

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: REQUESTS FROM YOUTH AND SHELTER SERVICES FOR PRIMARY TREATMENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AND ROSEDALE SHELTER

BACKGROUND:

The City has an ASSET agreement with Youth and Shelter Services (YSS) to provide a variety of services. In FY 2017/18, this agreement includes \$52,000 for Primary Treatment Mental Health Services and \$31,750 for the Rosedale Emergency Shelter. YSS has submitted a request to adjust how those funds may be allocated and drawn down.

PRIMARY TREATMENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE:

Early in the 2017/18 fiscal year, YSS staff approached City staff to outline issues they were having with fully drawing down the allocation for this service. YSS has explained that more clients are being supported by Medicaid, which does not provide enough funds to fully cover the cost of providing treatment. Additionally, non-Medicaid funds may not be used to subsidize individual clients. Therefore, the City's ASSET funds for this service can only be used to support a dwindling number of eligible clients, and YSS's revenues to support the service are declining.

As of June 20, YSS has not drawn down any funds for this service. **After discussion with City and ASSET staff, YSS has proposed several steps to allow it to access these funds to support the service, while still remaining in compliance with Medicaid regulations:**

1. **YSS has requested that it be able to carry over its unspent balance for this service remaining at the end of this fiscal year.** This would ensure that these funds would be available to draw down and not forfeited on July 1. Normally, unspent ASSET funds at the end of the fiscal year remain in the Local Option Sales Tax Fund balance to be used towards other purposes as determined by the City Council. If these undrawn funds were carried over, YSS would have access in the next fiscal year to these funds plus the funds awarded for this service under its FY 2018/19 contract (another \$52,000).

This request is unusual among ASSET agencies, and is a substantial amount of funds to carry over. However, the City Council has authorized carry-overs for funded organizations in the past (most recently with \$5,100 in unspent funds carried over for the Ames International Partner Cities Association on June 12th).

2. **YSS has also requested that the manner in which funds for this service may be used be broadened.** Currently, a client must be an Ames resident and not have Medicaid or private insurance to cover the treatment in order to be claimed by YSS for reimbursement by the City. It would take 485 such appointments to fully draw down the City's allocation of \$52,000 at the contracted rate of \$107.29 per hour. **YSS proposes that in addition to clients traditionally paid by the City, that it be allowed to schedule specific blocks of time for "crisis walk-in appointments."** If the time is filled with a client in crisis who has Medicaid or private insurance, those sources would pay for the treatment. **If the block of time goes unfilled or is filled by an Ames resident who would normally be funded through ASSET, the City would be billed.**

In this proposal, the City would be paying for access to services, in addition to actual services for City clients. The ASSET Administrative Team discussed this proposal at its meeting on June 6, and recommended approval of this arrangement. City staff notes that rapid access to mental health services is a critical need to ensure appropriate supports for residents experiencing mental health crisis. There are limited alternatives available for crisis services, and individuals who cannot obtain crisis services in a timely manner may be at greater risk for harm or interactions with the Police Department.

ROSEDALE EMERGENCY SHELTER:

YSS has also made requests related to its Emergency Shelter Service. This service saw reduced demand compared to what was anticipated during the fiscal year. The City's contract for FY 2017/18 provides \$31,750 for this service. As of June 20, YSS had drawn down \$13,737 for this service, leaving a balance of \$18,013. Another program, the Transitional Living Emergency Assistance for Basic Needs, was allocated \$2,250 in YSS's FY 2017/18 contract, but those funds were completely exhausted as of September of 2017 (three months into the contract year). These two services are similar in that both provide services to homeless youth in the community. Therefore, **YSS has requested:**

1. **Moving the \$18,013 in unspent funds for this service to the Transitional Living Emergency Assistance for Basic Needs service.** YSS would then be able to draw down against this balance at the service rate previously agreed to in the FY 2017/18 contract for the Transitional Living service.
2. **A carry over its unspent balance for this service remaining at the end of this fiscal year.** YSS would draw down against any services that had been provided during the current fiscal year but not reimbursed. Any remaining balance would be carried over to the next fiscal year and could be applied to services provided after July 1. As with the request above for the Primary Treatment Mental Health Service, this carryover would ensure any remaining funds would be available to draw down and not forfeited on July 1.

