing evictions. DRC also offers improved technology resources for clients and volunteers.

Councilmember Dahlhoff asked how many clients calling the resource line reside in Tumwater. Ms. Drake said she could provide the information via an email later in the day. Additionally, based on a contract with the City of Tumwater, execution has been initiated to help fund mediation services for housing eviction resolutions.

**ASHHO CULTURAL  
& JOB TRAINING  
CENTER:**

Erin Jones, Co-owner, presented the funding request.

Ms. Jones said Khurshida Begum founded the center and they have been working over 15 years to support the community. The cultural center opened in August 2020. Ms. Begum and staff donated over 7,500 meals to the Tumwater/Thurston County area over the last several years. The building is located off Littlerock Road across from the Tumwater Costco. The facility hosts a variety of events. The center serves and advocates for people of color, under-served, under-resourced and marginalized people to include the LBGTQ+ community by providing community resources, gatherings, trainings, and events. The facility hosts events honoring different heritage months. The funding would provide resources to support young people in the area. The region lacks space serving minority, young people, and LGBTQIA+ communities. The

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funding would support those who lack financial resources by providing job training, mentorship, and space where students can belong.

Councilmember Althaus asked whether the cultural center is a non-profit or for-profit organization. Ms. Jones said the organization is both. Ms. Begum added that the organization is also a for-profit organization because initially, the organization did not receive its non-profit status. The catering and room rental side of the facility is operated separately with the ASHHO Cultural & Job Training Center focused on community education, such as financial literacy, community issues, community support, and hands-on interactive job training programs and cultural celebrations. The non-profit entity is applying for funding to focus efforts on career connections.

Councilmember Dahlhoff advised that she serves on the Board of Directors and would not vote on the funding request.

**MEDICAL  
EQUIPMENT BANK  
DBA THURSTON  
COUNTY COUNCIL  
AGING, INC.:**

Steve Robinson, Vice President, the Area Council on Aging, reported the non-profit includes two elements of *Senior News*; a publication to 18,000 monthly subscribers and the Medical Equipment Bank. The Medical Equipment Bank has served the tri-city area for 40 years of which 18 years have been from the basement of the Woodland Mortuary at no charge. As the mortuary is expanding, the space is no longer available. The service is now located at 3537 Martin Way East scheduled to reopen on November 2, 2023. The service is popular with doctors and clinics with service to approximately 10,000 individuals last year. The service provides an assortment of medical equipment, such as wheelchairs, crutches, walkers, knee scooters, and other medical devices to people who are disabled, unable to purchase medical equipment, or who have been injured. The grant request is for \$2,500 to fund batteries for wheelchairs. Batteries would be provided to those unable to purchase batteries to those who are severely disabled. The agency operates on a low budget with no established source of income other than several grants and donations. Equipment is accepted from donors, cleaned, repaired, and provided to individuals at no charge. The system is similar to a library whereby individuals are asked to return the equipment when no longer needed. The service is important to the community as it fills a need for people with disabilities and to the low-income community. Mr. Robinson recalled his personal circumstances when he was able to benefit from the service following major surgery. Tumwater residents served by the medical bank are approximately 1,500 individuals annually. Wheelchair batteries cost \$200 to \$500.

Councilmember Swarthout requested clarification as to the number of Tumwater residents accessing the medical bank. Mr. Robinson

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responded that the batteries would be available for those who qualify. Agency programs served approximately 10,000 people last year.

**TUMWATER  
EDUCATION  
FOUNDATION:**

Justine Capra, past President of the Tumwater Education Foundation said the funding request is to support the Principals Emergency Fund Program. Boardmembers are volunteers with the Foundation actively recruiting for additional Boardmembers. The Tumwater Foundation has provided memorial scholarship opportunities for students graduating from Tumwater schools, as well as classroom enrichment grants. The memorial scholarship honor students, families, and community members. The classroom enrichment grants funds projects and programs that are beyond classroom budgets. Students at all grade levels benefit from the grants. In 2016, the Foundation expanded its scope to include the Principals Emergency Fund. Funds provide basic emergent necessities such as clothing, medical care, food, or any other barrier restricting the student from maximizing their full potential. Principals identify student needs. The Foundation continues to host fundraising breakfasts. The next Breakfast is scheduled on November 8, 2023. The Council is invited to attend. The funds, if awarded, would be provided to the Principals Emergency Fund program, and allocated by school student population. Ms. Capra shared statistics from last year's program depicting the different types of support students received. During the last calendar school year, Peter G. Schmidt Elementary School had the highest need. Over the last three years, some schools utilize other sources of funding prior to using program funding because other funding sources often have specific requirements the schools must satisfy. The Foundation continues to engage individually with the schools and works closely with the principles and counselors if funding falls short of needs. In those circumstances, the Board can provide additional funds if available.

