



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL
CENTRAL STAFF

Council Bills 120812 & 120813: Midyear Supplemental Budget & Grant Acceptance Ordinances

CENTRAL STAFF

FINANCE, NATIVE COMMUNITIES, AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS COMMITTEE

07/17/2024

Mid-Year Supplemental (CB 120813) Potential Policy Considerations

Central Staff has identified three specific policy proposals of note:

1. Additional positions at HSD to support the City's response to homelessness
2. Additional positions for the CARE Department
3. Appropriation of \$10 million of JumpStart funding for new student mental health and Violence Prevention program

New Positions in HSD to Support Homelessness Response

- 19 FTE proposed for the Unified Care Team, and two FTE for additional contracting support.
- Position request are in the mid-year supplemental so the hiring process can begin immediately.
- These requests are related to the decision to shift \$11.4 million of homelessness prevention and outreach funding from the KCHRA to HSD, starting in Q3 of 2024.
- Total cost of position adds is \$3.2 million
 - On-going funding for \$2.2 million has been identified from existing activities/programs within HSD, Parks, and OH.
 - For the 14 new Counselor positions, \$1 million will come from the transferred KCRHA funding but not yet known if funds will come from outreach or prevention dollars

New Positions for the CARE Department

Background

- The Executive is requesting 21 new positions to expand CARE crisis response operations by early 2025.
- The Executive has identified sufficient funding for phased hiring this year, including a \$1.9 million grant.
- The ongoing annual cost of the expansion is about \$4.3 million.

Observations

- The Executive has not identified an ongoing funding source to offset the \$4.3 million in ongoing costs. These costs will thus increase the City's projected budget deficit for 2025 and beyond.
- The CARE crisis response program operates under an existing MOU with SPOG. Dispatch of CARE on the basis of a 9-1-1 call occurs in limited circumstances.
- CARE staff have participated in the response to approximately 500 calls, in total, since program launch last October.
- Seemingly successful models in other cities (e.g., Durham and Albuquerque) use sole dispatch and respond to more call types. These programs respond to hundreds and even thousands of calls per month.

New Positions for the CARE Department (cont.)

Observations (cont.)

- The independent evaluation planned when the current pilot was developed has not been completed. The Executive is also proposing to redirect the ~\$500K that included evaluation funding to help pay for the expansion.
- Given that CARE response is a new program and dispatch protocols are evolving, an assessment of the current pilot may not offer meaningful insights at this time.

If Council is interested, Central Staff could develop options to (i) preserve the evaluation funding, and/or (ii) slow the pace of hiring so a full funding commitment is not made until Council can see the overall budget implications. This latter option would potentially delay program expansion, so creates trade-offs of its own.

JumpStart Funding for Student Mental Health & Violence Prevention

Background

- In the fall of last year, Council raised JumpStart tax to provide \$20 million for student mental health.
- The funding was appropriated to DEEL, but further Council action is necessary because mental health is not currently eligible for JumpStart funding.
- The Executive has proposed \$10 million for student mental health and youth violence prevention:
 - \$2 million for Violence Prevention. HSD will administer funding and will host meetings with key stakeholders and relevant City departments to finalize a spending plan.
 - \$2.4 million for Telehealth services. This funding would support the expansion of pilot program that currently serves about 80 students. Would expand access to ~2,000 students.
 - \$5.6 million for In-Person Mental Health Therapy. Funding will be deployed via an agreement with King County Public Health to expand services at School-based Health Centers.

JumpStart Funding for Student Mental Health and Violence Prevention (cont.)

Observations

- Mental health is not generally a city-level function in Washington State.
- That said, Council's funding decision last fall was driven by a desire to address the mental health crisis among school-aged children. This crisis presumably contributes to, and is partially driven by, incidents of youth violence.
- The Executive acknowledges that a total of \$20 million was made available for 2024, but is requesting only \$10 million at this time. The remaining \$10 million will stay in the JumpStart fund and be available for other JumpStart-eligible activities in 2025.

CB 120812 – Midyear Grant Acceptance

- Second comprehensive grant acceptance and appropriation legislation in 2024
- Would authorize City departments to accept \$73.7 million and appropriate \$53.5 million from external sources
 - \$18.7 million acceptance is funding Federal Highway Administration for SDOT's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects
 - \$19.5 million from the WA Department of Commerce to provide low to moderate income residential electric utility customers with a one-time \$200 bill credit.

Next Steps in Mid-Year Supplemental Process

- August 7: Second hearing & possible vote on CB's 120812 & 120813 at the Select Budget Committee
 - Amendment requests due July 25th by noon
- August 13: Final action on CB's 120812 & 120813 at the City Council meeting
- Late September: Mayor's Proposed 2025-2026 Budget
 - Will include the 2024 year-end supplemental and a final grant acceptance bill

Questions?