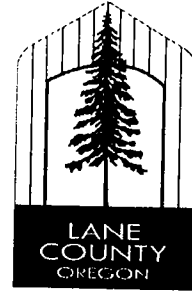


W. 9.0.

AGENDA COVER MEMO

AGENDA DATE: July 25, 2007
TO: Board of County Commissioners
DEPARTMENT: Health & Human Services
PRESENTED BY: Rob Rockstroh



AGENDA TITLE: ORDER / _____ IN THE MATTER OF APPLYING FOR AND ACCEPTING STATE FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$127,398 TO CONTINUE EXPANSION AND ENHANCEMENT OF COUNTY VETERAN SERVICES PURSUANT TO ORS 406.450-.462 AND SENATE BILL 5541 AND TO ESTABLISH A NEW 0.5 FTE TEMPORARY ASSISTANT VETERAN SERVICES COORDINATOR POSITION AND TO APPROPRIATE \$18,394 IN REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES TO FUND THIS 0.5 FTE TEMPORARY ASSISTANT VETERAN SERVICES COORDINATOR POSITION (FUND 285)

I. MOTION

Order / _____ In The Matter Of Applying For And Accepting State Funding In The Amount Of \$127,398 To Continue Expansion And Enhancement Of County Veteran Services Pursuant To ORS 406.450-.462 And Senate Bill 5541 And To Establish A New 0.5 FTE Temporary Assistant Veteran Services Coordinator Position And To Appropriate \$18,394 In Revenue And Expenditures To Fund This 0.5 FTE Temporary Assistant Veteran Services Coordinator Position.

II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

The Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs (ODVA) is accepting applications for funding to expand and enhance County Veteran Services pursuant to ORS 406.450-.462 and Senate Bill (SB) 5541. The Lane County Department of Health & Human Services is seeking approval of the Board of Commissioners for Lane County to apply for and accept these funds for the current and future fiscal years. Additionally, approval is also sought to establish a 0.5 FTE Temporary Assistant Veteran Services Coordinator position and to authorize \$18,394 in revenue and expenditures to fund this position.

III. BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

A. Board Action and Other History

This Board originally accepted funds under this program for Fiscal Year 2005-2006 pursuant to Board Order 06-2-8-2 and in Board Order 06-8-15-7 granted authority to the County Administrator to apply for funds under this program for Fiscal Year 2006-2007.

Please also note that this program was created by SB 1100 during the 2005 Legislative session. During that session, this Board wrote a letter to the Lane County Legislative Delegation objecting to any "Maintenance of Effort" requirement. While the language originally objected to was modified, the basic concept was maintained in the final version of the passed bill.

B. Policy Issues

No policy issues are related to this motion.

C. Board Goals

The goal of Lane County Government is to "ensure the safety and well-being of the people who live, work, and visit our communities." Ensuring that those Lane County citizens who served in our country's military, and their qualifying dependents, have timely access to information and assistance in applying for the benefits they earned from their military service will not only directly benefit those citizens, but will also ease the burden on our county's health care system and increase the disbursements of federal money into Lane County.

D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations

If awarded, state funds of \$127,398 will allow the Veteran Service Program to continue the expansion and enhancement efforts it has instituted from the creation of this program. The main efforts towards these ends has been the increase of 1.5 FTE and hiring of an extra help position. Additionally, the office has been able to engage in more outreach services to the rural communities of Lane County. Finally, staff has also been able to attend high-level training to better serve all the veterans of Lane County, but especially those who are returning from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The fiscal year 2007-2008 Veteran Service Program budget includes these funds and staffing and activities determinations are dependent thereon. Lane County and other local contributions which fund the Veteran Service Program through the Human Services Commission are sufficient to meet the Maintenance of Effort requirement for fiscal year 2007-2008.

E. Analysis

With the passage of SB 1100 (now codified at ORS 406.450-.462), the 2005 State Legislature established a County Veterans Services Expansion and Enhancement

(E&E) program. The State program was funded for the 2007-2009 Biennium pursuant to allocations to the counties contained in SB 5541. Under the allocations contained in that enactment, Lane County is scheduled to receive \$127,398 for each fiscal year within the 2007-2009 Biennium. See, SB 5541, Sec.1(4)(t). The Governor signed this bill on May 15, 2007 and it is effective July 1, 2007.

