



Legislation Text

File #: 20-129, **Version:** 1

Receive a presentation from the Solano County Probation Department to include a review of adult recidivism data from Beyond the Arc, Inc, and available programs and services for youth; Approve a 6 month contract for an amount not to exceed \$45,000 with Literary Engineers to develop and produce a book for youth; Authorize the County Administrator to execute the contract; and Authorize the Chief of Probation to execute any amendments to the contract which are technical or administrative in nature

Published Notice Required? Yes ☐ No ☒
Public Hearing Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

The Probation Department recommends the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive a presentation from the Solano County Probation Department outlining adult recidivism data from Beyond the Arc, Inc., and information related to programs and services available for youth in field services and at the Juvenile Detention Facility (JDF);
2. Approve a 6 month contract for an amount not to exceed \$45,000 with Literary Engineers to develop and produce a book for youth;
3. Authorize the County Administrator to execute the contract; and
4. Authorize the Chief of Probation to execute any future contract amendments that are administrative or technical in nature.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

The Probation Department has evolved into a Department focused on evidence based (EBP) and evidence informed practices. The services offered to adults and juveniles, in addition to the methods used for monitoring and supervision, have allowed the Department to move in a forward position for the past eight years. The Department strives to change lives and reduce recidivism through positive behavior change. The Department's firm, fair, and care approach exemplifies our interactions with clients in the office and in the community.

The Department has partnered with Beyond the Arc, Inc. (BTA) since 2017 to gather, review and analyze recidivism rates for adult clients. An independent review of criminal justice records by BTA found a 49% reduction in new convictions over a five-year period. The Department attributes this success to the innovative programming (cognitive behavioral therapy, substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, job readiness, and vocational training), and the supervision services that are provided to adults which seek to reduce reoffending.

Along with providing services to adults, the Department has also focused its efforts on providing prevention services for youth. In 2018, the Department entered into a partnership with the Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District (FSUSD) and started the Adopt-a-School program at Fairview Elementary. The Department adopted a third-grade class, and staff from the Department go to the classroom on a weekly basis to provide tutoring and other supportive services to the teacher and the students. In June 2019, the Department was recognized for

their efforts by the FSUSD Board, and the program is now in its second year. For the past six years, the Department has enhanced treatment services and has a one-stop shop for most clients in Fairfield and Vallejo. In addition to the Adopt-a-School program, the Department also partnered with Literary Engineers/Literary Tools to create a customized book regarding the positive impact of Probation Officers in the community. The Department will be working with the author on the storyboard and layout of the book. The book will be given to elementary age students as part of the Department's early intervention and prevention program.

For youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system and receiving supervision services in the community, the Department formally opened the Youth Achievement Center (YAC) in July of 2019. The YAC serves as a one-stop youth multi-service center and focuses on addressing criminogenic needs utilizing a risk, need, responsivity framework. The goal of the YAC is to provide services based on the youth's risk and needs to reduce delinquency and increase the successful transition into adulthood. YAC services take place in a variety of locations. In addition to interventions, the Centers offer pro-social activities as well to include Youth of the Month, Spoken Word, and Job Readiness Day. The Centers, where group interventions occur, are located in a building near the Probation Office in Vallejo and at the Sullivan Interagency Center Fairfield. Although the YAC services are up and running, the Department was informed that we would need to move out of the Sullivan Center by May 2021 due to the FSUSD needing the space for another purpose. The Department has formed a committee to look at viable options to accommodate the North County Juvenile Supervision Staff, as well as the Department and contracted staff assigned to the YAC.

The Department continues to enhance services for youth in detention at the JDF. Most recently, the JDF implemented a trades program in partnership with the Solano County Office of Education (SCOE). The "Introduction to Construction Trades" course is a three-semester program that provides an overview and introduction to the trades. Students are introduced to calculation and characteristics of materials, carpentry, framing, basic electrical wiring, welding, and plumbing. Students learn about the construction trades and construction careers. Coursework is project-based, providing students with opportunities to develop teamwork and project management skills. Students demonstrate responsibility for personal and occupational safety on the job site and have the opportunity to obtain Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) certifications verifying their competence. The certifications are entered into a national database that prospective employers can search and verify youth competencies. The instructors and assigned Student Support Specialists are actively compiling resource and referral materials for youth transitioning back to the community. Outreach has been done to establish relationships with local unions and trade organizations. The goal is to have representatives from the trade unions and organizations give presentations to the youth at the JDF, build connections, and establish relationships prior to the youth being released.

In addition to the trades program, the JDF and SCOE continue to focus on the educational needs of the youth in detention. On January 23, 2020, ten (10) Evergreen Academy students received their high school diplomas before a supportive crowd of family, Probation staff, and community supporters. Three (3) youth received \$500 scholarships from the Fairfield Host Lions Club to further pursue their educational goals. Since the 2016-17 school year, 63 youth have graduated high school while detained at the JDF. Moreover, JDF continues to offer online community college courses with an average of five (5) youth enrolled each semester. Group Counselors and contracted service providers assist with enrollment, navigating college and course materials, and tutoring the youth to support success in their educational endeavors.

The Department is having a positive impact on our clients and the community. We are firm, fair, and care, and will continue to implement programs and services for adults and youth that make a difference and are essential to the evolution of the probation field.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The cost of preparing this item is minimal and is absorbed in the department's FY2019/20 Adopted Budget. The cost of the contract for Literary Engineers which includes the development, illustration, and initial

production of the book, is funded by the Youthful Offender Block Grant (YOBG).

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board of Supervisors could choose:

1. Not to receive the presentation from the Probation Department. This is not recommended as this is an opportunity for the Board of Supervisors and the public to receive information on adult recidivism data, and the programs and services available for youth in field services and at the JDF.
2. Not to approve the contract for Literary Engineers. This is not recommended as the book will be customized for the Department and will illustrate the positive impact of Probation Officers in the community. The book will also be given to elementary age students as a part of the Department's early intervention and prevention program.
3. Not to authorize the Chief of Probation to approve and execute any future contract amendments. This action is not recommended and is not practical as it would require the Department to request approval for routine matters such as minor technical or administrative changes.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION