

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication



Date : November 17, 2016
To : The Honorable Theodore Lipscomb St., County Board Chairman
From : Timothy Ochnikowski Director, DAS Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD)
Michael Bonk, Disabilities Recreation Manager, DAS - OPD
Subject : ***Accessible Recreation Contract, 2017-2019, Easter Seals Southeastern Wisconsin***

Background:

On January 1, 2002, responsibility to provide accessible Wil-O-Way recreation services were transferred from the Department of Parks to the Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD). OPD assumed responsibility for both recreation programming and operation of the facilities located in Grant and Underwood Parks. Recreation services were designed to be coordinated by OPD's Community Recreation Coordinator, and following a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, supplied by a community agency skilled and knowledgeable in providing recreation supports requested by people with disabilities. Through RFP processes completed in 2002, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2012 & 2016: Easter Seals Southeastern Wisconsin, and its predecessor agency Kindcare, Inc. has served satisfactorily in this capacity.

Under the direction of the OPD, Easter Seals has successfully increased the number of Wil-O-Way Summer Day Camp participants involved in the six-week experience. They have also been able to support the needs of people with more complex and pervasive accommodation needs. Care providers are also benefited and comforted to know that campers are in a safe and stimulating environment. This affords them both respite, and the opportunity to continue employment and other life tasks. Through support provided by Milwaukee County, camp fees are maintained at an affordable price for all camp costs including provision of transportation.

In addition, the Wil-O-Way Centers have offered additional onsite recreation opportunities based at the Grant and Underwood Centers to the benefit of people with disabilities and their care providers. On other occasions, program participants are supported in community outings such as Lake Michigan sailing at the Milwaukee Community Sailing Center, area restaurants, movies, bowling centers, etc. With highly satisfactory survey results, this combination of services has maintained successful operations.

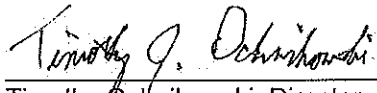
Current Status:

In keeping with the goal of OPD of providing the most cost-efficient and effective services to persons with disabilities, OPD wrote the RFP for the 2017-2019, so as to provide more flexibility to the contracting agency to provide recreation programming that seeks high participation of persons with disabilities, while at the same time lowering the required staff time and costs needed to provide those programming opportunities.

Easter Seals, which was selected for the 2017-2019 recreation contract, will comply with paying the living wage to its program staff, as stipulated in the living wage ordinance. This will result in the reduction of 927 hours of programming hours per year, or a reduction of 30% of programming to persons with disabilities.

Recommendation:

The Director of the Office for Persons with Disabilities respectfully recommends that the County Board and County Executive review and adopt the attached resolution calling for a three-year contract with Easter Seals to provide summer camp and recreation programming for persons with disabilities.



Timothy Ochnikowski, Director
DAS Office for Persons with Disabilities



Michael Bonk, Disabilities Recreation Manager
DAS Office for Persons with Disabilities