Sub __ to 2021 RES-140 (PROPOSED – BARE)

3 AWARDING A CONTRACT TO FOCUS COUNSELING FOR 4 CONTINUATION OF HOTELS TO HOUSING CASE MANAGEMENT 5 DCDHS – HAA DIVISION

This project is funded with the County's allocation of local aid authorized in the 2021 American Rescue Plan. Therefore, this resolution follows the format outlined in 2021 RES-013.

Justification

<u>Authorizing Law:</u> In March of 2021, the federal government authorized the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan (ARP) stimulus bill authorizing additional funding to respond to and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic across multiple areas of need.

Dane County was allocated over \$106 million in ARP local aid. A portion of those funds have been committed to various efforts to prevent and end homelessness and limit spread of COVID-19 through efforts to provide social distancing in the congregate shelter system. Over \$2.6 million in ARP funding was approved for the Hotels to Housing rehousing initiative for use in 2021 by the Dane County Board in May of 2021.

Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Preventing exposure to and spread of COVID-19 among households experiencing homelessness has been a pillar of Dane County's pandemic response. Beginning in March of 2020, Dane County funded non-congregate hotel shelter operations and assisted with other congregate shelter expansions to quickly create critical social distancing in the community's homeless shelter system, partnering with numerous hotels to provide rooms, and with the City of Madison, Public Health Madison-Dane County, and frontline agencies to administer the program.

In May of 2021, Dane County authorized the first phase of a historic effort to provide housing search, rental assistance, and case management services to people experiencing homelessness who are currently served by non-congregate shelter funded by Dane County. Referred to as Hotels to Housing, the program assists eligible households with up to two years of rental assistance and case management.

Since the program began an existing contract for case management with Focus Counseling, the agency has assisted more than 80 hotel shelter guests with securing housing. 170 households are currently enrolled with the program through Focus Counseling and continuing their housing search.

The Dane County Department of Human Services – Housing Access and Affordability Division (HAA) seeks to contract with Focus Counseling to continue housing search and case management services through the Hotels to Housing initiative.

The funding source for the program is changing from CARES to ARP. An RFP has been issued to identify Hotels to Housing case management partners in 2022 and beyond.

<u>Duplication of Funding/Existing Partnerships and Programs:</u> The funding is cooperative with other housing programs, as additional housing resources are necessary to meet the local need.

Expected Outcomes and Data Collection

Local program standards set by the Homeless Services Consortium (HSC) Dane County/Madison Continuum of Care for rapid re-housing outcomes are 1. To work with client households to obtain permanent housing and maintain housing stability after exiting the program, 2. 85% of program participants enrolled in the program should exit to permanent housing within two years, 3. No more than 5% of households will return to homelessness within the first year of program exit.

Data collected will minimally include the total number of households served, demographics of program participants, the number of individuals who obtained employment and/or increased income during their time in the program, the number of individuals who established connection to non-emergency medical care or behavioral health supports, the average length of time in the program for households.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the County Board requests quarterly reports be shared with the members of the County Board, and that the Health and Human Needs Committee review the reports on a quarterly basis and discuss how the information presented addresses anticipated program outcomes.

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the following contract be awarded and that the County Executive and County Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to sign the agreement on behalf of Dane County, and that the Controller is authorized to make payments:

72 <u>Vendor</u>73 Focus Counseling, Inc.

Contract Amount

\$291,736