It should be noted that the requests related to moving the Rosedale Emergency Shelter funds to other services have not been reviewed by the ASSET Administrative Team or the ASSET volunteers. However, this type of request is fairly common towards the end of the fiscal year from other agencies, and is not typically reviewed by anyone other than City staff for a recommendation. The City has routinely allowed funds to be shifted from one service to another within the same agency as an alternative to the agency forfeiting those funds (Childserve makes a request to shift City funding within programs nearly annually).

ALTERNATIVES:

1. a. Authorize a carryover of \$52,000 in unspent FY 2017/18 ASSET funds for the Primary Treatment Mental Health Service and allow funds to be used to hold crisis walk-in appointment times, in addition to the actual appointments provided to City of Ames clients.
 - b. Authorize the transfer of \$18,013 in unspent FY 2017/18 ASSET funds from the Rosedale Shelter program to the Transitional Living program, and allow unspent funds at the end of this fiscal year for the Transitional Living Program to be carried over to FY 2018/19.
2. Do not authorize these requests.

CITY MANAGER’S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

City staff has been working with YSS to resolve issues related to the drawdown requirements for the Primary Treatment Mental Health Service since fall of 2017. The requested solution provides YSS with 1) time to make adjustments to its service delivery, 2) flexibility in how the funds may be used, and 3) a solution that also benefits the youth in mental health crisis in the Ames community. Providing appropriate crisis services helps avoid more challenging situations later that may require greater resources from the hospital, the Police Department, or others to resolve.

Additionally, the requests related to the Rosedale Shelter and Transitional Living programs are relatively routine compared to similar requests from ASSET agencies at the end of the fiscal year.

Both of these requests allow the City to ensure services are provided in exchange for City funds. Approving the requests allows a increase in the flexibility YSS needs to be able to best serve its clients and the community.

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



June 20, 2018

Brian Phillips & Ames City Council,

At your request, YSS is respectfully requesting changes for two City of Ames ASSET funding allocations for FY17-18 to allow us to maximize the impact of the approved services.

First, for the Primary Treatment/Mental Health (3.17) allocation of \$52,000 for FY17-18:

- We request that funds not fully drawn down be carried over into FY18-19.
- In addition to support for traditional city-funded/non-Medicaid clients, we request that these funds be used to support pre-scheduled “crisis walk-in appointments” with YSS therapists.
 - This program would enhance access for individuals in urgent need of services, and ensure those experiencing a “crisis” situation would be assured immediate access to mental health services. Quicker de-escalation and treatment often prevents hospitalization for mental issues. Pre-scheduled “crisis walk-in appointments” would be available on designated professionals’ schedules and held for same-day referrals. Referrals could be taken from any source, including individuals, hospitals, clinics, social services, etc. Note that while a Crisis Stabilization program is being developed in Ames, it is designated for adults and not youth.

Second, for the Emergency Shelter - Rosedale (2.08) allocation of \$31,750, for FY 2017/18:

- We request a transfer of \$18,013 to the Emergency Assistance for Basic Needs – Transitional Living Program service which provides housing for homeless youth in Ames. This is a similar population to Emergency Shelter, but provides support in an apartment setting vs. shelter.
- We request that funds not fully drawn down be carried over into FY18-19.

We appreciate your willingness to provide some flexibility, allowing YSS to adapt to the growing needs of the community. We also appreciate the role Brian Phillips plays as a consultant on this funding and his efforts to help craft these recommendations to ensure that youth in Ames are receiving the critical care that they deserve.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out directly.

Thank you for all that you do to support our youth.

Respectfully,

Andrew Allen
President and CEO