

BUDGET RESPONSES – COUNSELING AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Describe the current staffing in the CSS department that would be affected by the budget reduction and cost impact of staffing changes.

The following positions in the CSS department would be eliminated with this reduction:

- 1 full-time Director
- 1 part-time Counselor (30 hrs/wk) that also performs administrative functions
- 2 part-time Counselors (approx. 10-15 hrs/wk combined) that only provide counseling services to clients
- 1 part-time unpaid Intern Counselor (approx. 20 hrs/wk) that only provides counseling services

What is the cost impact of these staffing reductions?

Given the staffing structure in the CSS department, which relies heavily on part-time paid and unpaid staff, the direct cost of these positions and related overhead expenses totals \$197,000 for FY2010. The CSS department generates approximately \$39,000 from counseling services, resulting in a net reduction of operating expenses of \$158,000.

Describe the level of counseling activity performed by the CSS department.

The CSS department has averaged 1,120 counseling sessions (each lasting approximately 1 hour) per year between 2006 and 2008. 686 counseling sessions have been conducted in 2009 through September. The department has averaged 154 new clients per year between 2006 and 2008. 99 new clients have received services in 2009 through September.

How many of the counseling clients are Downers Grove residents?

Approximately 76% of counseling clients going back to 2007 are Downers Grove residents.

Describe the types of problems experienced by clients who rely on CSS department services?

A wide range of concerns are confidentially addressed through counseling, which include but are not limited to: coping with job loss, divorce, major illness or financial hardship; loss of a parent, child or sibling; intervening when youth are harming themselves or acting out in the schools, at home or in the neighborhood; helping individuals to better manage their behaviors, emotions and relationships; addressing child abuse, including adults dealing with abuse that occurred in their childhood; supporting residents with mental illnesses to function better within the community; helping family members to reduce conflict in the home, address addictions and other unhealthy excesses; or providing affordable aftercare following treatment or hospitalization.

How are the fees set for counseling clients?

When a new client inquires about services from the CSS department, they are told that the resident rate is \$60 per hour and the non-resident rate is \$70 per hour. During the initial meeting, if it determined that they have legitimate financial hardship based on total household income and number of dependents, counselors can offer lower rates. Rates for non-residents cannot fall below \$50, whereas there is no minimum threshold for resident rates. The fully loaded hourly cost for the paid counselors is approximately \$35.

Why does the Village have a policy of providing services to non-residents?

Non-resident clients, who are charged for service at a higher rate than residents, help to reduce the net cost to the Village for providing counseling services to residents.

What other counseling options are available to residents and how are they different from the services provided by the CSS department?

Counseling services are available through the organizations listed below. An explanation is provided to show how their services differ from the services provided by the CSS department:

- **Private practices counselors** – because these practices typically accept insurance as payment for services, they must extend the same rates to all clients, and do not have the ability to adjust fees based on ability to pay. Most of the clients that use CSS department services do not have insurance coverage that can be used to cover counseling and find the private practice alternative cost prohibitive.
- **DuPage County Mental Health Department** – services provided by the Health Department are limited to people with significant chronic mental health concerns or in more urgent need of psychiatric (medication) services. For this reason, the department often receives referrals from the Health Department for individuals who do not meet their criteria for receive County services.
- **Not-for-profits such as Family Shelter Services** – generally do not provide general counseling services or the other range of services that the department offers. Not-for-profits receive grants that provide support to specific

services with each agency addressing a unique concern such as: domestic violence, child abuse & foster care, sexual abuse and rape counseling services, addiction treatment, people with disabilities or developmental delays, homeless, etc.

What are the primary factors that make a client select the CSS Department from which to receive services?

As indicated above, the CSS Department is unique because the services are either 1) more affordable, 2) more accessible (in terms of location and scheduling convenience) and 3) appeal to a broader range of clients (who may not qualify for services at other entities). For a large number of the clients that the CSS department services, there are functionally no other similar services in the community available to them.

What would the likely impact be if the people who receive services from the CSS department are no longer able to because this service is eliminated?

It is difficult to measure and predict the impact of this program elimination. It is likely that some of the clients that currently rely on the department for services may demand response or require services from other public service functions, such those provided by as law enforcement, emergency medical services, the townships, DuPage County, or the schools.

Describe any other non-counseling services performed by the department that would be eliminated.

The following table lists other services provided by the department and how they would be handled with the elimination of counseling services

Service	Plan
Information and referral for social service inquiries	Will be performed by other Village customer service functions, with less ability to provide information directly
Senior citizen assistance, including production of Senior Resource Guide and coordinating services and referrals	Will be evaluated and, if maintained, reassigned to another department for completion
Administer District 99 Alternative to Smoking Suspension Program	Will discuss options with District 99 representatives, service will likely be eliminated.
Salvation Army Representation for DG (currently administers disbursements and provides financial networking)	Will discuss options with Salvation Army representative and identify other possible providers (i.e. Townships)
Domestic violence follow-up	Will be evaluated and essential services provided by the Police Department
Home Chore Program administration	Will be evaluated and, if maintained, reassigned to another department for completion
Neighbor dispute resolution services	Will be evaluated and, if maintained, reassigned to another department for completion
Staff liaison to Human Services Commission	A new staff liaison will be assigned
Youth in Government Program administration	Will be reassigned to another department for completion
Prentiss Creek Resource Center Management and Grant Administration	Will be managed by staff in the Police Department with support from the Village Grants Coordinator

If the Council approved the budget with the elimination of the Counseling function, describe the transition plan that would be implemented.

In advance of the approval of the budget, if it is possible or likely that the CSS department will be eliminated, Manager’s Office staff will work with the Director to develop a comprehensive plan for outreach to key stakeholders who will be impacted. Appropriate communication may begin prior to final budget adoption to ensure that external agencies have adequate lead time to make any necessary adjustments to their operations. The plan will be implemented expeditiously once budget adoption occurs with close coordination between the Manager’s Office and Director to ensure that all programs and activities are terminated or transitioned to other responsible parties in the most reasonable manner possible. Assuming his willingness and availability, the Director will be retained until such activities are finalized to the satisfaction of the Village Manager.

Please provide an estimate of the net \$ effect of elimination of the Counseling and Social Services Department.

The direct costs for operating the Resource Center in 2010 are \$48,700, with \$14,667 anticipated in grant revenues, leaving a balance of \$34,052 to be paid from other General Fund revenues.

Please provide a total change in staffing if the Counseling and Social Services Department is eliminated.

The Center currently employs one part-time Resource Center Coordinator and one part-time Resource Center Mentor.