



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:15-1256

Agenda Item Number: 29.

Agenda Date: 2/12/2015

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Department of Human Services

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Melody Woosley

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City Wide

SUBJECT:

2015 REAP and WARM Program Agreements

SUMMARY:

This ordinance authorizes an agreement with the Residential Energy Assistance Partnership, Inc. for the issuance of utility assistance credits in a projected amount of \$1,000,000.00 for the Residential Energy Assistance Partnership (REAP) utility assistance program, and authorizes an agreement with CPS Energy for the issuance of utility assistance credits in a projected amount of \$75,000 for the Project Winter Assistance Relief Mobilization (WARM) program through December 31, 2015.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In 2002, the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, and CPS Energy established the Residential Energy Assistance Partnership (REAP) as a method to help local economically disadvantaged families needing utility assistance. Specifically, REAP provides direct utility bill credits to income qualifying CPS Energy ratepayers living within the city limits and Bexar County. REAP funds are raised locally, financed by donations from CPS Energy ratepayers and trust investment income, and are specifically allocated to help residents in need throughout the San Antonio community.

WARM funds also provide utility assistance benefits for qualifying low income City of San Antonio and Bexar County residents. WARM was established in 1982 and is funded entirely by interest earned from the \$7.5 million Project WARM Trust.

The City's Department of Human Services administers REAP and WARM credits through the Family Assistance Division on an appointment basis or as needed through emergency referrals from the community. Community Services Specialists are funded through the City's general fund to support CPS bill assistance to screen and certify participants to determine program eligibility. Eligible participants must be at or below 125% of the federal poverty guidelines (\$29,813.00 annually for a family of four), and may receive up to \$400.00 in credits per year for REAP or \$150.00 in credits per year for WARM.

In 2014, REAP and WARM assistance credits helped almost 7,000 households maintain their CPS service, including 10,000 young children and 1,700 senior citizens.

ISSUE:

This ordinance authorizes an agreement with the Residential Energy Assistance Partnership, Inc. for the issuance of utility assistance credits in a projected amount of \$1,000,000.00 for the Residential Energy Assistance Partnership (REAP) utility assistance program, and authorizes an agreement with CPS Energy for the issuance of utility assistance credits in a projected amount of \$75,000 for the Project Winter Assistance Relief Mobilization (WARM) program through December 31, 2015.

For 2015, CPS has agreed to provide \$1,000,000.00 for the Residential Energy Assistance Partnership (REAP) utility assistance program. Of the total \$1,000,000.00 available in REAP direct assistance, the City will manage and administer 82% or \$820,000.00, and Bexar County will manage and administer 18% or \$180,000.00.

Priority assistance is given to low-income CPS ratepayers in the following categories:

- Households with members 60 years and older
- Households that have a member with a disability
- Households with children age 16 years and younger, and in school
- Households with a member that has critical care needs with life-sustaining medical equipment

Through these credits, the Department of Human Services anticipates providing CPS utility assistance through REAP to approximately 7,000 households, and approximately 500 households through project WARM.

The provision of utility credit assistance to residents is consistent with the City's commitment to Family Well-Being. The REAP and WARM programs improve the well-being of families in San Antonio and Bexar County through the provision of supports that reduce poverty, prevent homelessness, and promote housing stability.

ALTERNATIVES:

Should this ordinance not be approved, CPS would need to identify an alternate provider to ensure assistance is provided uninterrupted.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This ordinance authorizes an agreement with the Residential Energy Assistance Partnership, Inc. for the issuance of utility assistance credits in a projected amount of \$1,000,000.00 for the Residential Energy Assistance Partnership (REAP) utility assistance program, and authorizes an agreement with CPS Energy for the issuance of utility assistance credits in a projected amount of \$75,000 for the Project Winter Assistance Relief Mobilization (WARM) program through December 31, 2015.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of an agreement with CPS Energy and Residential Energy Assistance Partnership, Inc. (REAP) for the issuance of utility assistance credits through the REAP and WARM programs.