Councilmember Swarthout asked Ms. Capra to share information on the amount of funding provided to schools during the pandemic. Ms. Capra advised that at the onset of the pandemic, \$20,000 was distributed to schools for childcare expenses with additional funds provided to schools to fund emergent needs. Childcare was the main source of need at that time. Resources were available at the beginning of the school year prior to the pandemic to provide funding to the schools. The Foundation is exploring other initiatives of focus as well.

**SAFEPLACE:**

Ryan Cole, Development Manager, and Wendy Martinez, Communications Coordinator with SafePlace, presented the funding proposal.

SafePlace is located in the City of Olympia serving the entire Thurston County region. The mission is to prevent and end sexual and domestic violence. SafePlace meets its mission by providing programs including

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a 24-hour Help Line, housing program with relocation services for survivors, a confidential shelter (only one in Thurston County) legal advocacy, youth prevention education, and many more programs. The funding request would support survivors by providing fuel cards to survivors, mechanical repairs to survivor vehicles, and gift cards to youths residing in the City of Tumwater. Fuel cards help survivors reach safety and to meet obligations to help them attend court hearings for domestic violence protection orders or to attend the business office to meet one-on-one with an advocate. Mechanical repairs of cars help to eliminate transportation barriers and gift cards to youths provide a source of funds for essential items such as clothes and school supplies.

Ms. Martinez reported the services include survivor advocacy, emergency shelter for domestic violence, and housing resources and more. For survivors in Tumwater, the funding enables the organization to focus efforts on them by partnering with local mechanics to assist with car repairs and to access essential needs and advocacy from SafePlace. Survivors in Tumwater are able to access SafePlace services with the funds increasing the number of survivors SafePlace can reach in Tumwater.

Mr. Cole reported the funds would enable 15 mechanical repairs and provide 32 fuel cards and 28 gift cards totaling \$6,000.

Ms. Martinez reported in 2022, SafePlace served approximately 2,000 survivors across all direct service programs. The SafePlace 24-hour Help Line fielded approximately 4,000 calls. SafePlace is on pace to break those numbers in 2023 having served 1,569 survivors through August and answering 2,980 calls to the Help Line through August. The need is great and SafePlace services are often the lifeline survivors need to reach for safety and stability. SafePlace is humbled to help Tumwater residents in times of crisis and the organization is grateful for the opportunity to apply for funding to support its mission to prevent and end sexual and domestic violence.

**GARDEN RAISED  
BOUNTY – GRUB:**

Clare Follmann and Jennah Kemp thanked the City for its continued support of the GRuB Garden Project. Garden Raised Bounty (GRuB) is a 501c3 non-profit organization working at the intersection of food, education, and health systems to grow healthy food, people, and communities. The original project in 1993, the Kitchen Garden Project, provided gardens to low-income households. The Kitchen Garden project evolved into the GRuB Garden project serving low-income and food insecure individuals and families in the community. GRuB provides custom-made home gardens to recipients and supports necessary for the success of gardens over the long term. Gardens provide an abundance of benefits beyond food. Since 1993, GRuB Garden constructed 3,200

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gardens for low-income households. The funds from the City of Tumwater last year helped support staff to review applications, review custom garden builds with applicants, coordinate the garden builds, and provide classes, training, and workshops on gardening. Five gardens were built in Tumwater this year with garden recipients receiving various starts, feed, soil, and other garden items, as well as support needed for ongoing success. GRuB continues to follow-up with all gardeners regularly to address any questions or concerns. Evaluations are completed following the closure of the garden seasons to gauge success rates. Tumwater gardens served 19 Tumwater residents and provided an opportunity to grow over \$500 of produce. Over the 2023 season from April through June, volunteer staff and military veterans joined to build 35 gardens for low-income households in the region. The GRuB Garden projects also supported three community gardens including two at low-income apartments and one at the Madigan Hospital Soldiers Recovery Unit at Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

Ms. Kemp shared information about the experience of a 2023 Tumwater garden recipient.

Ms. Follmann advised that the funding request this year is for \$4,000 to provide more gardens, training, and services to low-income residents during the next garden build season.

