

TOWN COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

To: Honorable Mayor & Town Council
From: Mark Nuaimi, Town Manager
Date: February 15, 2013
For Council Meeting: February 19, 2013 – Budget Workshop

Subject: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding Alternative

Prior Council Review: Goal Setting Workshop (January 12, 2013)

Recommendation: Review & Comment on Community Development Block Grant funding alternatives.

Summary: Through a formal cooperation agreement, the Town of Yucca Valley participates with the San Bernardino County's Community Development and Housing (CDH) department in the administration of Community Development Block Grant funding. The Town's entire 2013-14 anticipated allocation of \$100,802 can be applied to one or more eligible *Projects* or *Public Service Programs*. Previously, *Programs* funding was limited to 15% of the total, but that limitation is not applicable because the County has prorated the Town's allocation after considering the 15% formula for the County as a whole.

Order of Procedure:

- Request Staff Report
- Request Public Comment
- Council Discussion/Questions of Staff
- Motion/Second
- Discussion on Motion
- Roll Call Vote

Discussion: At the Goal Setting Workshop (January 12, 2013), Town staff demonstrated that a structural deficit is projected for the upcoming FY 13/14 General Fund budget. In order to balance the budget in the short-term and address the structural deficit for the long-term, Town staff have examined a number of funding sources that have traditionally not been used to pay directly for Town-provided services to the community.

In FY 11/12, Town staff recommended that CDBG funding be used to supplement Code Enforcement funding in order to expand enforcement in targeted areas. While council approved that one-year allocation, they indicated that this practice should not be relied upon in future budgets. CDBG funding in FY 12/13 was allocated towards the Community Center Playground / Splash Park project.

Reviewed By:

Town Manager

Town Attorney

Mgmt Services

Dept Head

Department Report

Ordinance Action

Resolution Action

Public Hearing

Consent

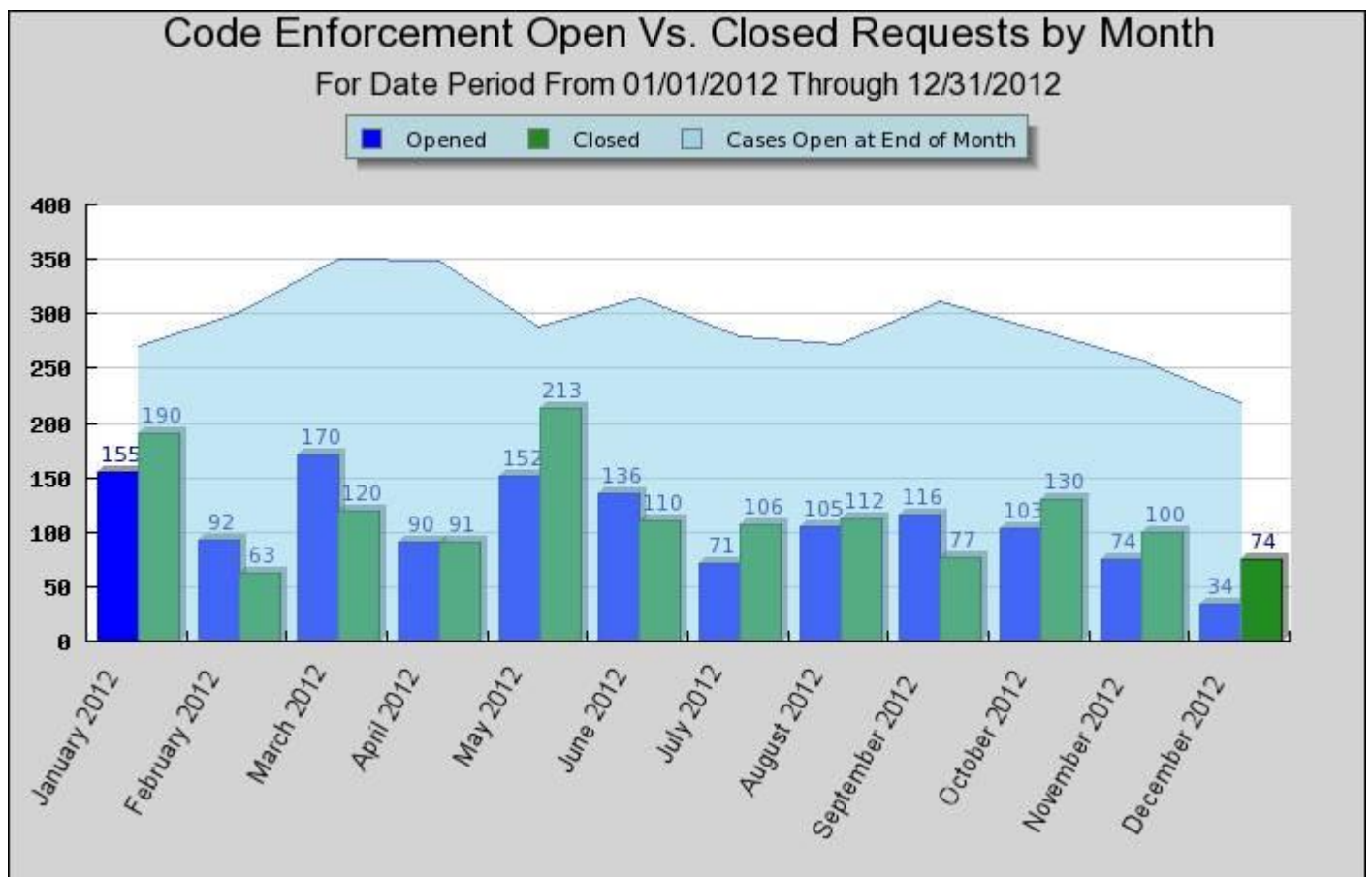
Minute Action

Receive and File

Study Session

Town staff is proposing once again to have council consider allocation of CDBG funding to the Code Enforcement program. In doing so, Town resources going to Code Enforcement would be available to allocate to the Town's Public Safety contract with the County of San Bernardino to fund the Sheriff Safety Specialist position that is currently unfunded.

Town Council Priorities – Staff understands that the Town Council and the community have a number of priorities for services. Typically, Code Enforcement is not near the top of that list when polled. However, as was shared at the Goal Setting Workshop, the Code Enforcement program serves a vital role in maintaining the health & safety of this community. Over 1000 cases a year are handled throughout the community through the resources invested in the Code Enforcement activity.



Public Safety – Town Council continues to make it clear that public safety is the #1 priority of any city or town. This is evidenced by the fact that over 35% of the Town’s annual budget is invested in maintaining public safety. One component of the public safety arsenal is our rich pool of volunteers – our Citizen Patrol volunteers have logged as many as 9000 hours in a year and recently volunteered over 6900 hours in FY 11/12. That program is a critical piece of our safety services, supporting sworn officers during special events, natural disasters, road closures, traffic incidents, and other enforcement activity. These resources have been coordinated by a Sheriff Safety Specialist position that currently is unfilled. Staff is recommending that the FY 13/14 budget include funding to fill this position and leverage the thousands of hours of volunteer time to the benefit of the community.

Conclusion – By funding the Code Enforcement activity with CDBG resources, General Funds can be made available to fund the Sheriff Safety Specialist position. Using this outside funding resource (CDBG), the Town is able to preserve two key services that maintain the health and safety of this community. This does limit the Town’s ability to distribute these funds to assist other entities that have applied for funding.

Alternatives: There are a number of policy alternatives that the Town Council could arrive at including:

- 1) Remove the Sheriff Safety Specialist position from the Town’s Schedule “A” contract and require the sheriff’s department to assign sworn resources to coordinate the volunteer activity;
- 2) Reduce funding to other Sheriff services (i.e. reduce sworn resources) in order to full fund the Sheriff Safety Specialist;
- 3) Seek cuts elsewhere in the Town’s General Fund budget to provide the resources to fund the SSS position. Council should be aware that given the structural deficit, Town staff are already pursuing this strategy in other areas of the budget;
- 4) Council can reject this approach and allocate the CDBG funding to any of the approved projects contained in the report of the February 19, 2013 Town Council Public Hearing.

Fiscal impact: None at this time; impacts will be based upon the follow-up actions to allocate the \$100,802 of available FY 13/14 CDBG funds.

Attachments: None