

Kate Harrison
Councilmember District 4

RECEIVED AT
COUNCIL MEETING OF:

DEC 10 2019

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CITY OF BERKELEY

URGENT AGENDA MATERIAL

Meeting Date: December 10th, 2019

Item Description: Women's Therapy Center Debt Relief Effort: Relinquishment of Council Office Budget Funds to General Fund and Grant of Such Funds

Submitted By: Councilmembers Harrison, Robinson, Hahn, and Mayor Arreguin

"Good of the City" Analysis:

The analysis below must demonstrate how accepting this supplement/revision is for the "good of the City" and outweighs the lack of time for citizen review or evaluation by the Council.

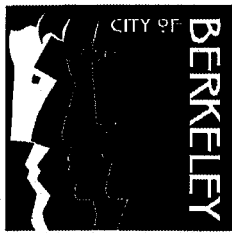
The Women's Therapy Center is facing an imminent budget shortfall that they hope to make up before the end of the year, and as the last Council meeting before year's end, this is our last opportunity to raise money through an office relinquishment.

Consideration of supplemental or revised agenda material is subject to approval by a two-thirds vote of the City Council. (BMC 2.06.070)

A minimum of **42 copies** must be submitted to the City Clerk for distribution at the Council meeting. This completed cover page must accompany every copy.

Copies of the supplemental/revised agenda material may be delivered to the City Clerk Department by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Copies that are ready after 12:00 p.m. must be delivered directly to the City Clerk at Council Chambers prior to the start of the meeting.

Supplements or Revisions submitted pursuant to BMC § 2.06.070 may only be revisions of the original report included in the Agenda Packet.



Kate Harrison
Councilmember District 4

UREGENCY ITEM
CONSENT CALENDAR
December 10th, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmembers Harrison, Robinson, Hahn, and Mayor Arreguin

Subject: Women's Therapy Center Debt Relief Effort: Relinquishment of Council Office Budget Funds to General Fund and Grant of Such Funds.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution approving the expenditure of an amount not to exceed \$1,000 per Councilmember including \$100 from Councilmember Kate Harrison, to Women's Therapy Center's Debt Relief Effort (<http://www.womenstherapy.org>). Funds would be relinquished to the City's general fund for this purpose from the discretionary Council Office Budgets of Councilmember Harrison and any other Councilmembers who would like to contribute.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

No General Fund impact; \$100 is available from Councilmember Kate Harrison's Council Office Budget discretionary account.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

None.

BACKGROUND

Women's Therapy Center (WTC) of Berkeley provides a vital service to the Berkeley community that is not available anywhere else. WTC is a community based organization providing mental health services to women and gender non-conforming adults, adolescents, and all couples through a social justice lens. Doing so on a sliding-scale payment basis, WTC provides mental health care to community members who could not otherwise afford it, specifically to those individuals who make too much money for MediCal but are still uninsured or underinsured – a population that is large and has little institutional resources. Women's Therapy Center is also a training center, providing in-depth psychodynamic relational psychotherapy training for interns preparing for licensure in the mental health field. WTC's racial and gender equity focus uniquely prepares new clinicians to serve clients effectively in support of substantive long-term mental health, both in WTC's clinic and in their subsequent community mental health employment.

Starting as a small group of women wanting to expand the therapy field, WTC has since evolved into a community of 40 faculty who teach and supervise, many of whom are senior clinicians, and more who are graduates of WTC's training program. The Women's

Therapy Center continues to receive increasing numbers of requests for service in the East Bay, following the closure of the Ann Martin Center in Emeryville and other similar nonprofits.

For many years, the Women's Therapy Center supported themselves entirely through client fees. The faculty decided years ago to forego getting paid so that the organization could pay interns in the advanced training programs, as so many of them had to work additional jobs in order to complete their licensure process. However, since WTC's start 40 years ago, economics have shifted dramatically. Costs like rent and infrastructure are steep and growing.

Recently, the clinic suffered two break-ins, misogynistic in nature, which the Berkeley Police classified as sex crimes. WTC secured their space, but not without significant financial burden, including new locks, security enhancements, significant graffiti removal, and loss of income as the clinic was closed for four days. Staff and clients returned with appropriate caution, continuing to slow the income stream to the Center. The unexpected financial hardship that the Women's Therapy Center has experienced is presenting the organization with the immediate prospect of closing their doors, and ceasing to provide their invaluable resources to the Berkeley and East Bay community.

The Women's Therapy Center is already implementing changes for more long-term stability, including becoming credentialed to accept more insurance types and applying for city, county, and state mental health grants. However, those long-term fixes notwithstanding, the WTC is still facing a budget shortfall of about \$50,000. We encourage other fundraising efforts beyond this office fund relinquishment, but want to utilize Council resources to assist in overcoming this shortfall.

The Women's Therapy Center is a unique institution in Berkeley, and we cannot lose its services over a one-time budget shortfall due to unexpected circumstances. WTC has never done fundraising of this kind before and they do not anticipate needing it in the future. This fundraising is a one-time effort not only to save this institution, but all of the people, particularly women of color, low income, trans and gender-nonconforming people, adolescents and couples of all kinds who utilize their well-regarded and much-needed mental health services.

CONTACT PERSON

Kate Harrison District 4 510-981-7140

ATTACHMENT: 1: Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

WOMEN'S THERAPY CENTER DEBT RELIEF EFFORT: RELINQUISHMENT OF
COUNCIL OFFICE BUDGET FUNDS TO GENERAL FUND AND GRANT OF SUCH
FUNDS.

WHEREAS, the Women's Therapy Center, a nonprofit organization dedicated committed to in-depth relational therapy training and mental health services for women and gender non-conforming adults, adolescents, and couples, seeks funds to continue to provide for uninsured and underinsured people in need; and

WHEREAS, the Women's Therapy Center is unique in its services to the community, particularly following the closure of similar nonprofit organizations in the East Bay; and

WHEREAS, despite long-term initiatives to stabilize its budget, increasing costs of operation and recent break-ins have burdened the Women's Therapy Center with unanticipated costs, leading to a one-time budget shortfall of about \$50,000;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of the City of Berkeley that funds relinquished to the City's general by the Mayor and Councilmembers from their discretionary Council Office Budget up to \$1,000 per office fund from any Councilmembers who would like to contribute shall be granted to the Women's Therapy Center to support their services and close their budget shortfall.