Councilmember Dahlhoff inquired as to the number of gardens to be sponsored in Tumwater next year. Ms. Follmann responded that based on initial calculations, the cost of each garden is approximately \$500 not accounting for inflation. Funding of \$4,000 would provide eight gardens for Tumwater residents.

**FAMILY SUPPORT  
CENTER OF SOUTH  
SOUND:**

Maija Glasier-Lawson, Development Director, reported the Family Support Center of South Sound was founded in 1992 by a group of childcare advocates who recognized the importance of shrinking the family unit to ensure children had sufficient support within their family to the extent possible. The founders recognized the importance of families having one resource to meet needs rather than accessing numerous programs to meet needs, which was stressful and often re-traumatized families. The Family Support Center is a one-stop service offering five programs serving the needs of families and survivors of family violence in Thurston County. The funding proposal is for the Family Resource Services Program (FRS), which serves as the oldest and core program of the organization. The FRS program is available to any family in Thurston County. The program is an eviction prevention program designed for any family not currently homeless but experiencing struggles to remain housed. The program meets basic needs of diapers, formula, hygiene supplies, crisis intervention, and mitigation services

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with the landlord to prevent eviction. Some childcare resources are also provided. The FRS is designed to help any family struggling to pay rent or to assist in budgeting to help them overcome a crisis. Last year, the program served 1,000 parents and children totaling approximately 350 households. Approximately 10% of all agency services are provided to Tumwater residents. Each year, approximately 40% of all families receiving support are new families accessing programs representing 500 individuals. The organization distributes over 20,000 basic items each year. This year's funding request is \$4,000 equating to approximately \$160 for 25 families for assistance with rent, clothing, and other needs to enable them to pay rent to remain in their home. Serving 25 Tumwater families equates to 7% of the total number of families served by the organization.

Councilmember Dahlhoff reported she serves as the Co-Chair of the Board of the Directors for the Family Support Center of South Sound.

**BIG BROTHERS BIG  
SISTERS OF  
SOUTHWEST  
WASHINGTON:**

Moriah Candler, Program Director, said the agency serves Thurston, Mason, Lewis, Grays Harbor, and Pacific Counties.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Washington is a mentoring organization serving one youth at a time by creating and supporting one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth. The vision of the organization is to ensure all youth achieve their full potential.

The community-based program enables adult mentors and Littles (ages 5 to 18) to meet and access community activities or visit sites. Matches meet two to four times a month with a minimum of a one-year commitment by mentors. The goal is to enable Littles to participate through their high school graduation. The matches are supported by staff and the parent/guardian of the youth. Three Tumwater students are currently participating in the community-based program. The matches include career-focused activities to explore different career interests in collaboration with local businesses and individuals.

The second program is a site-based program operated from the Tumwater Boys and Girls Club. High school and adult mentors (Bigs) meet with Littles at the club. Tumwater Library participates in the program by offering a place for participants to meet and utilize library resources. Staff facilitates activities for the site-based program based on an established curriculum of different areas. One activity is JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion). Other activities include the STEAM lab, career connections, and a program working with Naked Prosthetics, a local company developing prosthetics for different body parts using 3D printing. During 2023, the program served eight Tumwater students. The

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site-based program started the new school year with two students participating from Peter G. Schmidt Elementary School.

The third program is the career mentoring exploration program. Students are matched with adult mentors working within a specific career industry. Participants meet monthly for approximately 2 hours exploring all facets of the business. At the end of the school year, students can apply for a paid internship or a scholarship. In 2023, the program served three Tumwater students.

During the 2023-2024 school year, the program's focus is on architecture, distribution logistics with Harbor Foods, financing real estate with multiple partners, and construction and property management. The program is currently enrolling high school students interested in those careers. Some students have expressed interest in participating in technology and computer programming, marketing and design, music production, and climate and environmental changes and impacts. The organization is exploring those specific career paths for the next school year.

Ms. Candler shared some examples of outcomes from mentoring shared by students. The career program is designed for one school year; however, each match has the option to continue meeting after the year. This year, all matches want to maintain contact to some degree. The program supports youth building their social and emotional skills, increase confidence, and it promotes a sense of belonging. Post-COVID, more students have self-identified that they need support socially and emotionally.

The funding would support expansion of the site-based programs within the Tumwater School District. Based on conversations with Tumwater Middle School representatives, the school is interested in hosting a program. However, funding support is necessary to support staff to attend the meetings and create curriculum.

