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City Manager's Office

Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Julie Edmonds-Mares

SUBJECT: SENIOR SERVICES PROGRAM

DATE: January 29, 2014

Approved

Date

1/30/14

INFORMATION

The purpose of this memorandum is to respond to the Rules and Open Government Committee (Rules) request for information. At the November, 20, 2013 Rules meeting, staff was directed to issue an information memo regarding the Office on Aging and its role in providing elder abuse services.

Former Program

During the 1990s, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS), through its Office on Aging (OOA), provided a wide array of senior services. These services included direct case management (which may have included an elder abuse component) offered at senior centers and was provided in partnership with the County of Santa Clara. These case management services transitioned into the Older Adult Resource Program, in which staff was assigned to specific regions within San José to provide resources and connections for seniors to maintain independence. This particular program served approximately 200 seniors per month. Additionally, between 2000 to 2010, OOA provided programs including, but not limited to, the following:

- Retired Senior Volunteer Program
- Senior Companion Program
- Senior Nutrition
- Senior Commission Staffing and Management
- Senior Games / Special Events
- Strategic Planning for Senior Services
- Partnership Development

In 2010, as resources began to diminish, PRNS and partner agencies were confronted with having to eliminate direct case management services through the Office on Aging along with reductions for a broad array of senior supportive services at the City operated community

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centers. As Office on Aging programs were reduced incrementally to address the City's budget shortfalls, staffing levels fell from 64.5 FTE to 14.5 FTE. At the same time, community based organizations (CBO) experienced similar shortfalls and service reductions, resulting in fewer services for seniors. Overall, the reduction in staffing and available external resources has substantially decreased the Department's ability to provide comprehensive services.

Current Program

Currently, the City of San José provides staff-led and non-profit venter services to the senior community through its community centers and Community Center Reuse Program sites, several of which are funded by senior health and wellness grants. Through this model, senior services such as senior nutrition, socialization opportunities, health and wellness, leisure programs and resources and referrals are provided.

PRNS realizes the high demand for additional resources in the area of indirect case management. To help meet this need, PRNS leverages its services with its network of partners to maximize existing resources to best serve the senior population. Additionally, to be more proactive in this area, the City has engaged Santa Clara County to collaborate on training staff and the community on the intervention and prevention of elder abuse in the context of making referrals to Adult Protective Services. Also, through a partnership with the Health Trust, the City provides Senior Peer Advocates at seven community centers. These Senior Peer Advocates are volunteers trained to provide basic information and referral services to seniors in the city. PRNS will continue to seek additional grants and resources to provide services for seniors that prevent social isolation and promote healthy aging in San José.

/s/

JULIE EDMONDS-MARES
Director of Parks, Recreation and
Neighborhood Services

For questions, please contact Suzanne Wolf, Deputy Director, at 408-535-3576.