

City Council Budget Work Session Transcript – 8/10/2023

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[10:00:15 AM]

Budget work session. It's August 10th, 2023, and 10:00 in the morning. We are meeting in the city council chambers at city hall, which is located at 301 west second street in Austin, Texas. And we have a quorum of the Austin city council present today. This budget work session, as we've laid out some time ago, and have worked our way up to is a day where council will have the opportunity to lay out proposed amendments that they might be proposing for the budget and allow for questions and answers and comments. However we want to do it, but it's just it's focusing on potential amendments to the budget that's been laid out before we get started, of course, we all know all members of the council know that we don't have all the money available to pay for all of the potential amendments. And that's going to require some discipline on the part of the council as we

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go forward. It's also true that we don't we want to be fair in how we approach the number of amendments from specific council members or the amount of money based upon the proposed amendments for city council members. You know, there's some questions about how you deal with the fair allocation per member, the fair allocation in terms of money per member per for the area of the budget. So some work has gone into trying to create an orderly process for this. And hopefully today will help us in that regard with that, we will start with I'll recognize the city manager and he'll recognize his staff for our revenue update from the manager's office and then some thought process with regard to a potential framework. And then we'll come back to me and I'll start the process of helping facilitate laying out amendments

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. So with that manager, I'll recognize you. >> Mayor, council members, thank you very much. As has been the practice in the past, we've got a Kerri Lang is going to be providing us an overview of the dollars that are now available that we've been able to identify and then I have some brief comments following her presentation about giving us that framework, so us so that we can move forward with today's discussion. >> Good morning, mayor and council Kerri Lang budget officer of financial services department. I'm actually going to turn it over to Eric Nelson, division manager or division chief with financial services, budget and performance. >> Hey, good morning. Council. Eric Nelson, division chief of financial services. This will be extremely brief. I just want to update you with some revenue change since the release of the proposed budget. If we could go to the next slide, please. As we communicated to you in a memo last week at the official voter

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approval property tax rate, we could generate an additional \$5.2 million beyond what was assumed in the proposed budget on top of that, at the July 20th council meeting, you began the process of approving a new franchise agreement with Google that will generate \$2.3 million in ongoing revenue each year for the general fund. So in total, we've identified an additional seven and one half million dollars in ongoing revenue with respect to one time revenue that Google deal also involved a one time payment of \$800,000. And on top of that, we've since looked at a potential real estate purchase. We thought we were going to need \$7 million in cash for that. There's a new way to structure that and so therefore that's freed up \$7 million in one time funding that had been included in the proposed budget . And that's all I have for you . So just to sum it all up,

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seven and one half million in ongoing 7.8 million in 1 time, I'm available to spend any. Oh thank you, Eric. >> Let me just provide the framework that the mayor just referenced a few minutes ago. You know, the updated financial picture revenue picture provides a framework for these amendment discussions that we're going to have this morning. And as always is the case with respect to budgeting, there's always more needs than there are resources. And as you can see, we've organized the revenue update of and your proposed amendments into two categories. One time and ongoing. And this fiscally important, this distinction is important because we want to make sure we match the revenue that is ongoing with amendments that are ongoing, as it were, and the revenue to that's one time with one time amendments that are being offered and we want to we want that framework to ensure that we create the expectation that those things that we are going to take on as

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amendments that are ongoing, that they're matched with the revenue picture on into the future year to help facilitate policymaking and the appropriate analysis for decision making. We've come to an organizing framework that we think can help guide this discussion. Ann first, we want to look at the and identify the overlap between proposed amendments and the critical department needs that exist in this city. And there are clearly some areas that you've identified that match previously unknown or unmet needs of our organization, known unmet needs of our organization. And we want to be able to analyze that and provide that to you over the next several days. And second, throughout this budget process and over the past six months, the council has given us clear direction about the key policy directions of your interest. One is affordability, resiliency, homelessness, public safety and quality of life. And given the limited resources that we that we need to look at the highest impact for all areas in these priority areas and our

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professional staff will work over the next several weeks toward the 16th to get that. And one final note first. I think some of the amendments that you've offered, we'll be able to accommodate some of your proposals within the \$1.3 billion budget. That's the general fund. And in the days ahead, I will ask each of our department directors to take a critical look at the amendments that you offer and place on the table during the course of this discussion today, and then hopefully to be able to use their prudent fiscal management to be able to address those needs during inside the budget process or that envelope. And I think some of the items that may potentially be left, some of the items that are going to be offered today may be better left out for midyear amendment allowing the staff more time to provide additional analysis and explore partnerships where other funding agencies may help us to address those recommendations and those concerns of the community. And with that mayor, we'll provide you all the support. Mayor and council, all

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the support you need to help us get through this process. >> Thank you, manager. I'm going to before we go any further, I want to recognize councilmember Allison alter. She she had a comment that I told her I would bring up early and I forgot. So thank you, mayor. >> City manager I wanted to acknowledge the parks department and also thank you for really following up on the maxim of taking action when there was opportunity to better meet the needs of our community. I reached out to director Mcneely last Friday asking if we could reduce the fees at our pools, especially now that we're switching where many neighborhood pools that are free are closing and Tuesday night I got out the message that

yesterday we would be waiving all pool fees except at Barton springs and so I just want to shout out to director Mcneely, thank her and her staff in

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aquatics for making that happen . I happen to be a deep Eddie yesterday because it was my husband's birthday and got a chance to see the patrons coming to deep Betty and finding out that it was free and just seeing how happy that made them and how much relief that provided for them as they approached the next several weeks of continuing heat . So just really want to thank the staff for taking action, really quickly. And you know, this was something that I worked on with Garza and they were going to be trying to find all sorts of ways to subsidize their community. And so I think this is going to make a big difference. So I just wanted to say thank you to director Mcneely. >> Thank you, councilmember, and thank you to the director and to the parks that deserves recognition. I'll recognize councilmember Fuentes and then councilmember Kelly. Thank you, mayor. >> My question is for the city manager, our city manager. I appreciate your your opening comments, particularly around you, you know, discussing and letting us know that the city

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departmental staff will be taking a look at our amendments and considering which of our amendments can be rolled in to the base budget. Can you share with us a timeline or help us better understand when we should hear back? >> Yeah. Well, first, yes, the timeline is going to be between now and next Wednesday, and we'll obviously work with your office as we get part of this. I want to make sure that we've got everything on the table that we know that's being offered so that that's the final, the final and best amendments of in this year's budget process. And so then we want to then turn those over those areas that we think that there's opportunities for us to work within that \$1.35 billion budget to figure out how we get that done. And as soon as as soon as this day is over, we're going to go to work and then begin to connect with your office. When we be able to identify those opportunities. >> Okay. So our offices will be notified individually if our amendments have been rolled in. >> Yeah, part part of I don't mean to speak for the manager, but part of what the goal was in asking for amendments to be presented by a certain time and

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then to have a day like today would be to facilitate that. And and the goal was to have it. It's not quite a week, but it's right at a week, including a week to allow for that that kind of thing to happen in. And as you know, the amendments, some amendments made the kind of the agreed deadline and some came in after the deadline. So when everything is out there and hopefully this is what today will help us do,

then I think it will facilitate the manager's ability to facilitate that in the budget. >> And I'm going to do my best to just you know, I've been hammering the departments with a saying in Spanish and nettle, and so I'll try to work through this without being so strict on that. And the second thing is, is that I've also been telling all the acms just say no. And so we'll be a little more flexible with respect to that because part of this is to make sure that we accommodate the needs of the council and the community. >> Even our non Spanish speakers seem to pick up on what that

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meant. Councilmember Kelly and then councilmember Velasquez, thank you, mayor, for the recognition. >> I just wanted to kind of piggyback off of what councilmember Allison alter said about the pools. I think that's great and I appreciate that you were working on that. I also just want to remind everyone that we've seen an increased fire risk in the community as of late. We are under a red flag warning today and the weather conditions will continue to be conducive to the rapid spread of fires. So if you're outside in the area and you're trying to enjoy the day, please make sure you do everything you can to prevent the spread of wildfires so that we can protect the residents who live here and our beautiful green spaces. District six has one of the largest areas related to nice areas with increased fire risk. And for more information, you can visit firewise.org to learn how you and your family can prevent wildfires. Thank you. >> Thank you. Councilmember Velasquez. >> This being my first budget, I wanted to say thank you for the structure on that. I know we came in a few minutes after the 6:00 cut off, but but we try to

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get there. And also, I was I was forewarned by former councilmember Raul Alvarez that the city manager is known for saying no dinero. So I made sure to have some good conversations with him before before that jumped off. >> Thank you. Councilmember Allison alter. >> Thank you. I was just wanted to ask staff when we would hear what the sales tax report was from yesterday. >> Sure. If we could bring that presentation back up, we have some backup prepared for that. And it's all the way at the end. Please. Oh, really? One more. Okay, well, without the graphic, the message is the same. It's just not as dramatic. We received the August sales tax payment yesterday. The overall payment was 2.1% growth.

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However, that really distorts the real picture because we had a \$1.7 million one time audit adjustment in our favor. But in the current collections line, which is the one we use to really assess the trend, it was actually -2.9% growth. That's the lowest figure we've seen since the pandemic. So it really does tie into our thinking that we're going to experience some challenges with sales tax growth. And we'd certainly

not be inclined to revise our projections upward at this point . >> Thank you. Can we make sure that we get to see that slide maybe at the end or something? Because, yeah, absolutely important for us to see and maybe talk through if there are nuances of that. Can you speak again to the move for the reserves as recommended and why that's important to go from the 14% to the 17, especially now

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that we have potentially 7.5 million of ongoing and 7.8 million of one time funding. >> Yeah, and I'll take that one at Benigno. Chief financial officer there's many reasons that were proposing that and this is not the first increase in reserves. We've seen. We had implemented a revised policy years ago that took us to a recommended 12% total when on senate bill two passed. That set the 3.5% property tax. We said we recommended and council approved going to 14% because we lost a lot of revenue flexibility with with that limitation on our property taxes. In other words, when we have an economic decline in sales, taxes were to drop, we lost some of that flexibility. So we increased it then coming on the heels of a lengthy pandemic, really an unforeseen event where we had to put a lot of money into the community very quickly before we were receiving money from the federal government and we were able to do that. It was our reserves

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that allowed us to do that. And now we've seen, you know, two major winter storms. I don't remember what the first one was called. I think everybody calls it snowmageddon. And the second one was called winter storm. Mara but they both require the city to utilize reserves and the current instance, we were able to take \$5 million out of our general reserves to help cover expenses that were being incurred by Austin resource recovery. So just from a disaster response perspective and the increased number of severe weather events, having that reserve is important and then the rating agencies is critical as well. We have seen our rating downgraded by moody's and Fitch over the last couple of years and Ed reserves as part of the equation. I believe that will get us back to a triple a rated credit. I do want to say that we still are highly rated. We're double a plus, which is a very, very strong rating. It's just not the highest that that you can be, which is a triple a agency. We'd like to see us get back to that level. And there's a number of things we have to

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do. And we've done them. We've reformed our pension systems and but but increasing our reserves is, is, I think, important. And if you look at the government finance officers association, that's the primary best practice institute and professional organization for the municipal finance world. They recommend a 60 day reserve. If you do the math on that, it comes out to 16.7. And that's why we round it up to 17%

as our as our proposed. So for all of those reasons, we think it's really important to take the opportunity to increase our reserves while we have some extra revenue that have come in as a result of the really strong sales tax. We saw over the last year and a half. >> Thank you so just what is it you rounded up from, what, 67? >> You know, the policy is 60 days. The gfoa recommend nation is 60 days. If you do the math on that, it's 16.7. We've always presented our reserve as as a

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percent. And you know, just trying to keep it simple, said 17% as opposed to getting into decimals. I mean, if you really want to get into decimals, it's 16.6, six, six, 6% is what 60 days equates to. Thank you. >> Yes. Councilmember Fuentes. Thank you. >> I just since we're talking about reserves, that is a matter of policy that this council will have a conversation around. Right now, the city manager's proposed closed budget has us going from a 14% reserve policy to a 17% reserve policy. The 60 days that Mr. Benigno just outlined, and I think all of us here are committed and what you just laid out and increasing our reserve policy, it's just a matter of how quickly and to what extent. So what is before us is a 3% increase. I think we can have a conversation of whether or not to do it incrementally to do a 1.5% increase this fiscal year, to do a 2% increase. This fiscal year, or to do the full 3. But that is a conversation that will have in

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the coming days. And of course, next week when we do our final deliberation session. And as we consider today's amendments, I do want to point out that the total here for one time expenditures for all of the amendments that have been filed is 26 million. If we add and if we only go the 2% increase on the reserve policy for this fiscal year, that would give us another 13,000,000 in 1 time funding. So that would put us at 20.8 million. And if we did it, half of it at a 1.5% increase instead, that would give us 27.3 million, which would be sufficient to cover the amount of amendments that we have proposed for one time. Expenditures that number is subject to change because city manager just laid out that some of the amendments might be incorporated into the base budget. But since councilmember Allison alter talked about reserves policy, I wanted to provide the balance of that conversation to say it's still a it's a policy question that

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we'll have a conversation on. So just to kind of lay out some context and additional consideration, okay. At some point we're going to go to amendments, right? >> Yeah. Okay. Councilmember Ryan alter, one really quick question just on this topic. >> When do our agents, when do the agencies re evaluate rate? >> Is it annually, quarterly? What does that look like? >> We do an annual general obligation bond sale.

We're meeting with the rating agencies this Friday to present our financials as part of getting our updated rating for the sale, which will occur in September. Thank you. Oh, I did want to mention, too, that the auditor recently took a look at reserves and what other local Texas entities are or local governmental entities the large Texas cities do. And so council should have that report. I think it generally found that our reserves are below what our Texas large city peers have as a reserve policy, not 100, but in to the in general, we're a little bit below our peers. >> It looks like they found the

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slide and yeah, I don't have too much more to add. >> This just illustrates the dynamic we're talking about and you can see that trend in the current collections where it's flipped negative for the first time in some time. >> Very good. So members, as we get ready to go into the amendments, let me tell you how how a couple of things. One is for expedition two to make make it a more efficient kind of thing as we go forward. What I would suggest is and you'll have this is not an exclusive list of questions you might ask yourself about your proposed amendment or about other proposed amendments that you hear. Again, this is not an exclusive list. And some of the questions won't apply, but there are a couple of questions that I would ask that we all ask as we go forward. One is, as has been pointed out, is this something that is required , requires recurring funds or is it something that's a one time

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fund and then a part of that is , are we building on something that was a recurring fund, but it was funded previously with one time funds, and that's put us into a situation where we're now having to figure out how to do that and whether we how we might want to approach an amendment like that. Another one is, is this something Lang that instead of fully funding it on the front end, can this be reduced in order to allow for a mid-year analysis of what's really being spent on that debt? Because we may not be able to anticipate the full spending or is it something where we can achieve a partial goal as we build to future years? Another one is if this is a related to a staffing issue, will this and I'll say it this way just increase our staffing problems? In other words, do we have a situation where we already have a lot of unfilled positions?