**COMMITTEE  
DISCUSSION:**

Manager Medrud thanked all agency representatives for attending and presenting their respective funding request. The request to the committee is to forward a recommendation for the allocation of \$15,000 to the City Council for consideration.

Councilmember Dahlhoff suggested eliminating consideration of the request from the Dispute Resolution Center of Thurston County as the City has a contract with the Center, which could be amended to include the Conflict Resolution Resource Line. The committee supported the recommendation in recognition that funding availability of \$15,000 was limited for the remaining applicants.



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The committee supported Councilmember Dahlhoff's recommendation to distribute funding of \$15,000 evenly to the remaining applicants.

The committee discussed the potential of an applicant unable to accomplish a project because of a smaller award. Councilmember Dahlhoff noted that the project presentations reflected all funding requests as scalable.

Committee members shared their respective recommendations for the allocation of funds either by equally dividing the total amount between all the applications with the exception of the Dispute Resolution Center or by a proportional division among the applicants. The committee agreed to divide funding proportionally among the remaining eight applicants.

Councilmembers Dahlhoff and Swarthout agreed to abstain from voting on the funding amount for agencies they serve on for transparency and to avoid any conflict of interest.

**MOTION:**

**Councilmember Althaus moved, seconded by Councilmember Dahlhoff, to recommend the City Council approve the following Community Human Service Program funding allocations:**

- **Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Washington \$2,175**
- **Garden Raised Bounty \$1,740**
- **Medical Equipment Bank – Thurston County Council on Aging \$1,085**
- **Rebuilding Together Thurston County \$1,305**
- **SafePlace \$2,605**

**A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

**MOTION:**

**Councilmember Althaus moved, seconded by Councilmember Swarthout, to recommend the City Council approve the following allocation of Community Human Service Program funding:**

- **ASHHO Cultural & Job Training Center \$2,175**
- **Family Support Center of South Sound \$1,740**

**A voice vote approved the motion. Councilmember Dahlhoff abstained.**

**MOTION:**

**Councilmember Althaus moved, seconded by Councilmember Dahlhoff, to recommend the City Council approve the following allocation of Community Human Service Program funding:**

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- **Tumwater Education Foundation** **\$2,175**

**A voice vote approved the motion. Councilmember Swarthout abstained.**

**BUDGET**  
**AMENDMENT NO. 1:**

Director Niemeyer reported the proposal is the first amendment to the 2023/2024 biennium budget adopted in December 2022. Biennium budgets are estimates developed six to nine months prior to adoption. A biennial budget forecasts expenditures and revenue three years into the future. Staff analyzed the outcome of the previous budget. The analysis reflects an increase in revenues beyond expectations and lower expenditures, due in part to deferral of projects and supply chain delays. Some of the savings are attributed to a difficult labor market leading to difficulties in hiring staff and a high demand for contractors creating difficulty in completing projects timely.

An unexpected opportunity is the Habitat for Humanity Tâlicn Homes project in collaboration with the Department of Commerce and South Puget Sound Habitat for Humanity to take advantage of a grant program for connecting housing to infrastructure programs. The City was able to reimburse Habitat for Humanity for water, sewer, and storm infrastructure. Although the Council approved the grant and the contract between the parties, the action was not officially included in the budget and is included in the amendment.

Some challenges include:

- The lease for South Puget Community College for the relocation of Water Resources and Sustainability was higher than anticipated for less space in addition to construction costs for converting the space to office use.
- Skyrocketing liability insurance costs. Since 2020, insurance costs have increased by approximately \$500,000 or by 288% not because of the number of claims, but because of the industry and society in general. The City's insurer, WCIA, is scheduled to provide a briefing on insurance costs at a future Council worksession.
- Inflationary pressures
- Supply chain issues delaying Ford truck purchases
- Brewmaster House arson fire
- Fire door replacement at Fire Station
- Required maintenance at Fire Stations and the Police Department

The next briefing will include more information and specific figures. On November 21, 2023, the Council will be briefed followed by a public hearing. Based on the outcome of the public hearing, the Council will be

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requested to adopt the budget or delay adoption until the December 5, 2024 Council meeting.

Councilmember Dahlhoff referred to potential amendments she would like included. She asked how the request aligns with the budget review process. Director Niemeyer asked for submission of the information as soon as possible to enable staff to finalize budget information.

**ADJOURNMENT:**      **With there being no further business, Mayor Sullivan adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.**

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President  
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