With the funding received under the previous two fiscal years, the Veteran Services Program increased its Office Assistant II position by .5 FTE, added a second full-time Assistant Veteran Services Coordinator, increased outreach trips to Florence to once per week and added outreach trips to Junction City and Blue River. Furthermore the Program has added computer capabilities and developed portable workstations to process veteran benefit claims more efficiently and effectively during both in-office and outreach appointments. Finally, the program was able to add an Extra-Help position during FY 2006-07 which further enhanced its services to county veterans and their survivors and dependents.

Funding under this legislation continues to be dedicated to the expansion and enhancement of county Veteran Services and may only be used for that end. There are no requirements concerning the timing of its use in relation to the use of county funding, nor is there any limitation regarding the use of these funds for Veteran Services administrative activities. The only additional limitation is that the money not be used for capital improvements (purchases over \$5,000).

As set forth above, the Veteran Services Program was able to hire an Extra Help position to increase the program's ability to assist Lane County veterans, their survivors and dependents. This position typically increased the program's office appointments by 13 to 17 per week. This increase in capacity further allowed the program to reduce the wait times for appointments. Due to the limited nature of Extra Help positions in general, however, the ability to continue service to program clients in this manner is limited. This situation is compounded by the specialized training required to competently serve within the Assistant Veteran Services Coordinator classification. To rectify the limitations imposed by the Extra Help position, conversion to a 0.5 FTE Temporary Assistant Veteran Services Coordinator position will allow the program to continue to serve its clients with competent personnel in a timely manner.

Funding is available for this new temporary position. The first allocation under the State Expansion and Enhancement program was received in January, 2006. Effectively, the State provided 24-months of funding during an 18-month period. Accordingly, the Veteran Service Program projects a carry-over of state funds from FY 2006-07 into FY 2007-08. This carry-over will be sufficient to cover the expenditures for the 0.5 FTE Temporary Veteran Services Coordinator position.

ODVA requires that the County apply for continued funding from this program for Fiscal Year 2007-08. As continued state allocation to this program was included in the Governor's Recommended Budget, these funds were included in the Veteran

Services Program budget for Fiscal Year 2007-08. In order to receive these funds from ODVA and continue the expansion efforts started during the previous two fiscal years, authority to apply for funds for these efforts must be delegated to the County Administrator. Furthermore, to facilitate application for funds pursuant to this program in future fiscal years, on-going authority for the County Administrator to execute the necessary applications in future fiscal years is requested.

The information required by the Board of County Commissioners prior to approval of grant applications and receipt of grant funds is provided below:

1a. What is the match requirement, if any, and how is that to be covered for the duration of the grant?

There is no "match requirement," per se. What is required is that the County maintain previous effort and not use the state funds to "supplant" local funds. The local funding for the program for Fiscal Year 2007-2008 is sufficient to satisfy this requirement.

1b. What effect would there be to these grant funds if there are MID-year (FY 2007-08) reductions to the Veteran Services Budget?

As also discussed in Question 8, *infra*, there is a Maintenance of Effort requirement associated with the Expansion And Enhancement Of County Veteran Services Program (E&E) as set forth at ORS 406.460. This statutory provision prohibits Counties "supplanting funds" historically provided by local sources with State funds under the E&E program. There are allowances in the statutory scheme for reductions in appropriations for Veteran Services officers by Counties, but those reductions are limited to "an amount not greater than the same percentage of reduction" to all county programs for the same period of time. See, ORS 406.460(3) and 406.460(2)(b).

There are questions about whether and how this "maintenance of effort" standard may apply based on any future MID-Year reduction decisions by the Board. If there is a MID-Year reduction decision concerning appropriations for Veterans Services officers which violates ORS 406.460, or if the state believes there is such a violation, Lane County may not be able to keep funds awarded under this fiscal year's E & E grant. If the state determines that the reduction is effective for the entire fiscal year (July - June), they may require that all funds received under this fiscal year's grant be refunded to them. If the reduction is effective from the County's decision point forward, there may be an opportunity to keep funding only for the period that the program was not reduced. The loss of E & E funds for the program would force a reduction in staff from the four current County staff (4 FTE) to one staff person (1 FTE), currently funded with HSC funds. Also, any additional staff approved by this Board Order would be lost.