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Burns this manager is working very hard in the 6 or 7 months that he's been here to get those filled. But if we add positions is now a do we need it when you're trying to fill those positions or does it just add to the problems and add a corollary to that question is it something from a staffing perspective perspective that it can just be absorbed? And I think probably that will be some of the things that the manager's office looks at and gets with members between now and the 16th. And of course, that's not just related

to staffing. It also may be are they able to be spending the money to achieve the goals you want to achieve right now and all you're doing is adding money to that. Another question to ask is whether or not the department has asked for that money is this something that we want them to be focusing on? But they haven't asked for the money because they know they aren't able to get

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that money utilized efficiently . How does an amendment relate to another amendment? And is their ability to consolidate those amendments and then the final one I'd mention is, is this within our mission as a city and a city council, or is it something that is also in some other jurisdictions, mission that it would be it would be better served there and or we ought to be pushing for that other jurisdiction to spend that money. I find it it's been interesting to me in the 6 or 7 months that I've been mayor this time, that other jurisdiction, Luz don't seem to care at all or have any problem asking us for money and we tend to say, oh, well, that's a good question. Why don't we pay for it? And and that's really we ought to have more collaboration and be willing to ask them those things as well. So those are just some

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questions that I hope we'll ask ourselves and ask of each other as we go forward to engage in some discipline about how we approach it. The way I'm going to bring up potential amendments is, is like I indicated, the way we did on Tuesday when we were going through questions and answers and you have in front of you a document that has a list of it's labeled fy 2023, 24 budget amendment tracking and the first items on that are related to proposed amendments to affordable Katy then it goes to equity, then it goes to homelessness. And so what I'm going to try to do to keep us where we don't just have one council member just lay out all the amendments and it's all over the place. Instead, keep it in these kind of buckets, if you will. And so what I'll do is begin Ann with what is labeled

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Ed Paige. Number four, Fuentes zero to family stabilization grant program related to affordability. Then I'll go to two others by councilmember Fuentes, then councilmember qadri councilman Ryan alter et cetera. You all get the point with that. I will recognize council member Fuentes to lay out the first proposed amendment for our edification. >> Thank you. And thank you, mayor. I appreciate the organization and the framework that you've laid out for this year's budget process. My colleagues, my three amendments are focused on affordable Katy really, truly getting out what the city can do to help our working families in the city. Given the affordability crisis that we're in. So this first amendment is on a continuation of the family stabilization grant program. This is a program that we launched last year as

a pilot that we all already know. It's six months into its pilot year, that it's a success. We've heard from families who have participated in this

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program and both of our budget testimony hearings who talked about having access to this type of financial assistance has really helped provide that stabilization. Ann has helped with housing security, and it has helped ensure that our families are not falling into homelessness. And so this amendment is asking for the reauthorization of that program. It is a \$1.3 million, one time funding request. And with this it would help 85 new families participate with this grant program. We've heard from some of the supporters include up together Garza the community investment budget coalition and saint David's foundation is a partner in this program. They also provide supplementary funding. And I want to thank councilmember Jose Velasquez, who has joined as a co sponsor of this amendment, as well as council member Vella qadri and Ryan alter. >> Questions or comments with regard to the proposed amendment by Fuentes. Councilmember

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Fuentes, I'll recognize you on the next proposed amendment. >> So this one is our child care grant program. I want to thank first thank councilmembers Velasquez and Allison alter for co-sponsoring this amendment. This builds off of a resolution that was passed by this council back in January of this year that sought to reduce zoning regulations and barriers when it comes to building child care centers. And so this is as part of that resolution effort, it would put an establish a grant program that would waive fees for child care operators that are going into areas that are known child care deserts, that zoning regulations, zoning resolution that we passed will take some time to get off the ground. Unfortunately the last update we got from our planning team shows that it won't be fully implemented until the end of next year, nearly two years after we've passed it. So this is why this program is needed now, because it's an interim solution to help waive those fees. The conditional use permit

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is on average between 20 to 25,000 per center on average, council members. >> Do you have any questions or comments with regard to the child care grant program? Proposed amendment councilmember Fuentes, you're recognized on the next proposed amendment. >> All right. So this is a social service contracts amendment. It seeks to do a cost of living increase for our social contract services. This is important work because what we know is that individuals who work in early childhood and care services are some of our most lowest paid workers that we have who on average make between 30 to 35,000. Most certainly less than 40,000. And that is simply not enough to live in this city .

So what we're doing is a cost of living adjustment increase to these contracts that have not been updated since 2017. This is in the ongoing expenditures. It's my the only amendment that I have that would fall under the

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ongoing expenditure bucket at 622,000 and we have support from success by six coalition. It's a recommendation from the joint inclusion committee, recommendation from the early childhood council. And I want to thank council members. Allison alter, councilmember Velasquez and Velasquez and vela for their support. Members any questions or comments with regard to the proposed amendment related to early childhood social service contract increase? >> Okay. Thank you. Councilmember Fuentes. I'll now recognize councilmember qadri on a proposed amendment. Great. >> Thank you, mayor. Hopefully mine will be as smooth as councilor moorman's Fuentes amendments. The first amendment I want to lay out is nobody's voted on anything yet. Yeah, I know that the first item I want to lay out is amendment. I want to lay out is the college food access food program under the item, this item will allocate additional money to maintain the college food access grant program that provides relief to food insecure students at local colleges and universities. The program was initially funded in

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the fiscal year 2021 budget, with 50 K for direct support and 7500in direct administration Ann and tended to be distributed over 1 to 2 years. The college commission's 2324 budget recommendation Ann request funding to continue the program and details additional fundings that will help offset the increased need for the program at campuses around the city. I think it's really important to know that this isn't just for UT, it's for any college and university. You know, in the area. The central Texas food bank administers the program and reviews many grant application forms from colleges and universities throughout Austin. But what I do want to kind of highlight about UT and the situation there is that the UT food pantry, which is known as UT outpost, reported 1 in 4 UT students don't know where their next meal comes from. And even though the program was created in response to the covid 19 pandemic before that, food insecurity among students was still on the rise and student

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emergency services and UT outpost 28% increase in the number of students helped with food related needs. So we're looking at a11 107,500 ongoing and I'd like to thank my co sponsors on this council members harper-madison Fuentes, Velasquez and Allison alter. >> Thank you, councilmember members, do you have any questions or comments related to this item, this proposal? Okay. I should have said something earlier, by the way, council member pool is off the dais today as I indicated on Tuesday. She's

not been feeling well and so she's not here today. And I know that we all are supportive of her not feeling not supportive of her not feeling well, but supportive of her as she doesn't feel well. You know, the good news is I talk for a living. And so but but anyway, she wanted to make sure that I pointed out that there's a good reason that she's not here today with that being said, I'll

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recognize councilmember Ryan alter on the next proposed amendment. Thank you very much. >> This amendment, it focuses on helping individuals stay in their home and ultimately Leslie not end up, whether unhoused or just in a very unstable situation. And so, you know, there's no single way to end or prevent homelessness. But we can engage in a host of supports. And what this item does is helps tenants stay in their home by providing them with with stabilization assistance, legal counsel when they are facing eviction so that they can know their rights and ultimately Leslie, you know, sometimes what we see is just the ability when they're represented to be able to work together with their landlord, even if they are ultimately evicted. It can help create a smoother glide path to

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their next housing. Instead of just posting on the door and kicking them out. So this would help groups like Basta, who help tenants facing eviction with those services. And it's one time councilman Allison alter. >> I'm sorry, council member, I was just wondering if, you know, how much is already in the budget for this, because I believe there's some funding in the budget for this. >> And if you don't, I can ask staff I don't know the answer to that question, but I bet someone here does. >> Well, you may lose that bet. >> I may just. But I see someone coming. Rosie, saving my day here. >> I thought I read a q&a question. >> She better know now if she's trying to save your day. >> I thought I read a question that somebody asked about that and there was a certain amount already in the in the budget, wasn't as high as your amount. But sure, I feel like there's a lot of pressure right now. >> So because you volunteered, I

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feel like that's my job. So we do have programs designed to address tenant stabilization. And so this would be layering in funds in existing programs, depending on how we structure this new program. It would be going into perhaps our our contract for tenant stabilization, which has a funding right now in our current contract of \$7.8 million. It was just approved by council that we anticipate expenditure over the fiscal year coming up. >> Okay. I thought there was. I'll take a look, but I'm I was pretty sure there was like a 250,000 that was strictly tenant stabilization. If I'm understanding what what this is about. That was separate from the rental assistance. >> Well, it's tenant stabilization has a different several

different factors associated with it. Rental assistance is one representation for in court with eviction proceedings as an aspect of it. There's educational aspects. And

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so. So the amendment is has to do, I think, with education on the rights and that kind of stuff. >> So is this not about the legal representation? Is this something different? >> So this this is focused on the correct legal representation. My understanding from it was councilmember Fuentes, is question number 92, the \$250,000 for emergency relocation assistance. I understood that funding to be for non but legal representation . But some of the other emergency needs like helping someone with a security deposit to move or those those one time expense vouchers that help individuals Ralls with with the relocation, not with rent presentation when they're facing eviction. >> Is that council member council members? >> I think this is what we said

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earlier as you laid out all these amendments. Our intent is to look at each of these individually, assess what's in the budget that can achieve that objective or find ways, flexibility within the budget to achieve that objective or find alternative funding sources that may be out there and we intend to, as we go through that process, this is to try to get that analysis in front of each council member that's making these proposals. That's not for us to say yes or no. That's not the appropriate role we want to play right now, because if you ask me, my recommendation on a lot of these, this discussion would be very short this morning. So and I don't we don't want to do that. We want to make sure we get all the amendments on the table and then let's because I believe in our recommended budget. So anyway. But it's to try to assess these figure out what we can manage through the budget, through the budget document and those that are find outside of it to find the funding source either that we've identified this morning or other funding sources. >> Absolutely. And I appreciate the question. I think it's a

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great one just to make sure we're not duplicating efforts. I didn't see it as a duplication, but if I'm incorrect and there are some funding for this, then you know, yeah, I'm happy about it. Yeah >> And that's one that we'll work with. Austin public health on because there's some similar services provided by both departments. >> And I would ask that you, I would ask that you also look at I mean, \$5 million in housing stabilization was just granted to two of our major nonprofits here in town. That also I mean, that's \$5 million. Two and a half went to caritas and two and a half went to lifeworks. So there may be there may be some overlap where, again, it's within our mission, but there are also others that have missions and they may be helping us with that. And when the state gave us gave Austin \$5 million just

for that, it it may be helpful. Councilmember Fuentes, thank you. >> And thank you, councilmember Ryan alter. I appreciate your

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amendment. I think what I like most about your amendment is the focus on mobile home communities . That is an area where we've not had injected services and support allocated toward and we know that our mobile home communities are some of our most vulnerable forms of housing and some of our most affordable forms of housing. And we've seen an increase in the amount of redevelopment targeted at mobile home communities, particularly along the project connect line. I've had issues in my district. Councilmember Velasquez, you've had issues in your district, too, regarding the displacement and a distinction between the tenant relocate Ann fund and what I see this amendment seeking to do is that the tenant relocation fund is was originally set up with the intent to provide funding for families who have been displaced where there isn't. The redevelopment has already occurred and they are massively displacing families. That's when that support services comes in to help provide that navigation services for families to other areas of housing throughout the city. What I see this amendment

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doing is providing support for our tenants, organizing within their development. If there's low standards within their housing, providing the providing them with that education of their rights, if they are in an unfair housing situation. So really it's the pre-work that needs to that needs support and that needs focus on especially if our mobile home communities versus is to support services provided once we have already a redevelopment in progress and their displacement has occurred and as a side note, the tenant relocation services fund was set up so that developers could fund and that program once they have decided to redevelop a property. We, of course, cannot require that because of state law. But it would encourage our developer community to contribute. >> Thank you, councilmember councilmember Allison alter. >> Thank you. I just want to thank councilmember alter and councilmember Fuentes for some of the clarification that helps me understand what what you're trying to achieve with the amendment. Thank you.

[10:40:59 AM]

>> Any other comments or questions with regard to this proposed amendment? Okay I'll recognize councilmember vela. >> Thank you, mayor. I I filed this amendment. To there was it was unclear where we were with the tenant stabilization funds at the beginning of the budget process. We have received a lot more clarity since then. We have just signed and executed \$7.8 million contract that with elwin sammaritano, who who successfully executed and managed prior tenant assistance contracts that we

had with them. The essentially the I belong in Austin program. They've been managing and they're about to do a very similar process with the . \$7.8 million that they just signed. The question around the tenant assistance. Again, we've already budgeted \$7.8 million

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that's coming out of last year's budget, really out of this year's budget. We have not budgeted and kind of a discreet amount. We do have the \$750,000 for the displacement and there's another, you know, other buckets of money. But so there's still kind of the outstanding question of is the \$7.8 million enough to last throughout the year early indications from staff was that they think that that money will be enough through about April or may of the coming fiscal year, depending on the drawdown. So I just visited with Edwin sammaritano this morning and we talked in great detail about how the program works, what they're doing. So I would just I think we're going to have to put more money toward the tenant stabilization. I think that the question right now is just how much more Shaw and I think we'll

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just kind of keep mulling that over and kick it into into next week. This is and again, I want to give credit to this council and the last council, I mean, the \$7.8 million was more than we've ever put into the rental assistance tenant stabilization that became a huge issue coming out of the pandemic where there were the potential for eviction. So many people were really struggling. I was just there this morning at and they were doing their food pantry this morning and they were saying that, you know, prior to the pandemic, you know, their food pantry would be 100 cars or so. Now they're up to about 300, 200 or 300 cars. So, I mean, the need has really grown with with the affordability concerns and anyway, I just wanted to lay that out. I don't think that, you know, we're quite there, but but this is going to be in the mix as one of the items that I was talking to the staff and other members and the idea was

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floated for maybe amid a year adjustment, you know, that that basically like, let's let them run with the contract, see where they are in, in, you know, six months from now, you know, February, March of next year. And if the need be, then we can supplement the contract. You know what I don't want is that they're not to be any rental assistance available. I don't want there to be a gap. I don't want there to be kind of we're in a place where, you know, people are in need and there's nothing available. I know we're not going to be able to meet all of the need, but I just want to make sure that there is rental assistance available throughout all of the fiscal year 24. So I'll just leave it at that. Thank you. >> Councilmember Bailey, anybody have questions or comments? Okay I'll recognize councilmember Velasquez. >> Thank

you, mayor, for the recognition. The to my Velasquez amendment number five. I want it is a city of Austin employee childcare assistance amendment.

