

A report from the Director, Department of Health and Human Services, requesting authorization to enter into purchase of service contracts for the operation of the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) and a contract with the State of Wisconsin for revenue to support the program, by recommending adoption of the following:

A RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Section 16.27, Wisconsin State Statutes (State Statutes), governs the operation of the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) in the State of Wisconsin (the State) and prescribes a role for counties in delivering such assistance; and

WHEREAS, Section 46.215, State Statutes, specifically addresses Milwaukee County's (the County) role in providing energy assistance to eligible residents; and

WHEREAS, per Section 59.52(31), State Statutes, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is requesting approval of two Purchase of Service contracts with community vendors to perform this critical service, which assists with heating, electric, and energy crisis costs for the residents of our County and offers year-round, 24-hour per day access to support; and

WHEREAS, funding to support these contracts, as well as County staff and overhead costs, is provided by the State WHEAP contract and is contingent upon Federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funding; and

WHEREAS, for the past few years, the State Department of Administration (DOA) has been utilizing a private vendor to process online applications, and as a result, the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2024 preliminary allocation to the County decreased by \$162,205, from \$2,957,437 in FFY2023, to \$2,795,232, due to the shift in applications from Community Advocates, Inc. (Community Advocates), and United Migrant Opportunity Services, Inc. (UMOS), to the private vendor; and

WHEREAS, to remain within the total amount awarded in the State contract, the contracts with the two provider agencies have been reduced by about \$17,768 compared to FFY2023; and

WHEREAS, given the reduction in funding, service impacts will occur such as the elimination of extended hours for customers, reduced outreach, longer call wait times due to the reduction in staffing at the call center, as well as overall job loss to our partner agency staff who are majority Black and Latino; and

WHEREAS, DHHS has not yet been notified of a final funding amount for the 2024 season and because the existing contracts end on September 30, 2023, the department is seeking approval of the contracts in the September cycle to ensure continuity of services; and

WHEREAS, per Section 16.27 and Section 46.215, State Statutes, the Director, DHHS, is also requesting authorization to execute a contract with the State DOA for FFY2024 (October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024) for the operation and funding of low-income energy assistance under WHEAP; and

WHEREAS, if the actual FFY2024 State WHEAP contract award is less than the preliminary award amount of \$2,795,232, provider contracts with Community Advocates and UMOS will be further reduced and DHHS will inform the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors of this change; and

WHEREAS, the Committee on Finance, at its meeting of September 14, 2023, recommended adoption of File No. 23-827 (vote 7-0); now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors (County Board) hereby authorizes the Director, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), or her designee, to execute contracts with the following vendors for the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2024 term effective October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, and in the following amounts:

Provider	2023 Contract	2024 Proposed Contract	Variance 2024/2023
Community Advocates, Inc. (Community Advocates)	\$1,540,949	\$1,668,909	\$127,960
United Migrant Opportunity Services, Inc. (UMOS)	\$820,015	\$674,287	(\$145,728)
Total	\$2,360,964	\$2,343,196	(\$17,768)

; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Director, DHHS, or her designee, is hereby authorized by the County Board to amend the Community Advocates and UMOS contracts due to the receipt of any addenda increasing the State of Wisconsin (the State) Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) contract with DHHS from the Division of Energy, Housing, and Community Resources, State Department of Administration (DOA), for the operation of the WHEAP during FFY2024; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County Board hereby authorizes the Director, DHHS, or her designee, to execute a FFY2024 contract for the period of October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, with the State DOA covering the operation of the WHEAP in the amount of \$2,795,232, and any addenda increasing the contract.

jmj
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