



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:20-4327

Agenda Item Number: 25.

Agenda Date: 8/13/2020

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Health

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Colleen M. Bridger, MPH, PhD

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Appointment of Dr. Junda Chichi Woo as Health Authority

SUMMARY:

This Ordinance authorizes the Mayor to execute a Certificate of Appointment of Local Health Authority for the Texas Department of State Health Services to appoint Dr. Junda Chichi Woo, Medical Director of the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District (Metro Health), as Health Authority for the City of San Antonio and surrounding areas of Bexar County, authorizes renewals of the appointment and approves an Interlocal Agreement with local municipalities to designate Dr. Woo as their Health Authority. The ordinance will also authorize the execution of the Interlocal Agreement with additional local municipalities that may desire to appoint Dr. Woo as their Local Health Authority.

Pursuant to Ordinance 2018-08-16-0631, Dr. Woo, Medical Director of Metro Health was appointed as Local Health Authority for the City of San Antonio and surrounding areas of Bexar County. The term of the appointment was for two years beginning October 1, 2018 and ending September 30, 2020. This ordinance will authorize the reappointment of Dr. Woo as Local Health Authority for the City of San Antonio and surrounding areas of Bexar County for a term of two years beginning October 1, 2020 and ending September 30, 2022 and renewals of the designation as long as Dr. Woo serves as Medical Director of Metro Health, subject to the ability of the City to de-designate through the City Manager.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In order to achieve the public health preparedness goals as outlined in the Texas Department of State Health

Services Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Cities Readiness Initiative Grants, the Medical Director of Public Health for Metro Health is seeking to be reappointed as the Health Authority for the City of San Antonio and unincorporated areas of Bexar County. The Texas Health and Safety Code empowers a Health Authority to implement “control measures” in the event of a public health emergency. Such measures may include quarantines, isolation orders, coordination of disaster response, controlling the spread of communicable disease outbreak or naturally occurring epidemics affecting the public health of Bexar County and other similar mandates.

ISSUE:

The appointment of Dr. Woo will provide a means for the Health Authority to implement “control measures” in the event of a public health emergency within San Antonio and the surrounding areas of Bexar County. In addition, the Interlocal agreement with local municipalities will implement control measures in the event of a public emergency. This formal coordination will also provide a seamless approach toward responding to epidemics or other similar circumstances that threaten the health of the community.

ALTERNATIVES:

If the appointment of Health Authority is not made, the City of San Antonio could rely on the Regional Medical Director of the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) to act as Health Authority during a public health emergency and local municipalities could choose to respond to emergencies affecting their community on their own, or also rely on TDSHS.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact in making an appointment of Health Authority for the City of San Antonio. However, the Interlocal Agreement with local municipalities allows for the City to be reimbursed by other entities if expenses are incurred by the General Fund for a service requested. Primarily, this agreement will be used to coordinate activities in response to a catastrophic event and/or major public health emergency.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the reappointment of Dr. Woo as the Local Health Authority for the City of San Antonio and unincorporated areas of Bexar County, renewals for reappointment and approval of an Interlocal Agreement with local municipalities to designate Dr. Woo as their Health Authority. The ordinance will also authorize the execution of the Interlocal Agreement with additional local municipalities that may desire to appoint Dr. Woo as their Local Health Authority.