[10:45:08 AM]

I want to thank councilmember Ryan alter, council member Natasha harper-madison and councilmember Fuentes for being co of this. This amendment was developed in consultation with city staff. It increases the budget by 1 million to account for expansion in eligibility and benefit amounts. This amendment works concurrently with the childcare ifc I brought forth that directs the city manager to develop a pilot program aiming to increase accessibility to childcare resources, increase childcare stipends and conduct a study that will outline employee needs. With Austin becoming more and more unaffordable, it's absolutely necessary that we find ways to expand childcare, especially for our city employees. >> Councilmember Kelly, are you raising your hand? >> Yes. I actually have a question about that. I know that there were some improvements in the budget related to childcare , and I was wondering if perhaps city staff could explain those to us as they are so that I could see how that relates to what you're bringing forward. >> Councilmember yeah. >> Our our proposed budget, or

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at least in the transmittal letter, we indicated to council that this was a fund that had not been accessed by our associates employees in a in a way that we thought they would. Rebecca Kennedy and team are working right now to try to figure out how to change those eligibility requirements so that fund can be accessed by more of our employees. And that's in the process of being worked on now so that we can have that go live October 1st. And as we said in the transmittal, this is we thought we had enough money. We wanted to see how the run rate was going to be against this fund. We think it's a very important item. It's an important item for council. And so this is one that we're going to watch carefully. And if we start to have financial issues, because more people need to access that fund, that need that care, we proposed in the budget that we would address it at that time with come back to council and make the request for appropriate appropriation that would be meet the needs of our associates. >> Okay. So council member, I definitely agree that this is a program that we need to use, but if it's underutilized right now, I would personally as a council

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member, be hesitant to support additional funding until we know what the needs are of the fund and we can work that into what we're doing. Because I want people to access it. But I also don't want to put money into it if it's not going to be utilized in the best way possible. So thank you very much for bringing this forward. But I'd like to err on the side of the city manager at this time. Thank you. >>

Councilmember Ryan alter. >> I just want to thank councilmember Velasquez for bringing this. As someone with two young kids, I can tell you firsthand the value in having knowing that you are able to not only have your kids in child care, but quality childcare. And it's expensive. It I pay more on child care than my house and that's nuts. And so not only me, I think is this critical because it broadens the pool of who is eligible. But it also enriches the benefit. Right now, the benefit is \$100 a week, which is

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good, but it's nowhere near what the market is actually. How much it costs. And so by not only increasing who's eligible, but the amount of that benefit, I think it makes us as a city incredibly attractive for our employees to not only stay here, but when we're trying to recruit people to say, hey, if you have a family, the city of Austin is a great place to work and we're going to take care of you. So I couldn't support this more because I just think it's critical and I might say I don't think you heard anybody say they don't support it. >> I think the clarity is that that it wasn't working Lang for whatever reason, the manager, the new manager has said figure out why it's not working and how you can make that work. And then let us see how it's accessed and more money can come at another point in time. I think that's all that is being said here. So

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anyway, thank you, mayor, for clarifying that. >> That's that was the intent of what I said. I appreciate it. All right. >> Anything else on that item, councilmember Velasquez? I'll recognize you on the next amendment. >> Thank you, mayor. This one is for our parent support specialists. I want to thank councilmember Fuentes, vela, all alter Natasha harper-madison this alter. So this item is for our parent support specialist. It increases the number of full time hours to 74 campuses as well as increases the base pay salary to attract and retain experienced staff. All but three says work in title one schools or schools with population from families did determined to be low income or who are considered to be economically disadvantaged . Ed says help address the top the three top needs of our families at aid housing support, food access, enrollment and attendance support and they are the heart and north stars of our schools. And you touched on

[10:50:15 AM]

it earlier, Mr. Mayor and council member vela and I have had a conversation about leaning on our partners, our our counterparts at the at the county and the and aid to help us fund a little bit more of this. So we'll be looking at that after we get past this. Hopefully any other councilmember vela, just a brief comment. >> I these are a lot of these campuses are in D four and D three. We've talked about it. Parent support specialists are critical. They really play a role that teachers can't play, that the counselors

can't play. They interact with the parents. They try to get them help. They they they just do a lot of really, really good things as we the city stepped in at a time when Austin ISD was facing considerable financial difficulties and again, I don't blame aid this goes back to the state, this goes back to the way we fund public schools in Texas.

[10:51:17 AM]

You know, the problems are run deep. I'm happy to step in and fill the gap because these are essential services, especially for these, you know, low income schools, title one schools. I would say, though, at some point aid needs to pull those back and put them into their core budget. Hopefully the legislature will come back. And you know, this year and add some funds and they can pick up these, you know, like I said, I'm I'm to the extent that we can, to the extent that we're able everybody turns to the city to fill the gaps. And I'm happy to do that to the extent that we're able to the extent that we have the resources. But, you know, ultimately the funds that we provide to other institutions, I know we give a little bit of money to, I think long term with the 3.5% property tax cap with the financial challenges and the demands that we have for providing core city resources is I'm not sure how we continue to, to sustain that.

[10:52:17 AM]

But but how, how much is in the base budget for this item? >> It's \$1 million. Mayor okay. >> All right. Other questions or comments? Councilmember Kelly, I was just curious how much we give aid every year in our budget. >> Is that the 1 million that you just mentioned or is it more than that? Thank you. >> You know what? I apologize. I thought we were back talking about the child care program. That's \$1 million. We can get you the numbers for the program. Okay. >> That would be helpful. Thank you. Do you have an answer? >> Yes, I do. Laura Lafuente, Austin public health. So specifically for the parent support specialist, we have \$1.29 million total. We're probably providing over \$3 million in support out. That includes the after school prime time program and also the victory program. Thank you. >> I tend to agree with council member vela that we really need to be be cautious of the ongoing support. It is a very important program, but I would very much

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like to see maybe some more initiative from aid to incorporate those into their budgets in the future as well. And there are other school districts in my district that could use support as well. But when I look at the city, holistic Leslie, I would hope that they would be able to support themselves more. Shaw thank you. Other questions or comments on this item? >> Thank you for coming up. Appreciate it. Councilmember Velasquez, I'll recognize you on your next proposed amendment. >> So that was a

perfect segue. So my next amendment is for prime time and the victory tutorial. Thank you to council member alter council member harper-madison councilmember Fuentes and council member vela for co-sponsoring this item. Is funding for prime time and Vicki tutorial to meet the needs of families who typically typically cannot afford after school enrichment or child care for their children and for tutoring for students who are considered to be economic disadvantaged. It restores our fiscal year 21 funding levels for the remainder of our four year contract with them. >> Councilmember Allison alter,

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thank you. >> I want to thank councilmember Velasquez for bringing this forward. And I'm proud to co-sponsor for this. This is a little bit different than some of the items, other items that we've discussed in that prime time and victory tutorial are city programs. So this is a partnership that we initiated with aisd many years ago to address our desire to provide after school programing. It was much more efficient and effective to do it in their buildings. That is what they're providing and they're helping to manage it and do those things. This is also a restoration up to a certain level. So if we don't fund this, they'll be almost 100 students just for prime time. That will not have after school care this next year. This is something that also is a function of some weirdness that happened with the pandemic because we were not able to have students in classrooms and as far as we've been able to tell, a-p-h just

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reduced the amount of the contract without ever coming and getting Lang consent from council that we wanted to reduce this as part of the pandemic. Over time, there was some complicated contracting things, but doing this particular action would keep us at our fiscal year 21 funding levels. It moves us towards that. I don't even know that it gets us all the way to that, but it does keep us where we were last year. So these are really, really important programs. Also very important for some of our violence prevention activities because it keeps kids in a safe place where where they're learning. >> Thank you, councilmember. Other questions or comments? Thank you, councilmember Velasquez. We'll now go to the second category of items and I'll recognize council member, the mayor pro tem on the first proposed amendment. >> Thank you, mayor. The Ellis

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amendment one is going to be the planning positions and itod stands for equitable transit oriented development. This is a program that actually councilmember harper-madison led on a number of years ago, and it was in relation to a federal grant that capmetro and the city have worked on and it's about how to make sure that as we expand our public transportation infrastructure, that we've got the appropriate land use surrounding those stations and so this is work that's been going on for a number of

years. I am actually pleased to announce that with the revised answer that we got for question number 176, the ongoing expenditures of \$484,000, I'm going to circulate a version two that brings that number down to 282,000. So I get to take claim for being the first person to lower one of my dollar amounts, and I hope I get a gold star for that. But I might. I might need it later, but that's that's what the amendment focused is on for the tod planning and we've got

[10:57:23 AM]

that revised answer for 176 about the needs and they were able to lower the ftes from 4 to 3 because the project connect office has stepped up and offered a position that can help partner in this planning effort . I have a question. >> Councilmember Ryan alter thank you, councilmember Ellis. >> And I don't know if this is for you or maybe for staff. I'm wondering if we as a council prioritize etds over the imagine Austin update or something to that effect. Can could we pull from that bucket? >> Councilmember alter we did turn out we had a discussion last night with several folks and I think we this is one of the things that we figure that after today that we can begin to accommodate, to try to mitigate some of that so that it fits into the either the one time funding sources or the ongoing funding resources and so this is one that we've begun discussions last night and I think we'll

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work toward some resolution of this before the 16th. Thank you . >> Other questions or comments? Yes, thank you. Mayor pro tem. I'll recognize councilmember Fuentes. >> Thank you. This is an amendment focused on expand ING youth programs, particularly focused on indigenous latinx, hispanic and black youth in east Austin. It is a 100,001 time funding request and it would go to support programing at the Mac. The Mexican American cultural center. I want to thank council members Jose Velasquez, councilor Avila and qadri for their support. >> Thank you. Councilmember questions or comments with regard to this proposed amendment. All right. I'll recognize council member harper-madison with regard to the next proposed amendment. >> Thank you, mayor. I appreciate the recognition my amendment number one is primarily about the critical services that we need at the carver library museum. Carver

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library museum and community center, which is a critical piece of the O. Two community, the this black neighborhood in east Austin, the carver's current general fund budget has proven insufficient to maintain basic operations, leading to challenges in staffing and summer programs and funding for new exhibits. This budget amendment would allocate \$397,881 for programmatic needs in order for the carver to continue fulfilling its essential role within the community. The increased budget will be utilized for the following purposes to employ permanent staff, ensure the continuity of essential services and

operations at the carver by funding an fte. At first year course east of \$75,542 to support the development and implementation of culturally competent programs. Fostering

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community and engaging and enrichment to fund new exhibits that celebrate the history and heritage of the historically black neighborhoods served by the carver at and to secure funds for emergency expenses, ensuring that the carver's capacity to address unforeseen financial needs without compromising vital services. And then lastly, to support the needs of events and programs traditionally facilitated by the Mac during their renovations. So just to be clear there, while the Mac is renovating, they're utilizing the space at the carver, and that's going to require some additional support and funding questions or comments with regard councilmember Allison alter. >> Councilmember harper-madison , is this part of the library system or part so. >> So both. >> So the library system is the carver library, but the museum, I believe, is a part facility, if I'm not mistaken. Director Mcneely may be able to speak to

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that for me. I think. I think Mr. Weeks may be here as well to speak to. >> Mr. Weeks is here you are correct. The carver library is part of the library system, the genealogy building, and the carver, George Washington carver museum and cultural center is within the budget. Okay. >> So is this adding an fte to the library or to parks. >> To the library? >> Okay. Well, either way, I always love more for parks, but I also noticed this is, I think the only element in the amendments that's going to the library. And I think that it's important that we think about the services that we offer here at the library as well. So I just wanted to highlight that as we're thinking through this, that this would be an addition

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that would help the library system as well. >> Absolutely. And I spoke to her briefly the other day when I shouted out miss Doreen, but the carver library in a lot of ways excuse me, serves as a critical after school resource source. I mean, the kids leave in Blackshear and Kealing and Campbell, they go straight to the library and they hang out there till their parents get off work, which I think sort of speaks to some of these amendments that we've had about after school care and childcare as well. So it really ties into all of it. >> Good morning, Roosevelt weeks , proud director of the Austin public library. We currently have of the funding that we need for staffing unless Mr. Ryan tell us who's the manager there that she need additional staffing, we should be able to handle the need, but I need to get with her on that to verify that. But as of right now, I think we can handle the need. >> I appreciate that. And for what it's worth, you know, just to be clear, with the general

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public and folks watching these amendments, none of them are set in stone. It's recommendations. But if we can work through it without actually having to amend the budget, that's obviously our preference. But thank you for the clarity. Thank you. Thank you. >> Councilmember Vila. >> I appreciate council member Harper Madison's comment about that and that you absolutely true where we're drafting an amendment sometimes just in case and after we're done communicating with staff or you know what, it's not needed anymore. In other words, I just don't want people to get the sense that just because an amendment is not adopted doesn't mean that the need has been met. Like that's going to happen a lot where I'm going to pull an amendment. But in the background, we've already talked to the department and they're going to move funds here or there or whatever the case may be. So I think that's a really important point to share with the public. Thank you. >> I think I'm glad both of you have emphasized that. And that was part of the reason we wanted to have a day like today where all of the amendments could be put out there. People could see what was being discussed. But just because an amendment that's

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laid out today doesn't it end up being an amendment to the budget? Doesn't mean it's not being utilized in some way. And or utilized as direct Ann to staff that that's a priority. So there might be a reallocation of how money in the budget gets utilized will allow the question that council member Ryan alter just ask with regard to planning. So thank you both. And councilmember yeah, I'll recognize you again. >> Councilmember harper-madison I just received notification that the fte was a hard request. Not for the library. >> Well then we need to make sure they're talking to each other. Well so I wonder if director Mcneely can speak to the need. >> So just. Just kymberley Mcneely serving as a director just for clarification, the parks and recreation department

