



Discussion of \$87,000 Funding Request for Legal Aid of Sonoma County

City Council Meeting
September 26, 2017

David Gouin
Director of Housing & Community Services

Background

January 10 - Council agreed to request a future agenda item

- \$20,000 gap funding request by Legal Aid of Sonoma County

January 24 – Council voted to discuss request at next available agenda opportunity

Background

February 28- Council directed:

- One-time funding of \$20,000 for Renter Legal Advocacy Services
- Legal Aid to report on how the funds were spent and outcomes
- Staff to seek proposals for Renter/Property Owner education, mediation, eviction defense, Sec 8 terminations and habitability retaliation

Background

May- Council allots \$75,000 General Fund funding for renter legal services

June- Request for information received:

- Renter Advocacy/Legal Representation Services \$87,000
- Renter/Property Owner Education and Mediation Services \$30,000-\$75,000

Background

August-Council to consider these services along with Rental Inspection as fee based programs, now postponed

Legal Aid of Sonoma County Report

April – June 2017 \$17,368.12

- Hired first ever housing staff attorney
- 168 served (116 adults, 52 children)
 - 30 seniors
 - 27 Hispanic, Black Native American, and/or Asian
- Services provided
 - 40 cases – Legal Advice
 - 13 Written Pleadings
 - 33 Negotiations with resulting settlement
 - 9 Full Court hearings
- 14 Habitability Cases - 6 mold infestation; 4 water intrusion; 2 unpermitted; 1 no water/electricity; 1 no heat
- 30 households where tenants remained in homes
- Leveraged average of 4 wks of additional time in housing for each household served
- \$8,000 in relocation costs obtained

RECOMMENDATION

- Council direction regarding an award of General Fund funding to Legal Aid of Sonoma County for Renter Advocacy and Legal Representation Services in the amount of \$87,000 plus \$8,031 for City contract admin.
- Total \$95,031