2. Will the grant require expenditures for Material and Services or capital not fully paid for by the grant?

No.

3. Will the grant funds be fully expended before county funds need to be spent?

No.

4. How will the administrative work of the grant be covered if the grant funds don't cover it?

The grant will cover administrative costs.

5. Have grant stakeholders been informed of the grant sun setting policy so there is no misunderstanding when the funding ends? Describe the plan for service if funding does not continue.

There are no grant stakeholders in the traditional sense of other entities which will receive funding from the County pursuant to the funding received under this program. This program may only fund County staff and activities.

If funding ceases from this program and local contributions are not increased, service levels would revert to pre-Expansion and Enhancement Program levels.

6. What accounting, auditing and evaluation obligations are imposed by the grant conditions? How will the department cover the accounting, auditing, and evaluation obligations? How are the costs for these obligations covered, regardless of whether they are in the department submitting the grant or a support service department? Does the department acknowledge that the county will need to cover these costs and is it an appropriate cost incurred by support service departments?

ODVA continues to maintain quarterly reporting obligations associated with this program which will be satisfied by the Veteran Services Coordinator. These reporting obligations are nearly identical to those required by ODVA under previous funding programs. There is no prohibition to use funds received pursuant to this program to cover staff time to satisfy these reporting obligations. ODVA maintains an option to audit fund recipients to insure that the legislative intent is being met.

7. Are there any restrictions against applying the county full cost indirect charge?

No.

8. Are there unique or unusual conditions that trigger additional county work effort or liability, i.e., maintenance of effort requirements or supplanting prohibitions or indemnity obligations?

Yes. State funds under this program may not be used to supplant local funds.

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, LANE COUNTY, OREGON

ORDER:) IN THE MATTER OF APPLYING FOR AND ACCEPTING STATE
) FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$127,398 TO CONTINUE
) EXPANSION AND ENHANCEMENT OF COUNTY VETERAN
) SERVICES PURSUANT TO ORS 406.450-.462 AND SENATE
BILL 5541 AND TO ESTABLISH A NEW 0.5 FTE TEMPORARY
ASSISTANT VETERAN SERVICES COORDINATOR POSITION
AND TO APPROPRIATE \$18,394 IN REVENUE AND
EXPENDITURES TO FUND THIS 0.5 FTE TEMPORARY
ASSISTANT VETERAN SERVICES COORDINATOR POSITION
(FUND 285)

WHEREAS, Lane County Department of Health & Human Services, Human Services Commission, funds and administers a veteran services program; and

WHEREAS, the Oregon Legislature has made available funds available to provide for the expansion and enhancement of county veteran services offices; and

WHEREAS, the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs has developed a program to distribute those funds to several counties and requires that interested counties apply for those funds; and

WHEREAS, the amount of funding allocated to Lane County for the expansion and enhancement of its County Veteran Service Program is \$127,398 pursuant to this program; and

WHEREAS, the Fiscal Year 2007-2008 budget for the County Veteran Services program includes this State funding;

WHEREAS, there is continued need for an increase in the capacity to serve Lane County Veterans and their dependents and survivors;

WHEREAS, there will be carry-over funds from previous State disbursements to Expand and Enhance Lane County Veteran Services sufficient for the expenditures associated with a 0.5 FTE Temporary Veteran Services Coordinator Position;

NOW THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED AND ORDERED that Lane County shall apply for State funding for veteran services and shall accept State funding in the amount of \$127,398 for Fiscal Year 2007-08, and it is

FURTHER ORDERED that the County Administrator be delegated authority to execute this application and all applicable award documents for State funding for veteran services, and it is

FURTHER ORDERED that a new 0.5 FTE Temporary County Veteran Services Coordinator Position shall be created within the Department of Health & Human Services, and it is

FURTHER ORDERED that appropriations are increased in fund 285 by \$18,394 in revenue and expenses to fund the new 0.5 FTE Temporary County Veteran Services Coordinator Position.

DATED this ____ day of July, 2007.

Faye Stewart, Chair
Lane County Board Of Commissioners