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didn't have this as a specific request, but I do believe that the advisory commissions and the quality of life commissions did put in a recommendation Ann, where they were looking at different needs of the different quality of life commissions. >> And so I believe that the reason why this has surfaced to the top is because when folks were taking a look through equity lens, taking a look at the different budgets of our cultural centers, the carver has a lesser budget and a lesser ftes than the other cultural centers. And those decisions had been made through various iterations of decisions that the council had made previously. When they were adding ftes and or budget amounts to the particular budgets. So the parks and recreation department is working hand in hand with the with the Mexican American cultural center

being closed. We're working hand in hand with the carver and with other entities to be able to make sure that we're supporting programs and really great things are happening there. And I think the

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community gets excited about those great things and wants to be able to continue those. >> And council member this is these are some of the discussions we're going to have post this meeting so that we can evaluate that, talk to both director Mcneely and Roosevelt and others just to make sure that we've got programs resourced appropriately and figure out whether it can fit within the \$1.3 billion budget that we already have proposed or whether additional funding may be needed. And that's the analysis we're going to do going forward. >> I appreciate that clarity. Thank you. >> Thank you. Councilmember harper-madison. I'll now recognize councilmember qadri on a proposed amendment. Great. >> Thank you, mayor qadri amendment for fair housing testing, education and support. From what we understand right now, this would go under office of civil rights. That's something the housing department has said the item will allocate funding for fair housing testing , education counseling to give residents guidance on civil rights and countering discrimination in the housing market. The reason we're bringing this forward is to support in the face of housing

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discrimination, enforcement of fair housing laws that are key components to an inclusive Austin, where all types of people can live in all types of places, from mitigating displacement in our eastern crescent to improving housing opportunities in higher income areas. The funding also behind this is another reason normally funding happen through hud, but that funding has been discontinue, issued and the amount that we initially had was \$500,000 for, I believe it was for a one time funding for 500 K, but I also hope to get a gold star from the city manager because knowing there's other amendments that are going towards tenant rights, we would be willing to go down to 350 K, but that would almost be the floor because we know that the Austin tenant council that has worked on this and has like they need at least that 350 K to properly operate. And then I just want to quickly thank my co

[11:08:35 AM]

sponsors on this harper-madison Velasquez, vela and Ryan elder. And I'm sorry, last thing which I should have mentioned the first time that I laid out an amendment, the source of funds we're hoping would come from the general fund. That's it. >> Thank you. Councilmember qadri questions or comments? I'll recognize councilmember vela on the next proposed amendment. >> Thank you, mayor. The next amendment vela number seven, would be to basically keep our funding steady for the legal services for immigrants. We provide. Again, these were decisions that prior councils have made in response to

increase ceased deportations and the separation of families and just the general kind of chaos and problems that immigration enforcement Swint can cause us to support our local legal service providers in their efforts to help immigrants out.

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Oftentimes the people that suffer the most, and I've know this all too well when there is some kind of a deportation enforcement action, something like that, or the children, oftentimes, you know, us citizen children, you know, dad is gone in in in detention. And so I just want to believe that there was a cut from prior years in terms of the amount. And this would essentially restore the amount to what we had given those agencies in the past. >> Questions or comments, members. Thank you. Councilmember vela. I'll recognize you again on the next proposed amendment. >> The next amendment is again pretty straightforward, making sure that we have live Spanish interpretations at the city hall at our council meetings. And my understanding in conversation with the city clerk's and with the Pio, the city's Pio, is that

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there could be a way to use an fte that could be helping the Pio do outreach in Spanish, but then also we would pull that person in here from, let's say, 10:00 to 3:00 to make sure that we have a person on hand for the translation interpretation on the phone stuff can be a little tricky. I think. You know, just having somebody here, we have a lot of Spanish testimony. It just makes sense to have somebody here at all times to facilitate the flow of the of the meetings. >> It would help me understand. No dinero, no. Thank you, councilmember. Questions or comments with regard to that item. Councilmember vela, you recognized on the homeland security and emergency management item. >> And this is also this relates to the we have a language access plan that has not really been fully implemented. This would

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add, I believe, a position to homeland security and emergency management and the reports and audits with regard to language access issues, specifically identified the need for better communication in other languages during emergency situations. This is, again all going back to the snow and all of the emergencies and issues that arose there and just making sure that our emergency communications are multilingual and honestly not just in Spanish. We really need to pick, let's say, the top 3 or 4 languages and make sure that when there's a citywide emergency, a critical citywide emergency, that we're getting information Ann out in various languages and that were so people can take the precautions that we're asking them to take right now. I think the wildfire situation also just highlights the need for getting good

information out in a timely manner, in an appropriate language. >> Thank you, councilmember mayor pro tem and then

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councilmember Kelly just adding on a comment to that, I know that over the years, as we've looked at emergency management communication, there's actually a lot of people that just volunteer because they speak those languages. >> And I think if this is a way to make sure that people are fairly compensated for that work and that expertise, and that is something that we should be doing. >> Thank you. Mayor pro tem, councilmember Kelly, thank you. >> Council members, colleagues, I believe you may recall when I passed the central health pandemic equity committee recommendation adoptions that came out of the pandemic, it was a lot related to language access and that sort of thing. So if it's okay with you, I'd like to co-sponsor your your item. Councilmember >> Greatly appreciated. >> Councilmember Kelly councilmember Allison alter. >> So I'm really interested to see what staff comes back with here to say what they're doing because they should be doing this already. We've gone through multiple reports back that had the need for language access. I don't know if it's specifically hits what you're getting at in

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your amendment, but one of the things, as we've been going through these reports, again at audit and finance is, you know, we have reports from multiple years ago. I can't tell you which disaster that said we needed to have the language access. We've been told over and over again that was fixed. So I really want to hear kind of what staff are saying this absolutely should be addressed. The general issue. But my hope is that it's actually already in the budget. But it may not be. >> And I appreciate that. Councilmember alter that is exactly we're pulling from those reports to craft this amendment, and that's exactly what we're trying to address with this amendment. >> Other questions or comments. Councilmember vela, thank you. I'll recognize you with regard to your proposed amendment related to the sobering center. >> Yeah, I've talked about this before. This is not going to come out of general fund or I should say highly unlikely. There's grant money available both from the samhsa, which is a

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substance abuse and mental health federal agency. We received a grant, I believe it was an earmark out of congressman Doggett's office. There's also the potential to pull funds out of the opioid settlement money. So what we want to do is the sobering center, which are police and ems rely on to divert people that they would normally arrest because they're highly intoxicated. They instead take them instead of taking them to the jail. Or we take them down to the sobering center. They talk to the staff, they you,

you basically sober them up, offer them resources, kind of send them on their way when they're they're ready to go. They've been doing something called they call it holdover for some of these folks where someone will get to the sobering center, talk to the staff and really kind of be like, you know what? I need to end this addiction. You know, I want help. And it's just so important to be able to get them

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help at that moment where they're ready to go. You know, you can't just tell them, well, come back in 30 days. You know, they're going to lose that that that passion Ann basically that they once they make that decision. So the sobering center is looking at ways to work on this. This would be basically some kind of capacity building central health is going to be in that conversation in you know integral care is going to be in that conversation. There's potentially some private monies out there. This will hopefully give them a little bit of breathing room to start kind of looking around to see how we can kind of add additional services to the mix. Again the intention would not be for the city to fund the services. It would be kind of to add capacity to the executive director and the administration at the sobering center to kind of give them a little bit of breathing room so they can go out and add additional services to the mix that they have. >> Thank you, councilmember Vila, does anybody have any questions or comments with regard to this proposed item? Councilmember Allison alter I just wanted to clarify, did you just suggest that this could come out of the opioid grant?

[11:16:42 AM]

>> I've been talking with Austin public health about that, and they're is a potential to get it out of the opioid settlement money. There's a potential to get it out of this other earmark. It's just a question of what are the restrictions and the eligibility and what are the requirements you know, on the sobering center, if they take those funds. So I think we we're working through that. I hope we get some some clarity to that soon. But but that that's the goal, to tap one of those sources and not the general fund. >> That'd be great. Thank you. Yes >> Councilmember Fuentes, thank you. >> Thank you for that question. I want to caution against using the opioid settlement dollars. Truly what we saw the county is adding to their amount of funding that they're committing as a county to help address the opioid crisis that we're seeing . And so really, in fact, the conversation we should be having is injecting more dollars to respond to the crisis in our community, given the level of overdoses. So I wanted to share my thoughts on the funding source for that.

[11:17:43 AM]

>> Thank you, councilmember Kelly. >> I also agree that we should be focusing on the opioid settlement dollars on preventing overdose from happening. I do know that staff released a memo in response to

the resolution that I passed related to narcan, and if my colleagues haven't seen that, I wanted to highlight it. So thank you. >> Good. Thank you. All right. Thank you, councilmember Bella and others for commenting on that. I'll recognize councilmember Velasco. As for a proposed amendment, thank you, mayor. >> I want to thank councilmember Fuentes qadri alter and Vella for our co sponsoring this with me this amendment is intended to address the a growing community need for affordable and accessible sti testing and treatment for the city's most vulnerable communities disproportionately impacted by HIV and stis. With a focus on the lgbtq plus community, we had a presentation yesterday at our public health committee meeting

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where we were informed by Texas health action and the kind clinic about the spike in stis and the need for safe and welcoming spaces for our lgbtq plus communities to have their health needs met. Yes >> Councilmember Allison alter, thank you. >> I'm a co-sponsor on this. I just want to underscore what councilmember Velasquez just said, that we are seeing a spike and just as we saw spikes with the monkeypox, the monkey I'm sorry, I know the name mpox. Sorry. The name has changed. Mpox situation. It really can overwhelm our clinics and if they don't have the funding. So I'd like us to be able to find some support to be able to help address this public health need . So thank you for bringing this forward and I hope that we can do that in an appropriate manner . >> Council members I think

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yesterday when we were going through this amendment, we were getting some comments from Austin public health. And based on your comments and then councilmember alter's comments, I know that this is one that we just got to work through to figure out what the real need is and where and what is the role for Austin public health and what other agencies may have a role as well to play. But that's part of the homework we do after this meeting. >> Thank you. Councilmember Velasquez. I'll now recognize councilmember. For a Velasquez on the next proposed amendment. Sorry. Thank you. So my notes. >> Thank you, Mr. Mayor. And I will preface this by saying that I have a pending. I think I'm going to have a pending gold star on this because we have been in communication with you guys. >> Sure are generous with the gold stars to just handing them out to ourselves. >> It's a millennial thing. >> We have been in communication with assistant city manager Hayden to get confirmation on other funding sources and potential revision that might be made to this. But this amendment

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would expand harm reduction services through expanding support Singh drop in centers, mobile outreach clinics for individuals in need of substance use, treatment and care funding can support

weekend and evening hours at drop in centers, substance use treatment for more individuals and staffing and supplies for more mobile outreach clinics. And I want to thank council members qadri and Fuentes for co-sponsoring this with me. >> Thank you. Councilmember Velasquez, any questions or comments with regard to this proposal? Amendment all right. We'll go to the next grouping or category of items and I'll first recognize council member harper-madison. Thank you, mayor. >> I appreciate the recognition this item is specifically targeted at offering assistance to the county collaborative residential treatment center. The budget amendment would provide matching funds for a local nonprofit organization providing residential substance abuse treatment to individuals

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experiencing homelessness. These dollars should be used in collaboration with Travis county and for projects that are otherwise ineligible for the traditional source uses of housing funds, such as our city's bond funded programs and htc and other state programs. And then I'd like to just offer a little bit of commentary. Colleagues, I want to thank you again for your patience and consideration. On Tuesday as staff and I tried to hammer out how we would help support this increase in residential treatment beds. There are numerous reasons that we should consider supporting this initiative. One, this is a collaborative effort with Travis county, which is always great for us to work with our partner organizations and agencies, existing trusted social services providers and the philanthropic community which, you know, that's one of the things I'd like to put some highlight on. We're really going to have to partner with our folks in the community for whom this is

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important. In addition to our efforts in the county's efforts, this will both expand and secure a critical piece of our supportive housing ecosystem. A facility like this cannot access other sources of funding like housing bonds, because of the unique but critical nature of the service being provided. City manager if you could please update us on what you consider to be the best next steps on how we can support this collaborative effort. >> Happy to. Councilmember I know, as you know, it has been reported that that about 40% of our individuals are citizens that experience homelessness. About 40% either suffer from substance abuse or some behavioral health issue that they've been able to not have treated. And I think this is a this is a service that's needed for that for that part of the community as well as others. And what I'd like to do is work with your office as we approach the appropriate agency to help us address this issue, not just for

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this specific item, but maybe for other items going into the future where they can help us, really help the people that really right now suffer because they're unfunded, they're underinsured or completely uninsured. And we need to find ways to get make sure they get the proper care and the proper place. >> I really appreciate that. And I think it's important to recognize that this kind of effort is directly adjacent to councilmember vela's effort around the sobering center and other efforts that have been introduced as potential amendments around services for homelessness and frankly, you know, what is the expression? An ounce of prevention on? And I think, you know, preventative efforts would be critical for us addressing so many things, including indigent health care cost. And so I really appreciate looking forward to working alongside you on the item. Thank you. >> Thank you. Councilmember, any other comments or questions with regard to this proposed amendment by councilmember

[11:24:46 AM]

harper-madison? All right. We'll go to council. I'll recognize councilmember qadri on the next proposed amendment. >> Great. Thank you, mayor, for qadri amendment five. It's for homelessness services provider provider support. This item will allocate funding for capacity building and support for small service providers in the form of mini grants and trainings. The reasoning we're kind of bringing this forward is there was \$3.2 million of provider support. Funding was diverted towards temporary shelter needs at the marshaling yard. So we're hoping to restore partial funding through this. And then a quick point of clarification, and I think after we get down to what our final ask number is, I should get all the gold stars for whatever reason it accidentally was put at a 3,000,001 time expenditure. That number should have been \$590,900 for one time. But we're willing to reduce that amount just to make sure that it maintains the

[11:25:46 AM]

21 participants for next year. So from the 5.9 thousand 900, if we could get 90,900. So from that 3 million number you saw to 90,900, that would be great because it would it would mean that the 21 partners would continue to get benefited and some of those partners are Austin area urban league, Austin mutual aid, queer Topia, saffron trust, women's foundation, sunrise homeless navigation center. The other ones foundation, Ann and a number of bipoc led nonprofits. I want to thank my co sponsors on this and members harper-madison Ryan altar Velasquez and then I think my last point is that the source of funds we see a possible source from the home tizr where there's about \$6.6 million. And I think the manager has and councilmember, just so you know that there is a future award, it's a happy face when council members begin to say no idea, that's a double gold star, right? >> All right. Anybody got any

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questions? Councilmember qadri on that? Yes councilmember Fuentes to confirm. >> Councilmember qadri, you're going from 3 million to 90,000, is that right? Yeah >> So this is on. So the 3 million was an accident. It should have been 590,000. 900 was what our initial ask would have been. But we're going from that to 90,900. Correct >> Thousand 900. Wonderful and mayor, will we be will we be getting or manager will we be getting a updated spreadsheet with the new revised total? Yes, I'm I'm Kerry's nodding that she's keeping tabs of this and so we'll be able to do that and share that back with council members. >> So you kind of know where we're what the running tabulation is. Okay. Thank you. Especially for our work as we lead up to the 16th. >> Councilmember Kelly thank you. Could you please state again where you think those funds could come from? I was taking notes and I didn't hear you. My apologies. >> Yeah, no worries. We're looking at one possible source that the C home tirz. Yeah there's about, I think, 6.6 C home, you said? >> Yes, sir. >> Tirz. Yeah thank you. Yep.

