

City Council Meeting Date: February 12, 2019

To: Mayor and City Council
City Administrator

From: Teresa Jensen, Library and IT Director

..Title

Link Center Proposal Discussion.

..Body

Action Requested:

The Northfield City Council will discuss the permanent merging of Link Center services with Library services.

Summary Report:

In 2010 the City-funded position of Welcome Coordinator was eliminated, due to cuts in LGA funding from the state of MN. In order to continue these services, in January 2014 the Healthy Community Initiative (HCI) agreed to provide these services through a three-year contract with the City (from the City's Communications fund).

In 2017, the Northfield Public Library hired a full-time bilingual Outreach Coordinator position; in 2018 the library hired 2 part-time bilingual staff, for a total of 3 bilingual staff. The Library Director proposes to transfer the services once provided by the City, currently provided as a contracted service with the City through HCI, which administers the Link Center, back to a City service within Library operations, and to house this service at the library. Tentative date for the changeover would be by May 1, 2019. The City and HCI have a contract in place that runs through December 2019; both the City and HCI are amenable to end this contract on May 1, 2019. Our aim is to make the Library Link Center a clearinghouse for resident information, and to support the City in its long-range strategic goals of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Operational Effectiveness.

Alternative Options:

The Link Center can continue under the auspices of HCI, funded through the City-contracted funds of \$36,267 through the remainder of 2019.

Financial Impacts: The current Link Center contract with the City provides for \$36,267 in 2019 to fund all operations of the Link Center, including personnel, web content, monthly newsletter design, printing, translating services and postage. The first payment of 2019 has been transferred to HCI for Link Center expenses. The City and HCI propose that the City take over the remaining funds, transferring the remaining two payments in the amount of \$25,900 into library general funds to fund the function of the Link Center for the remainder of 2019, including the hiring of one part-time library staff. The table below illustrates sustainable funding for library Link Center operations, but assumes funding for the full year of 2019, rather than 2/3 of 2019:

| LINK Center Analysis - 2019 | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|-----------------------|
| Transfer LINK Center to Library | | | | | |
| Contract cost to LINK Center | | | | | |
| 2019 Expense Budgeted | | | | | \$ 36,267.00 |
| LINK Center expenses (non-employee) | | | | | |
| Postage - bulk mail | | | | | \$ 2,500.00 |
| Printing | | | | | \$ 3,000.00 |
| Layout | | | | | \$ 2,250.00 |
| Translation | | | | | \$ 1,750.00 |
| Newsletter costs to LINK Center | | | | | \$ 9,500.00 |
| Employee Cost with PERA & taxes | | | | | |
| | | | | | 24 hours/week |
| Cost Assumption Library Clerk 1 at \$17.63 | | | | | \$ 25,526.00 |
| Newsletter Cost | | | | | \$ 9,500.00 |
| Total Cost of In-house LINK | | | | | \$ 35,026.00 |
| Current Contract Cost for 2019 | | | | | \$ (36,267.00) |
| Net Annual Savings/(Cost) to transition to Library | | | | | \$ 1,241.00 |

Tentative Timelines:

The City, through Library Services, will take over the function of the Link Center May 1, 2019.