

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: AMES PUBLIC LIBRARY BUDGET AMENDMENTS FOR SMALL TALK

BACKGROUND:

One of the main initiatives at the Ames Public Library (APL) is to encourage early literacy skill development. Research clearly indicates that it is critical to introduce the development of literacy skills as early as possible in a child's life and that the first teachers are parents.

The Library has teamed with community partners to develop *Small Talk*, a program that emphasizes parent education around these realities. In collaboration with Raising Readers in Story County and Iowa State University, the Library will offer parent education classes that provide data to parents to help them increase their conversation with their babies. These classes will be based on the LENA Start curriculum and will utilize recording devices to measure the number of words spoken directly to the baby. The Small Talk program will include a research component spearheaded by Dr. Constance Beecher, Assistant Professor, School of Education and Family Literacy Extension State Specialist at Iowa State University.

The Ames Public Library Friends Foundation (APLFF) was awarded a grant from an anonymous donor to support the Small Talk program and research. The grantor will provide APLFF a total of \$435,171 over a three year period. The boards of the APLFF and the APL each approved an agreement where the APLFF will provide funds from the grant to the APL to offer parent education classes that provide data to parents to help them increase their conversation with their babies. These classes will be based on the LENA Start curriculum and will utilize recording devices to measure the number of words spoken directly to the baby.

For the grant period the Library will hire, supervise, and house the Small Talk staff, coordinate volunteers, recruit participants, host classes, store and distribute LENA Start equipment and materials, produce promotional materials and provide follow-up literacy programming. In the first year of the agreement the Library will receive \$62,776 to cover expenses related to these duties. The APLFF will also distribute grant funds to Iowa State University in support of the research component and to Raising Readers in Story County to cover their direct expenses. All three partner organizations will contribute in-kind services as matches for grant funds.

The first year of the grant agreement is from November 1, 2015 to October 31, 2016. Authority to enter into the agreement with the APLFF lies with the Library Board, so no Council action on the agreement is needed. Since overall spending authority is based

on the City Council's approved budget, the Library is requesting budget approval for FY 2015/16 to include \$62,776 for staff, equipment and materials related to Small Talk. The associated expenditures and revenues will be included in Council's final FY 2015/16 budget amendment later this spring. All expenses will be reimbursed by the APLFF with funds from the anonymous donor.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Authorize revenue and expenditure budget amendments in the amount of \$62,776 for staff, equipment and materials related to Small Talk. These amendments will be incorporated into the final budget amendments to be considered by City Council in May.
2. Do not endorse these budget amendments.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Ames Public Library and the Friends Foundation have teamed with community members to offer parent education classes that are scheduled to begin shortly. Funds are being provided by an anonymous donor and will be distributed through APLFF to cover the cost of staff, equipment and materials.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1 as described above.