[11:27:51 AM]

>> Thank you. Anything else on that item? Councilmember qadri. I'll recognize you on the next proposed amendment. >> Great. Thank you, mayor. The next proposed amendment is qadri amendment six. It's supportive services funding. This item commits to new funding for wraparound supportive services for permanent supportive housing projects. The reason that we're bringing this one forward, as we saw in the work session on Tuesday, there are three component components components to capital to build units, vouchers to help offset that rental income. And on-site supportive services, supportive social services funding needs to be committed several months before a project goes into construction. I think that's 1.2 kind of hammer home and the other one is having the needed funding commitment available can help prevent project delays and as we know, we have a great need for units in our community cannot afford delays. So the amount that our placeholder is about \$3 million for that, we're waiting on a more concrete

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amount. We're expecting it to be a little bit less than the 3 million. And then we also see this as a midyear amendment. And then I just want to thank my. Oh, and then the money would where we would hope it could potentially come from from in terms of a source of funding would also once again be that C home tirz and then I want to thank the co sponsors behind this harper-madison and Fuentes and Ryan alter questions or comments for councilmember qadri . >> Thank you, sir. I'll recognize councilmember Ryan alter on the next proposed amendment. >> Thank you very much, mayor. It looks like I might be having the microphone here for a little while. The reason I focused the bulk of my amendments on homeless service choices is I just think it is critical that we continue to make sustained investments in addressing our unhoused population. I think we heard it a lot from the community over the past couple

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of weeks. I know in district five we have seen an increase in the increase. If you look at just by point in time count numbers over the past couple of years, an increase of 137. I want to say. And you see it, you see it every day. And so while I appreciate the manager for making increased investment in homelessness throughout the budget, I think we just we have a growing need. And so it is going to be a just increasing our investments to even keep up with where we are. So this first amendment is one. I'm really excited about because what it will do is, is create a digital service delivery for homeless navigation. So outside of the dac, we only have one walk up navigation center for unhoused individuals to receive an assortment of services, including case management and that single center is in district five and we see

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unhoused individuals ride the bus from all parts of town to get there for services. And what this item would do is create kiosks or pods or something of the like in areas throughout the community where someone can receive many of those services there that they would receive at a day center instead of having to get on the bus and travel across town. And that not only helps connect people where they are. And so more people are able to get services, but it helps reduce some of the foot traffic and impacts that we see when you have a great a large number of people access a single site. And so what is another neat feature about this is that you can get some of the services. So for instance, they could have a locker that the person on the other side of the screen could unlock. Let's say it has a bus pass, right? So that they don't that's something that they could have gotten at the navigation center. But now are able to access at one of these sites. So I think it's a really neat

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innovation that that is worth exploring. And so that would be \$250,000 for the infrastructure for as well as 834,000 ongoing for the staffing behind it, for the person to interact with. And that is amendment number one. >> Members, is there any councilmember Kelly thank you and thank you, councilmember Ryan alter for bringing this forward. >> I know we had a lunch not too long ago and I may have lamented a little bit about how my district is the furthest one from downtown and how it's very hard for me to expect or anyone really generally to expect individuals who are facing multiple complexities to navigate all the way across the city through a bus system in order to receive services. And so I really like the innovative nature behind this amendment. I do believe that we should have services such as that are in your district across the city for individuals, if we want to make a dent in that situation and help lift people out of homelessness, the best way we can do that is to provide those services to them and meet them

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where they are. And so I really appreciate you bringing this forward and I'd like to know more about how I might be able to assist. So I appreciate that. >> Other questions or comments for councilmember alter on this proposed amendment. All right. That will take us to the next amendment. And again, that is councilmember Ryan alter. >> So this amendment focuses on diversion and rapid exit, which is the least expensive way to solve unsheltered homelessness by a long shot. If you look at some data, they say it's about \$400 on average for someone to receive divert Ann or rapid exit, which simply could mean that they need a bus ticket to their sister's house in Houston or help with the security deposit to get into housing. It's very low. A low cost way to help someone get into housing as you and if you compare that to the other end of the spectrum, which is costing us. \$15,000

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plus a year, if we can make smart investments early on to get unhoused individuals quickly back into housing, it's very effective. It's very efficient. And so what this would do is scale up some of those diversion services is so that we can help individuals who need it. And as we have a discussion about night shelter, this is one way to make our shelter beds go further because a an individual who might go into shelter, if they are able to receive diversion, rapid exit, they can then exit, shelter and that makes that bed free up where they might have otherwise stayed in it. So it can be kind of a force multiplier in that regard as well. And that is 500, almost \$600,000 of ongoing expenditures . Councilmember Fuentes, thank you. >> Thank you. Councilmember alter, I just want to appreciate your leadership on on the amendments you're bringing forward regarding homelessness and invite you to join our

[11:34:59 AM]

public health committee. Officially officially. >> Thank you. I think I might just have to do that since I'm ex-officio myself to death. >> Any other questions on that particular item? All right. Let's move to your next one. Councilmember alter. >> Next one is, is about homeless case managers. And so right now, one of the barriers we see for individuals getting into housing is they will have their coordinated assessment, but then they aren't necessarily able to get with a case manager to start receiving the services and ultimately connect to housing. So what this would do is create a grant program for positions burns that we would fund. Like I said, as a grant at a two year basis where an entity could come to the city and say, you know, if I was able to hire one more case manager, I could serve more people. We have them on the waiting list, but we're just not able to serve them today because we have a staff limitation. So this would help

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citywide us increase our ability to serve those who are just on a waiting list, ultimately to connect them to housing. >> Questions for councilmember Ryan alter with regard to that proposed amendment. Comments. All right. Thank you, councilmember alter. We'll go to your next proposed amendment. Yes this is amendment number four, and this is for project based vouchers. >> So as we had the discussion on Tuesday about permanent supportive housing and our increased investment into project based vouchers, it's really critical that we continue those investment outs because as we heard from our homeless strategy officer, you know, we are in in a need of about 3000 units. And while we have have a good pipeline coming down the road over the next few years, we need to continue to make sustained investment. And so rather than having it be tenant

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based and have an individual have to find a landlord who not only offers the services but is willing to say yes, when we do it as a project based voucher, it ensures that that bed will be available for someone who needs it. So this would create eight 100, 100 project based vouchers for permanent supportive housing . For a million and a half thoughts, questions or comments . >> Thank you. Councilmember alter the next item is also yours as you end your filibuster. >> That's right. This is last but not least, and this one is not super sexy, but it is really important. And this is about we'll be the judge of that. All right. Well, control act management and as we are going to be engaged in contracting with homeless service providers throughout the city, a discussion that we have had as a diocese is about how we can make sure those contracts are structured in a manner so that

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we are receiving the results that are promised to us within various rfps or other agreements. And so this would fully fund. Two positions within the homeless strategy division to do their contracting. This was identified as one of their areas of unmet needs so that we can Ann have them manage those contracts and be able to monitor them so that we are achieving the results, not just not just putting the money out there, but but getting the results through those investments. >> Thank you. Councilmember councilmember vela. >> And I'm so sorry. Let me go back to your the project based vouchers. That's a great approach to quickly get people off the street. My understand and if we could get clarification from staff is that we have unused vouchers right now because no one in apartment that's 97% 98% full is just you

[11:39:04 AM]

know, is not going to take a potentially problematic, you know, for whatever reasons, you know, they're not Wright. >> So those are tenant based vouchers that we're having difficulties with right now. Individuals who hold the voucher are struggling to find a landlord who will accept them, whether it's because of the amount the voucher pays or just simply we they don't they're discriminating based on their source of income. What this does is, is a project based voucher. So when someone is building a project, they say give me that funding and I will reserve these units so that they are available. There will be no discrimination on anyone who wants to who qualifies for it. Okay >> Thank you. I appreciate that clarification. Absolutely. >> Mayor pro tem, just a clarifying question on the contract management. >> One, the spreadsheet has a one time expenditure of about \$6,000. Is there an updated Ryan

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alter five or will that be coming or is there a Q and a? You can point me to just because it seems like what's on the message board is slightly different. And I know I've made amendments, so I'm not sure if you have an amendment is a great question. >> I will provide some clarification on the message board about that. I'm I'm not 100% sure. It's just the short answer, so I'll get you clarification. Okay >> Sounds good. Thank you. Any other questions or comments with regard to that proposed amendment? Councilmember Allison alter so I just wanted to clarify and I think I asked this in the Q and a, but I'm not sure. >> So in question nine, in the q&a where I asked for the unmet needs it gave, what the requests were didn't give us a full accounting always of whether they got what they asked for. And I think this is a case where they asked for more and they got two. And so I think that councilmember Ryan alter is filling in the other piece. And I just want to flag that because I think some of us are trying to fill out some things that were unmet needs on this chart or that or that departments have

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expressed it, but that some partial pool got funded but not the whole thing. And so I'm not counting those as fully met as I'm evaluating the choices that we're making. >> And they. I've gotten an update. Thanks to my good staff here. And I'm not going to give myself a gold star, but I'll go more silver star. It's down to 157,000. >> If you talk more than 15 minutes, it's hard to get a silver. It is. >> It really is. So that's what I got. 157,000 ongoing. >> Great. Thank you. Thank you. Councilmember alter. That'll move us into the next segment of items. These were not put together to be glib or cute, but the first one will be mayor and council positions and then the next one deals with neutering and I know that that's just by accident. Just by accident. Councilmember vela. Oh oh, boy.

[11:42:05 AM]

>> The. The mayor and council position. We have been authorized Ed for five staff members funded for. For what? What my office has done and probably what other offices have done is we have five and we just kind of, you know, scrape every other, you know, source of budget money and use it toward staff if it's tough. I mean, you know, at \$1.3 million general fund, you know, the airport, Austin energy, there's a lot going on. The things that city hall moved very fast that we tried to do a lot of constituent communications. We try to get out and about. We try to respond to the hundreds of emails that we get on a on a daily basis and additional staff member funded position would be extremely helpful. Any questions or comments? >> Councilmember qadri yeah, no, I just want to thank councilmember vela for bringing

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this forward. >> It's really important work that we do, but we're nowhere without our staff and making sure that we're paying them fairly and equitably is really important. And I think we've had to get kind of creative in our office to have five full time staffers. You know, I've reallocated some of my salary to make sure that happens. So I think this is just doing right by staff for all of us. I think it's really important. And thank you for leading on this. >> I'm happy to. And I would just say, based on that, the council, the staffing study that was done, I think last year, maybe the year before, I can't remember exactly, but other city councils and other kind of similar governmental bodies are better staffed than the Austin city council is. I know the other day we went out to lunch with a council member from San Antonio and I want to say they were in like ten. >> They have like, I'm sorry. I mean, I met with them too. Yeah, some of them have like as high as, I think like 15 staffers. Yeah

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>> And I'm not asking for 15, but 1 or 1 more would be very helpful. Well, thank anybody. >> Councilmember Allison alter. >> Thank you. I appreciate the need and the workload. I do think that our budgets were increased very large amount last year with the wage adjustment. And I'm not comfortable at this point making that adjustment. I think every department is struggling. And I think that that I think that we can we can live with what we have. >> Other comments or questions for councilmember vela on that item. Thank you, councilmember, for we'll go to the next item and I'll recognize councilmember vela. >> This is for increasing spay and neuter services. I did not come on to council thinking that I was going to grapple with animal services issues as much as I have over the last 18

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months or so. But the reality is that the animal center is struggling with capacity issues . You know, before the pandemic , we were talking to a man who is a contractor that provides the spay neuter

services for the city. I believe that before the pandemic, we're doing about 10,000 or so spay and neuter per year post pandemic. We're down to about 5000 per year. Consequently, we've seen an explosion in our animal population and our Austin animal center is bursting at the seams with kennels full. So I think this is one of those, as we don't want to be penny wise and pound foolish if we're going to get the Austin animal center under control long term, we've got to invest in spay and neuter programs. They will be effective long term. And so this is an attempt to do that. I would also add that my understanding is that emancipatory pet may be able to

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acquire an additional mobile unit for doing their spay and neuter services. So this would not from our funds but from other sources of funds and so adding to the spay and neuter moneys available would be additionally leveraged by the potential for an additional an additional mobile unit out there. >> Councilmember Kelly, thank you. >> And I certainly appreciate that. The need for more spay and neuter funding, I'm just wondering if that might be something we look at when the audit comes back from the auditor related to the animal center, if that might be included in some of their recommendations or if you knew anything about that? >> I don't know anything about that. I would say that right now the my constituents are report meeting potential like month to month wait for our spay and neuter services. And I with the pandemic and with all the related problems that we saw again so many people adopting

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animals during the pandemic and those animals have you know, maybe they regretted that decision and they may be wild now, I just I think the sooner that we get in front of this problem on the spay and neuter end of things, the sooner that we'll be able to get our broader animal population under control. So I there is an urgency to this . What I don't want to do is add kennel spaces, you know, where we're all we need now another, you know, more and more. That's not the way to go right now. I know the animal center is struggling with capacity and long term, again, we have the microchip resolution. That's a way to get animals back to their rightful owners. I think now the spay and neuter a budget amendment is another way to try to control our animal population . And again, I think the emphasis on this, too, is to do it in a humane manner. We don't want to we love the no kill shelter. We embrace a no kill model. But fundamentally,

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though, we have to provide the services around the animal center so that we are able to embrace the no kill model that our community hardly supports. Thank you. Council other comments or questions with regard to this proposed item? >> Yes. Councilmember harper-madison. >> I was just going to point out

this is another really good example of where philanthropy is going to be critical. We're going to need the general public to be able to really help us out with these expenses if we're going to maintain that no-kill model. >> Thank you, councilmember. That'll take us to the next group of items, and I'll recognize councilmember Allison alter on the first proposed amendment. Thank you. >> Colleagues. I've put forth an amendment to add two new ftes to par to implement the land management plan, which hopefully will be passing shortly. This will provide the necessary staff to implement this plan that is critical in our city's fight to prevent wildfires. You'll remember that the creation and implementation of this plan was recommended in our 2019 wildfire

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preparedness audit. We've also received a letter of support for this plan from the Travis county fire marshal. In 2019, it was estimated that pard managed more than 15,000 acres, which is about 29% of our land portfolio. So our acreage has only grown since 2019. And many of these properties have been identified as being at high risk for wildfires. This month we're seeing lots of red flag warnings for our community to alert us that a wildfire threat is possible in the Austin and Travis county area, we've seen land burn in bastrop. We have ongoing wildfires today in hays county and cedar park, and we have continued red flag warnings . The land management plan needs to be implemented. It's not another plan that we can put on a shelf. The stakes are too high. The consequences are dire. My amendment supports the staffing that is needed to implement this plan as soon as possible. I think we need to really be expediting this work.

