



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:16-3712

Agenda Item Number: 5.

Agenda Date: 6/15/2016

In Control: Governance Committee

DEPARTMENT: Human Services

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Melody Woosley

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Faith-Based Community Liaison

SUMMARY:

On March 30, 2016, Councilman Cris Medina, Council District 7, requested discussion of a plan to establish a Faith - Based Community Liaison to be considered at a future Governance Committee session.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On February 5, 2009, President Barack Obama signed an executive order establishing the new White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. In alignment with the White House effort, through a March 30, 2016, City Council Request, Councilman Cris Medina requested that City Council Governance Committee consider a plan to establish a Faith - Based Community Liaison. Proposed liaison responsibilities include consolidation of faith-based and secular organization efforts to address community issues, including: economic recovery; poverty; support for women, children, and families; teenage pregnancy; engagement of youth; and job growth. Under the proposal, the liaison would also serve as a bridge between government and faith groups.

Preliminary staff research of referenced cities and other national models reflects implementation of faith-based and neighborhood partnerships have resulted in a wide variety of purposes and strategies. These initiatives are housed in various departments within their respective cities, including: Mayor's Office, Human or Social Services departments, Police and Fire departments. Each of these initiatives focuses on a common goal of increasing community engagement and involvement of the faith-based sector to address community issues.

Major City Comparison:

Philadelphia, PA

Department: Mayor's Office

Purpose: Serves as the primary liaison between the Mayor's Office and Philadelphia's diverse community of faith and their leaders- committed to engagement of faith organizations in daily activities of City government.

Allentown, PA

Department: Mayor's Office

Purpose: Support faith based groups and grassroots community organizations by providing resources and training to empower non-profit and faith based community.

Phoenix, AZ

Department: Human Services

Purpose: Twenty member work group meets to plan summits and facilitate community engagement between the City, government agencies, community organizations, and faith community.

Austin, TX

Department: Police Department-Office of Community Liaison

Purpose: The Office of Community Liaison created a Faith Community Network comprised of congregations and organizations from across the City to bridge the gap between the community and Austin Police Department to address vulnerable segments of the youth and elderly population.

Miami Dade County, FL

Department: County Fire Rescue

Purpose: Developed the Communities Organized to Respond in Emergencies to work with and engage Faith-Based and Community Organizations to plan for, respond to, and recover from disasters that affect the community.

The City of San Antonio FY 2013 adopted budget included a Faith-Based Graffiti Volunteer Coordinator position in the Government and Public Affairs Department to enhance volunteer participation in Graffiti Abatement Program.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is requesting the Governance Committee identify the appropriate City Council Subcommittee to provide policy direction to guide development of an implementation plan. City staff will continue researching national implementation models and best practices to provide to the Subcommittee to aid implementation plan development.