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We have an option to do so that does not cost a whole lot of money, but it does require us to lean in and say that this is a priority. I do want to just flag that the land management plan is not only about Burt wildfire. There's all sorts of climate resilience and environmental aspects that we have been really neglecting and I hope that we will be able to lean into that. Thank you. >> Councilmember councilmember Ryan alter. >> I just want to take a two seconds to thank councilmember Allison alter, as we are literally burning north, east and south. This is critical is an understatement. We've got to get this done. And so I just appreciate your leadership on this issue. >> Mayor pro tem and then councilmember Zavala, thanks. >> I also want to echo my support for councilmember Allison alter bringing this forward. You know, as as we speak, we still have some open spaces the city owns that have not been properly addressed since the February storm where we just have kind of the natural

[11:51:15 AM]

degradation of the fallen limbs in places that are very hard to get to, simply because we don't have staff to be able to assign them. And so I think it's really important that we do everything we can on this front, especially as we have one person with parkland management that's currently focused on homelessness. So services just to make sure we have a hard rep. Representative and as a reminder, you know, camping in public spaces in the park space, very, very specifically was never authorized. And it's something that the city still struggles with today. So I know this is a big issue. I had someone who lives outside the city limits, but adjacent to city park space worried about someone using fires to cook their meals with this extreme danger happening every day. So I know this is a very urgent need and I hope to see us be able to do this work. >> Thank you. Mayor pro tem councilmember vela, again, I just want to echo my colleagues sentiments and I would like to be added as a co sponsor on that item. >> District four is a lower

[11:52:16 AM]

wildfire risk, very urban, but not zero wildfire risk. Even in a very urban district, there are still, you know, creeks and open spaces that are are very, very crispy right now and could ignite honestly at any moment. I appreciate the item and support it. Thank you. >> Councilmember Allison alter. Thank you. >> I appreciate the support. And I'll just say for anyone who's watching Lang, we have great resources. Our wildfire hub. If you want to understand the risk to your home, if you want to find resources for things that you individually can do to reduce your risk, everyone has a part to play with. The wildfire and just want to encourage folks to do to do that. Thank you. >> Thank you, councilmember. All right. That will take us to the next item. Members just in public, let me tell you what I think we'll proceed here in the next 10 to 20 minutes when we finish this section of items. And because we don't have public speakers today that we make have

[11:53:16 AM]

them waiting or anything like that, what I would recommend we do is take a 30 minute lunch break and come back. We're moving at a good clip. And so I think we will be able to finish early afternoon and that would allow a break for everybody. So as we get to the last in this section, which will be councilmember Velez, with regard to lifeguards, once we've completed that, then we'll recess for 30 minutes at whatever time that is, unless there's objection. All right. With that, I'll go to the mayor pro tem. >> Thank you, mayor. My next amendment is in regard to parks and recreation department facilities maintenance. This is a line item for ten full time positions, but they would be classified as temporary. We know there is a lot of work. That part is always stepping up to do, but we know they could always use extra hands and right now they're lacking the adequate staffing to properly maintain the parks, rec facilities, cultural centers and pools. And

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so we wanted to have this line item in there just reflective of the current need for additional fte, extra hands on deck. Many hands make light work. And so I think this is something that we should support. The parks foundation's recommendation actually came in twice as high as far as how many people they actually need. So we wanted to try to get as many as possible. So knowing that the need was quite high as they were able to assess. So this one is going to be for just ten positions, ones that are temporary. So they're going to be one time expenditure, but they would essentially be 40 hour per week types of work. >> Councilmember Allison alter, thank you. >> I'm pleased to co-sponsor this item. Thank you. Councilmember mayor pro tem Ellis, for bringing it forward. And I just want to underscore the need and also that, you know, I think it was 21 organizations came in and asked for \$2 million and 21 positions. And so we've already scaled this back to be reasonable. And so I hope that that we can get this

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funded. >> Yes, manager, mayor, members of council, mayor, pro tem and I just want to say that that discussion we had last week, we previously the under the old system, we've not adequately brought to council the organization that brought back to council a comprehensive report in terms of these needs plus other assets. >> And we're going to do that at the beginning of the fall to lay the predicate for 25, because I think that under previous management, we failed to do that. And as a consequence, the oxygen has been taken up by other issues that are pressing no need, no doubt. Rather and we owe as an organization now to bring you a full report about what needs to get done and what that roadmap needs to look like to ensure we get back on track. >> Thank you. Manager. Any other comments or with regard to this item or questions? All right. Mayor pro tem, I'll recognize you on the next item. >> Thank you. This is for the circle C metro park security. As I spoke about, I think it was on

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Tuesday of this week, there is a need to make sure that the soccer fields and the circle C metro park are not accessible. Other than a parks maintenance vehicle. The situation that we've been having is that after it rains, people have been going on there and tearing up the turf and messing up the soccer fields. And that's a tricky situation because parks partners with the lone star soccer club. And so there are part of their lease is that they are trying to be good stewards of the park space that they're able to utilize for their soccer program . And so when we have folks going going outside of where the parking spaces are and deciding to tear up the soccer fields, it's a situation that impacts a lot of different families and a lot of different kids that want to play soccer. So I wanted to tailor this very specifically to just this issue because I'm not familiar with the needs of other park spaces. And if this is happening in other parts of town, but we've been in close contact with parks and recreation department to really try to sort out the smoothest and quickest and easiest way to

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try to make those fields inaccessible for larger vehicles. So that's what this line item aims to do. >> Thank you. Mayor pro tem councilmember Kelly yeah. >> I just want to thank mayor pro tem for bringing this item forward and thank you for having your office talk to mine so that we could understand the importance of the need in your district. I'd be happy to co-sponsor that so that your constituents and even some of mine who travel across the city can use that space safely. >> I appreciate that. Thanks. >> Other questions or comments with regard to this proposed item? Thank you. All I'll recognize councilmember vela on the next item. >> I want to say too much about it. We need shades for our park facilities, parks has budgeted \$200,000 to add two shade structures in two parks. I would like to add to that about it and fund it as much as we possibly can. And I want to credit pard for creating a great map of our

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parks and which facilities need shade. It's really an excellent tool and they also have created a prioritization matrix which takes into account Swint equitable factors, population density usage of the park, alternative areas. Again, very well thought out plan for implement renting shade structures across our city. This would would allow them to start out hitting the major the highest ranking areas that need the shade. I will say again just in conversations, this is potentially bondable again I mean it is a it is a hard expense. We're not talking about people or anything like that. So if we could if there's any way to shift this from general fund to a certificate of obligation, I mean, that would be great. I'll leave that to management to figure out. But I do I would put

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this as next to the tenant support making sure we have sufficient tenant support as is my highest priority. Thank you. >> Councilmember councilmember Allison alter, then councilmember Ryan alter. >> Thank you. I had an opportunity to talk with some folks from your district actually, councilmember Vella, last week about the impact of the heat, and it really reinforced that the need for us to be having these spaces all over town and with the reduced tree canopy everywhere because of the storm and the discrepancies across east, west and east, I think this is really important. It I was initially skeptical of whether park could implement that much at once, but we got some information that they would be able to incorporate this into programs and projects that are already underway that may not have been able to afford the shade part. So I think it's much more doable. So I would support this as as much as possible that we can fund and would like to be

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added as a as a co-sponsor. Thank you. >> Thank you. Councilmember. Councilmember Ryan alter. >> Just two things. One, in our discussions with the Austin parks foundation, they have indicated that they would be willing to match up to a million dollars of this. So that's a money multiplier here, which which is really. Thanks to them and a great thing. The other thing I want to just highlight, I've had discussions with Austin energy and I encourage Paige, the parks folks to coordinate with them about what opportunities might have to instead of having a sale shade. What if we had a solar panel shade that now we are both having generation and shade together? So there are ways that we can be innovative and do more than just shade. And so I just I want to highlight that. >> Thank you, councilmember. Councilmember Fuentes, thank you. >> Just also wanted to express my gratitude for councilmember vela, your leadership on this shade structures amendment. And I'm really excited that the Austin parks foundation can also

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join us in amplifying our impact throughout the city, given the severe climate crisis that we're in and given the amount of triple digit heat we've experienced in consecutive days. This summer alone, I know that for my community, I heard several times from folks in dove springs about the need to have additional shade at the dove springs pool. So I would like to highlight that for staff as an area that I would like to see prioritized with this funding should it go through. >> Thank you, councilmember. >> And I appreciate the support and thank you, councilmember Allison alter for joining us as a co sponsor. With regard to the equitable pool, the reality is that the tree canopy in west Austin is a lot better than the tree canopy in east Austin. And if you look at that map that they put together, there's a lot of naturally occurring shade picnic benches and other areas that are almost fully shaded in a lot of the west Austin parks not so much in the east Austin parks. And again, I want to give

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I know pomelo park is a brand new park that just opened in district four. The park is already incorporating shade structures as an expense as they move forward in in in building out new playgrounds and new parks. This would be really to retrofit old playgrounds, old basketball courts and those kinds of facilities. So thank you, councilmember. >> I'll recognize you for the next item. >> And this is just to build that core group of lifeguards. You know, we have for swimming pools that are open year round in discussions with parks last year, they estimated that about 25 to 30 lifeguards that they would need on a year round permanent basis to staff these. We have 13 that have been created as permanent full time positions with benefits and everything. The rest of our lifeguards, even the ones that are working year round, are still considered to be temporary employees. This would just build

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on that number, taking it from 13 to 20, just kind of incrementally trying to add to that. >> Thank you, councilmember. Comments or questions. All right, members, thank you. To as I indicated, when we got to the that item, we would take a break, a 30 minute recess. It is. 12:03 P.M. I'm inclined to reduce that number from 30 minutes to 27. And get a gold star myself. But I won't without objection, the council will be in recess until 1235.

[12:05:00 PM]

>> Then when you find yourself lying

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I'm going to call the Austin city council back to order. >> It is 12:36 P.M. And we are continuing to meet at city council chambers and we have a quorum of the city council present. I'll recognize councilmember Allison alter on the first item in the new category three. >> Thank you. So, colleagues, my amendment number one, victims of crime act, victim service counselors. It authorizes the funding of seven ftes in the victim services division. The victim services division provides support to survivors of violent crime and is an integral part of crisis response in our community. Victim service counselors are system based advocates who provide both on scene and follow up trauma informed services, including counseling, crisis intervention and emotional support, advocacy, trauma, education, safety planning referrals to community and culturally specific resources and criminal justice system orientation. Because

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victim services is the designated crime victim liaison for the department. Counselors are also responsible for ensuring victims are aware of their rights within the criminal justice system. In my view, it is imperative that victims and survivors of crime have support and guidance within the system to specifically serve their needs and to ensure that their voices are heard. The rey of services provided by victim service counselors is highly relevant for the city's vulnerable culturally specific populations, particularly refugees, immigrants and non-english speaking community members. Maintaining these positions is critical. It's very important to note that the grant funding we are waiting on would have a different scope of work for the populations they would be working with. So even if we receive the grant, it would still reduce staff capacity for sexual assault response. We made promises to survivors and

advocates during the sexual assault settlement. And while many of you are new to the dais, I know that you wish to honor those promises. In my opinion, these are promises that we definitely all need to honor. My

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amendment speaks to the details of the current situation and the need for these positions in great detail, and I'm happy to answer any questions that you have. You'll note that you received a letter today from da Garza in support of these positions. And again, these are there's people who are in these positions right now serving these roles. Thank you. >> Council member. Council members, do you have any questions or comments with regard to this proposed amendment? All right. Councilmember Allison alter, I'll recognize you on the next proposed amendment. >> Sure. So, colleagues, you'll see in my amendment that I propose ten more full time employees, nine sworn ftes and one civilian within the ems department so the program can operate 24 over seven. This is for the collaborative care communication center. See for the C four programs. Make sure that patients who don't need the emergency room receive the medical treatment they require. This helps avoid a strain on our hospitals and provides real cost savings to our community. Patients and the broader health care system should this amendment be approved, these

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benefits could be realized on a 24/7 basis, which in turn would free up ambulances and reduce response times across the city. That makes it a win win. Further, this program also plays a really important role in our opioid response efforts for patients who need a more specialized response and follow up. And I hold the opinion that we cannot afford to not have this program be 24 over seven. This amendment, I will just point out, also relates to my item from council. And I don't know about you, but we're on experiencing decline or increased response times from ems and the C four program is one of the key ways that we can address those response times and reduce them without having to set up stations and invest in a lot of the extra equipment. Et cetera. So I think this is a really important program. I do want to point out that my amendment is listed as \$1.1 million. That would be if we

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funded this for the full year. My amendment actually has it starting mid-year. So in terms of ongoing funding that we need for this year, it's 5.5 Ann. And but we wanted to be clear about the ongoing implications of that hiring. >> Thanks, councilmember. Any questions? Yes. Councilmember Fuentes then councilmember Kelly. >> Thank you. You know, I first became interested in this type of service when me and my team were thinking through what are some alternative ways for us to provide

emergency response that doesn't necessarily have a law enforcement component to it? Right now in Austin, we have a co-responder model and we've tasked our police officers with responding to many incidents and many calls. We've asked them to be housing coordinators and social workers and mental health practitioners. And so by investing in this type of work and the C four model and bringing paramedics in on to the call center and expanding their

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level of service and how they respond in the community, especially in the night time hours, really extend us, our leadership as a city when it comes to mental health for us to be able to provide robust mental health services and so I'm excited about what this what the C four center can do and how it will just build upon on the fact that we were the first city in this country to offer mental health as a as an option. When someone calls 911. And then of course put paramedics in and responding to situations that there is a mental health crisis . And so I'm excited about this amendment. And I'm looking forward to supporting it. Thank you, councilmember councilmember Kelly. >> Thank you. >> And thank you for bringing this forward. Councilmember Allison alter, I really appreciate the focus on the collaborative care communication center. When I think about this item specifically, I think about the other ways that the ems services taxed and how, while this may seem like a large price tag, at first glance, we're

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really saving money overall in other areas. And I believe that that investment is important. So thank you very much for bringing this forward. >> Thank you, councilmember Kelly. Other comments or questions with regard to this item? I'll recognize councilmember Allison alter on the next proposed amendment. >> So colleagues, my amendment number four responds to hate. We all belong adds \$350,000 in one time money as you know, I represent an area where many acts of hate have occurred in the last few years. I remember that shock that rippled through our community in the days that followed these incidences of hate, which began in 2021. In in great strength. We have a history of acts of hate against many of the diverse members and groups that make up our city. However I also want to remember the response from our community in that aftermath, how quickly we came together to say that that is not what we stand for. I'm really proud to be part of a city council that has spoken loudly and clearly against hate, directed at any part of our

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community. We have stood against those who have targeted our Muslim community, our Asian community, austinites of color, lgbtq, and we've stood against those who have sought to challenge our democracy more broadly. We still though, have work to do to improve our community's response to

hate, no matter the group being targeted , we must continue to streamline our reporting process so that every austinite knows how to report hate incidents and we must improve our systems to monitor and interrupt patterns of hate before they escalate. Law enforcement officials must be trained in how to respond to the tactics of hate groups. We must continue to provide education Ann so that every austinite feels their responsibility to stop the spread of hate and knows what to do when they encounter it. We need every austinite to make these reports if they experience hate, I will note that even this past weekend and a couple of my colleagues know this, we experienced another anti-semitic incident in our community very similar to what we saw in 21 and

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22. We put this system to the test and there were some things we did well, and there's some things that we still need to improve. So this is timely and important. My amendment will provide the necessary funding to advance this critical work. I'm happy to provide more background. I also want to make sure that all of my colleagues and the room knows that we have a we all belong anti-hate event. This Saturday called the party at the people's house here at city hall at 6:00, right before the pride parade. And I hope you will join us and encourage folks to come. It is really, really important when we face the hate that we also are able to stand up and demonstrate that we value the cultural richness of our community. I know the staff in Pio who have been working on this event have really put a lot into it and I hope that we can all come and celebrate together . Thank you. You also have a letter from de Garza for that item. >> Thank you. Councilmember comments or questions. Very

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good. We will now go to the mayor pro tem on the next proposed amendment. >> Thank you. Mayor Ellis. Amendment number five is about the distribution of free gun locks and the education campaign for safe storage of weapons. And so that right now has a blank in it. We did get our answer back through the Q and a and are going to be plugging that in for 80,000 of ongoing expenditures. And that is only to make sure we're maintaining that program at the current level. So we appreciate all our partners who help us with those programs, and that's why we're bringing that amendment. >> Thank you. Mayor pro tem questions councilmember Kelly. I'll recognize you on the next proposed amendment. >> Thank you. So I believe and they have the visual AIDS I brought today are my first budget amendment is one time funding allocation to the Austin police department budget to fund 61 vehicle wraps. As you can see from the photos here. And then I believe there are several or a

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couple other photos. The Austin police department is in need of new vehicle wraps. Several officers came to me and let me know that their vehicles had experienced a lot of wear and tear. They don't look so great. And I believe it would go a long way for morale at the police department among the officers if we put the one time funding of \$183,000 towards this, there is a replacement schedule outlined in the budget amendment. But I believe it's a real small investment which will go a long way among morale for the officers. And then also it'll show pride in the city's department as a whole. So that is amendment one. Thank you, councilmember members, any questions or comments? >> Yes. Councilmember harper-madison, I would just like to take this opportunity to acknowledge we had our auditor do a special report about how frequently pd basically wrecks their fleet and it was

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astronomical. >> Knell so if we do make this kind of investment, I'd like for us to also disorder dovetail that with some degree of regular maybe the public safety committee could keep up with just how frequently the fleet is getting wrecked and worn out. >> Thank you, councilmember. Other comments or questions? I would just add I look took a look at that audit and my office has been trying to come up with a educational program potentially that we could roll out related to all fleet services and vehicles related not just to APD but the other departments that were mentioned in that I see this more as an investment in the overall outlook of the vehicles, not necessarily that they're being wrecked and need the wrap replaced. >> This is just regular wear and tear from what I can tell, based on the use of the vehicles. I appreciate that it was just an adjacent concern. >> Thank you, councilmember Katy. >> I'll recognize you on the next proposed amendment. Thank you. >> And I do not have a photo of

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this. We considered bringing a truck over here, but we decided not to. It would have looked real good outside that window over there. So this is Kelly budget amendment number two. One time funding allocation to the Austin police department budget to fund one aerial fire truck. We have at length talked about this as a dais and we have identified that this is a need without going into all the details, because I feel like we've talked about this apparatus ad nauseam. I will say that for those of you that aren't aware currently, it takes up to two years. And that's a very conservative estimate to get a fire truck built and then delivered. And so it is my belief that since one hasn't been purchased since 1995 related to this specific type of apparatus, it is vitally imperative that we get the ball rolling now and then upon delivery, we will be able to pay for it. And so that is Kelly budget amendment number two. >> Councilmember Fuentes, thank you. >> If we can have someone who or I guess my question is, where would this aerial truck be placed? Which station? >> It's my understanding that

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this gets added to the fleet. So it will replace whatever we've got. That's the oldest that goes then into into reserve. That's the way. That's the way that's what worked when I ran it. We would take the new one, make sure it gets into service and then take the best that you have left and move it into a reserve so that we have that available and that just depends on on where those were. Those aerials are deployed now. Okay >> And do we know because I know there was an assessment done that identified two stations in which needed an aerial truck. >> If that's if that's what the chief needs, that's where it will be. It will be driven by the needs of the system as he and the fire department define it. >> Okay. Good night. Ranch fire station was one of them that was flagged for the aerial truck. Need >> Yeah. Okay. Thank you, mayor pro tem manager. >> I just wanted to be clear that this is this proposal, as I understand it, is, is funding for an additional vehicle, but not the staffing to run it. The manager said this would replace a frontline apparatus, one of our frontline apparatus would go

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to reserve and that would allow us to increase our reserve level by one unit, which is something our fleet department feels is important given the wear and tear on these vehicles. >> Mayor pro tem, I was simply going to ask if all the dollars for this would need to be allocated in one fiscal year or is it the type of cost where you put a deposit down and then pay the rest of it when it is ready? >> So if that could be spread across two fiscal years instead of one, it'll be general, it'll be general obligation, not general obligation, but certificates of obligation. >> So it's a matter of how the financing works. When we identify the vendor and we'll encumber the money at that point. Okay. Sounds good. >> Thank you. >> Yes. Councilmember Allison alter. So I just want to clear why, because there is a need to have an aerial, but we've heard from the fire department now, city manager has not necessarily weighed in on whether that's valuable or not. >> But we've we've heard from the fire association. We've heard from the fire department. I know there hasn't been a new

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aerial team added in a very long time, as well as that we're behind on our trucks. So I think it's important that we purchase this. But I think we also do need to have a conversation. Do we need two of these purchased or ordered in some way? Because if we have to replace the levels in our fleet just to keep up with what we have. But I think that the intent Ann in putting this forward is not just to have an extra vehicle, but to move us forward in an effort to add an aerial into a new aerial team. I don't, for lack of a better word, into our system. And I think we do need to have some clear understanding of what that need is. Even just from a staffing perspective and a leadership perspective. We have a new wildfire battalion. They only have one captain. This aerial would be bringing in another captain, adding it to that battalion, other battalions have 4 or 6 capt ins. I don't

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know how to I don't know how to evaluate this. And the need for the additional staffing. Et cetera. I think that's something that the city manager's office needs to work out with the fire department and it may be that we can say we're going to order one, and then you go and you do all the work to order it. And by then you've figured it out and you decide, okay, maybe we need to that we can we can do that later. I don't know that 1 or 2 has to be decided by next week, but I just want to be clear that in putting this truck forward, it's not just to have an extra one in the fleet for me. I don't want to speak for council member Kelly. It's her amendment. But I'm trying to figure out how do we get us to a place where we add that aerial team and the staffing that goes with that truck, but you have to have a truck before you can do that. And it takes two years to order it. >> Well, let me that the comments you have is are good ones and we'll need to I'm sure the fire chief has some

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certainly understands what the deployment needs to be. We'll certainly have him do that analysis and then we'll bring that analysis forward if there needs to be more equipment, they need to bring forward that request. So we understand what that is and work through the operational questions about the staffing and the number of people that we need. But we'll ask the chief to prepare that analysis and then bring back that to council at the appropriate time. >> When might the appropriate time be? I mean, I don't know. I don't know if it is like this for the other council members. But sometimes when I have additional information, I'm better able to make more informed decisions. And since we're in the budget, I'm not asking for it tomorrow. But it might be helpful for us to get at the very minimum, some of the answers to council member Allison Walters questions so that we know how to move forward. I mean, if we need two trucks, we need two trucks, but I need to know that we need that before we finish this process. Yes I don't know that we're going to have this answer by next Wednesday. >> Okay. But but be that as it may, if his analysis in four months determines that there's an additional need, these are certificates of obligation. We

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simply bring an item to council, get that done at that time. Okay >> That's helpful. Thank you. >> Any other things on any other questions or comments? All right . Councilmember Kelly, I'll recognize you on the next proposed amendment. >> Thank you, Kelly. Budget amendment number three is an ongoing funding allocation for the Austin fire department budget to fund four fire specialist 911 call taker, fte positions and this came to me specifically. I I've spent quite a bit of time out there at 911 call center. I've developed some relationships with the individuals who work in that space and they have been providing dispatch services for AFD and ten Travis county emergency districts. They have had an increase of volume and they need additional staff to meet those increases in workload according to what I was told,

their staffing levels have remained the same since 2018 and over the last five years. Call volume has increased 43. I believe this would go a long way to ensuring that we have long term viability of the individuals in those positions

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and we're not over taxing them or over stressing them any other any questions or comments with regard to that? >> Yes. Councilmember Fuentes, thank you. >> I guess I know I'm not sure you're on when we met on Tuesday , we talked about hearing from the city manager and from staff around 911 call center operations. >> Is this an appropriate time to. >> No, I mean, I think we don't have the what we talked about last Tuesday. We know that we need to come back and talk to council about that. In terms of the 911 call takers, we have 52 vacancies and we need to work as fast as we can to get those filled to the people that take the initial calls. When I saw this amendment, it had not been brought to my attention that this was something that the that the 911 fire department takers or dispatchers needed. But we'll obviously Bruce mills will work with chief baker. We'll evaluate this and then determine Eid in the queue because what happens right now is we're having a hard time filling positions. So we

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need to just figure out how to sort through this and get it done as fast as we can, should it be adopted. >> So can I just clarify that the vacancies at the call center, my understanding is there's 52 vacancies are specifically related to the pd side and not the fire side. These would be additional fire side vacancy. Well, not vacancies, fire side positions for dispatch that firefighters specifically would be utilized in not the police side. Councilmember I haven't talked to the people you talked to. >> I'm happy to talk to them so they can educate me about the best way to do this. And so let me let me do that because I'm operating on not complete information. >> Okay. Thank you. >> And I realize there's a distinction between a 911 call taker for just currently housed within our police department versus the dispatchers that are on site at the call center. There are several different dispatchers there. Integral care is also involved. We'll have paramedics. So I just want to take a step back since we are focusing on this level of service, because there are it's a complex challenge in getting

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our 911 call center fully staffed. And since this amendment seeks to invest additional dollars on the dispatch side, particularly on the fire side, I think it's worth the conversation from a policy perspective. How you're managing our call center operations as an entire system. >> Councilmember Allison alter, thank you. >> City manager. When you evaluate the AFD dispatcher request, if you can also look at it sort of looking ahead, if investing in these positions and getting them higher is going to help us to avoid

a similar situation to what we have right now with APD. I think some of it I haven't done my homework on this, so I don't have a basis for judging the value of those. But my sense is that had we beefed up some of the other elements of the 911 system earlier that we might have we might have avoided some of the attrition because some of it is

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because of the high volume. And I think they're experiencing a higher volume. And so just just think about it also like looking forward, is this an investment that's going to help us to keep that area of 901. Staffed for longer? I would I would like to know the thoughts of staff on that. >> Yeah. And the only comment I'll make on that is that everyone knows as we started the year, we were way behind at and so there's a lot of catch up right now and this is part of that. This is the first budget cycle we've had to play catch up since there was a change in management. So I think we need to make sure we take that into account as we as we discuss this . Any other comments or questions? All right, councilmember Kelly, I'll recognize you on the next item. >> Thank you. Council member Kelly budget amendment four. That's me. An ongoing funding allocation to the Austin fire department budget to fund four

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lieutenant dispatch fte positions quite like what we were talking about previously with the prior amendment. This was also brought to me and as a follow up to the discussion about the city manager looking into that more, I did provide the interim city manager the over public safety with the name of the individual, specifically who I was talking to in the 911 center. So you all can follow up on that. So I'll keep that short. >> Good deal. Thank you. Do I get a gold star? No, not not. Not for that. Not for that. >> Yeah. >> Any questions or comments with regard to that item? All right, councilmember Kelly, I'm going to rival councilmember Ryan alter on your filibuster. Yes. Go for it. >> Thank you. Council member Kelly budget amendment number five is one time funding allocation to the Austin police department budget to fund for solar light tower trailers. The city is in need of these solar light trailer towers because they will provide safety lighting. The trailer has to have certain types of lighting

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and then they'll be battery or solar powered. This is really important because we have areas where there's a lot of crime, and by putting these solar trailers up, it will illuminate the area in the evening and it will allow for that deterrence of crime that we need that areas all across the city could have in a way that would be very important. And so it is a one time funding of \$70,000. And I just look, I just took a intro to criminal justice class at occ, and one way that you can deter crime is by illuminating the heck out of an area and so I think this is vitally important to the city. >> Councilmember Allison alter, as you

evaluate these items, I wanted to ask if you can look at whether there is forfeiture funds that could be spent on that rather than debt financing it. >> I think that also might be possible with the rap. There's a lot of money that's still in those funds and maybe the police chief, if he sees this as a

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priority, can use those funds for them. Sure. >> Other questions or comments. Thank you. Councilmember Kelly. Councilmember qadri, you're recognized for a proposed amendment. >> Great. Thank you, mayor qadri amendment one drinks spiking test. Strip pilot program under the dsd department. The pilot expands on the existing safer sixth street initiative to include funding for the distribution of drink spiking test strips to nightlife establishments along the current sexual assault prevention. Ann bystander intervention training . It also grows off of the Rainey street resolution that was brought forward by our office in April, which directs the city manager to work with Rainey street bar owners and stakeholders to encourage the written safety plans and training for door staff. The reasoning for this is that we have seen in instances where there was a, say, an article in 2019 where physicians have noted an increase of patients coming in from downtown bars who display unusual, nonalcoholic

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related symptoms. When asked if the cause was for was from drugs, the physicians have often said yes. I think it's definitely possible based on professional incidences as well as personal anecdotes that I've heard in the community, that this is potentially an issue that needs further inquiry. You know, I think a lot of times we as a community have done a great job at taking care of people after the fact, but making sure that we prevent something horrible from happening is something that we really need to do. I think a better job at. And I think this would be a great prevention strategy. We're looking at. We initially had put \$500,000 for funding, but then we looked at what other similar cities might have done and how much money they might have allocated. The only city that we could have found was west Hollywood. They did about \$15,000. And the state of Massachusetts is currently has a amendment from a state senator that's still making its way. And

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the whole state put forward a \$300,000 price tag on that. So rather than the \$500,000 I think we had initially, we put towards it, I think we're looking at getting that number down to a 100 K and in terms of where that funding would come from, it would be one time funding and we were looking at we saw there was an fte in APD that was removed because of a long term vacancy. It was about \$75,000. So maybe we would use some of that money to eat up that cost of \$100,000. And then my last thing I'll say,

I want to thank the only confirmed co-sponsor so far, councilmember Fuentes. But I do hope a lot of folks join in on this amendment. Thank you. Also, councilmember Velasquez. >> Thank you. Councilmember qadri comments or questions. Thank you, sir. I'll recognize you for the next potential amendment. You're not on. I don't believe.

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>> There you go. Yeah, for this one. We're going to stick with the amount of money that we see on it. But I do want to add, before I get into it, that I it's a similar amendment that councilmember Vella is as it's on the list for him for Vella amendment 14. And I have discussed it and we'll have a little bit more of a convo after all of this on it. But gallery amendment 13 has to do with the mental health diversion pilot program under Austin public health. You know, Travis county has asked the city to contribute \$2 million annually over a three year period beginning in fiscal 2023, 2024 to fund a multi-partner pilot program. The county has already committed this same amount and is making parallel funding requests to central health community unity care and our local hospital systems in as it was said when we brought this as an item, as a resolution on, you know, the jails should not be the largest mental health care facility in our community. And before covid,

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about 20% of the Travis county jail population was identified as having serious mental health conditions. And now about 41, which is about 880 inmates, are identified as having a serious mental health condition. So this amount would be \$2 million is and it would go for three years. So \$2 million a year for three years. And the co-sponsors from this are councilmember Harper, Madison, Velasquez, Avila and Fuentes. And I want to thank all of them for being a part of this . >> Councilmember Fuentes, thank you. >> And thank you, councilmember qadri and vela for bringing forward amendments regarding the mental health diversion center. I think that really speaks to the level of support that this initiative has from council. I certainly stand with you all in supporting the city, contributing and helping facilitate and ensure that the pilot gets off the ground and gets running as quickly as possible. Certainly we need alternatives to the jail system

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as a as a place to have people who are experiencing mental health crises and knowing the prevalence of mental health illness or mental illness in our in our city. We certainly need this type of diversion center. We are not alone in that. We've seen other cities across the nation Ann have similar types of diversion centers. I attended several community meetings. Councilmember Ryan alter attended one of them with me with the county to learn more about the center and hear from folks involved in the justice system

about the benefits of it . So I'm proud to support your amendments. >> Councilmember qadri yeah, I'm sorry. >> And I always want to make sure that I lay this out. But in terms of source of funds, as we were looking at, I think initially I put general fund, but we're going to see if we're able to get any sort of funding for it through through APD, councilmember Bella, I appreciate the item as councilmember qadri mentioned, I have a similar one and I know I was just saying how you know,

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they need to fund their own stuff. >> That said, I know, right? This is not something that the city has in long term. Long term. This is not an area that that we see. That is our responsibility that we need to fund. That said, if we can help kick start this initiative, it will, I believe, help relieve some of the pressures on APD where you have the same person kind of, again and again, the mental health issues, you know, relatively minor crimes. We're devoting a lot of resource to that type of arrest, that type of policing. There's got to be a better way. And I'm hoping that the county judge brown has really pushed on this that they can get it going happy to kind of give them a little a little push at the beginning. If we can . >> And the only thing I'll add to all that is that I favor we

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need a diversion center. I mean , let's face it, we can't address what we a variety of issues Luz and different shades of those issues without having a diversion center. My personal belief that this is first and foremost a county obligation because of the role it will play in, I use the word diversion, but the second is it's a close second. That central health ought to be the one that is funding this. This even if it is a pilot program at and I'm all for the concept of jumpstarting something, but the jump start is equal partner and so I think we ought to we need to there needs to be a push to find out whether central health can play a role or if the county can play a bigger role as we go forward on something that I think the whole community agrees, we really we really need. It's just a question of where those funds

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come from. Councilmember qadri yeah. >> The only thing I was going to add, yeah, I think conversations are ongoing between they are some of us at the city and the county and I know parallel funding requests have been made to central health. So Wright a lot of yes answers to be to be answered. A lot of questions. That's right. >> Okay. I'm going to change the order just real quickly, because councilmember vela does have an identical item. And I just want to see if we've covered you yet. >> We have. Okay. >> Very good. Thank you. Then I'll read recognize you on the 911 staff retention program possibility. >> Thank you, mayor. And if I may just before I get into that, I was talking to councilmember pool, who was

not able to join us today. And she the one item in particular that I just wanted to highlight which was the budget for the notification involving our planning efforts.

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She obviously her item with the small lots and the changes that that we're going to make to the zoning permissions on single family designated lots, it could potentially affect every single family zoned lot in the city that's going to be a big notify action. There's multiple other items that are with the planning department. Also that are going to involve, you know, us mailing a piece of paper to just about every household in the city. And she had expressed concerns, probably the wrong word, but she wants to make sure that we are sufficiently budgeted and that we're doing a very vigorous and broad notification so that everybody is aware of what's going on and everybody can participate. As she discussed when we passed the item that the item was the beginning of the conversation, not the end. So she asked she has talked about that. She wasn't able to be here. I just wanted to put that on the agenda. It's not a formal amendment, but I think it is important to properly fund that

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item. >> And I think that's probably going to be a unanimous agreement on that. The credibility of what the council wants to do with regard to housing, the credibility is at stake if we do not provide robust just and appropriate notice to the citizens and residents regarding the changes that might be made and as we were talking earlier today about allocations in, for example, in the planning department, that is one of the areas that probably we can assure appropriate funding through an allocation. But I'll let the city manager address that at an appropriate point. >> You let me know when. >> Okay. And then I'll go back to you. Councilmember villa, on 911. Thanks for bringing that up though. >> No, my pleasure. On the 911 staff retention programs. That's something we've been working on with the assistant city manager, Bruce mills, and the 901. Call center. It's just a matter it's

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not a going to be drawing any additional funds. My understanding is that the department does have the funds to do it, but just creating additional incentives mostly focused on retention for the 901. I believe those changes, if they have not already been made, they will soon be made. But just in case we have this item, we should get clarification here relatively soon. But again, this is just kind of creating another pay tier for and making a handful of other changes so that that we are keeping everyone that we're not in any way discouraging someone from continuing to work at the at the 911 call center council member yes. >> Two things is just to close the loop on the previous comment I made about the 911 call center earlier. Manager you mentioned that staff is working on an update to us regarding the 911 call center.

When can we expect that? >> I don't have that date now, but I can get that to the council once I get with staff

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and we can figure out is that something you think would be before budget or is that an update? We can certainly provide a memo before Wednesday. >> Okay. Before Wednesday. Okay. And the second thing, and I don't have to ask it now, but perhaps we can add it to the end. It's regarding retention incentives. Customer vela, you touched on retention incentives for the 911 call centers through your amendment. I have a question about retention incentives for airport employees. >> Go ahead. We'll just go take it up now. >> Yes. >> So you mentioned that I think last week's meeting or the week before. Yes we believe that the pay 4% pay increase plus the 7% gets people a one. I mean, basically keeps them whole plus one understanding that there's a from a benefit. I think it's the increase to the retirement system so that in essence they're in they're in the same place. However Shaw Jim Smith and Rebecca Kennedy at and Robert good are going to be looking at that. And if it turns

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out that we need to do something different, it's within our discretion to do whatever it is we need to do differently. I I want to I hesitate to telegraph to everyone. Yeah, I'm ready to increase salaries because I do believe in the no vinedo policy and so but we want to be prudent and we want to make sure that our that people do not leave because there's such important work to be done at the at aviation. And so as soon as they bring whatever recommendation we have, the ability to make those changes at the appropriate time. Thank you. >> Manager. >> That to me remains top of mind. You know, we've heard directly from employees who have been concerned about not having their full retention stipend preserved, you know, keeping it at that 10% retention stipend. I think would go a long way, not only with our airport employees, but with our utility employees as well. And so I just wanted to vocalize my support for that, given the high levels of staffing shortages, we have within those divisions. >> That's good. >> Thank you. Councilmember. And Robert good has that on his list. And we'll make sure we tend to it.

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>> Thank you, councilmember councilmember Lao, recognize you on the next. Oh, I'm sorry. Councilmember Allison alter. >> I wanted to just comment on both the airport and 911. So, so we started talking about this in our audit and finance and continuing and had an opportunity to talk with Robert good and to Mr. Kanellis with respect to the airport in particular, our and my understanding is that they're being held whole for this year at this start of the fiscal year . But there's a process in place .

There's a process in place to do a market study that then would go back and adjust salaries as appropriate for retention reasons and I do want to clarify, in saying that they're being held whole, that does not mean they get the 4% and they keep the 10. It's that they would not their salaries would not be going down in this year from having the stipend. I too would be interested in seeing if we could increase things so that

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they didn't feel like they were , you know, that they could get the other 4. But I do think it's important that the additional step up about the market study be communicated to staff. So that they understand that the intention is to adjust according to market for retention reasons. But that that is not yet complete and so cannot be in the budget. We've done that many times as mid-year budget amendments etcetera to be able to be able to do that. So I wanted to mention that and then on 911, I wanted to ask acm mills if you can tell us when the tiered structure for 911 for dispatch that we've been talking about for months when you think that's going to go into effect? My understanding was potentially going into effect this fiscal year. >> Thank you for that question. We I was talking over lunch trying to get the actual date to begin that because I thought somebody might ask, but it looks like it's going to be about mid September. We'll be able to put that in place. And that is the

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it's the call it a career progression type step. It's a little bit unique from just a regular regular step pay type program. I believe it will go a long way toward retention. It'll go a long ways towards addressing the compression issues we have with pay. And I think it'll be, it'll help with recruiting as well. And his manager said we have 52 or so vacancies and we have several applications in process now and hope to get those. We'd like to have that be 100% staffed in about 7 to 8 months. >> Thank you. I appreciate that. And you know, hopefully we can get that in as as soon as possible. I think this is a really important part of recognizing that our 911 dispatchers and call takers are first responders. Having that progression is a type of recognition for that, which I know is also important to them in terms of their career progression. So thank you. >> Agree. >> Thank you. And thank you, Susan city manager mills what?

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Councilmember Bella has a question. >> One more, too. I know one of the things the items that we were looking at also was a part time that allowing 911 call takers to go part time. Not that we want them to be part time, but sometimes through life circumstances or whatever the case may be. You know, someone can't go full time. Are we allowing a part time? >> Yeah, we have. There's no no prohibition for

that. We've not had much luck. We've we've asked that that's in place. As for that, I don't have an exact number, but we've had very few applications for that. But I agree with you that we agree that it's a it could be viable, that there are folks that maybe they maybe they have left a job or retired or just want to work part time. And we're certainly can can accommodate that with our schedules. >> I appreciate that. Again I don't think that's going to solve the problem in and of itself. But, you know, we should allow part time work. So I appreciate that. Thank you. Thank you, councilmember. >> I'll recognize you on the next proposed amendment. Let me thank you. >> The next amendment is data

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reporting. There were four position within the proposed Austin police department budget that that were for data for positions to implement the recommendations in the Kroll report. I need to follow up with the police department on those, but I will be bringing an ifc down the road very soon down the road involving creating a police data portal and San Antonio has an excellent data portal and Seattle is another city, has an excellent data portal. Basically, you know, you just hop on there and you can get just about any crime or staffing number over whatever time period you want. I want to center our debate around public safety in data and not in anecdotes. Right now, the only police reporting that we have, the only data that

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we have is the police chief's monthly report, which is fine in and of itself, but it's a it's a PDF. It's not interactive. There is no real kind of chart that you can go to and see kind of longitudinal data. And so that would be my ultimate goal with, with with these positions in themselves. Another thing that we have talked about to and will be continuing the discussion is where should the data portal be if, for example, office of police oversight may be a better spot for overseeing and managing the data portal than the police department? You know, again, we're going to continue to have these discussions and see where we are. But I think those four data positions, I just want to make sure that if we're adding the data positions that we're getting good information that is available to the public and that's the focus of this item.

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It's a budget neutral item. >> Thank you, councilmember. Any questions or comments with regard to that item? Okay. We will now go. I'll recognize councilmember vela on the next potential amendment. >> And this one is with regard to the move of the police department budget, H.R. Personnel and other personnel from, the their respective departments back into the police department. But I don't have any objection to the movement of the staff. The question is what open records impacts or if any, are those

moves going to have the, the, the opoa item in may passed overwhelmingly with 80% or so of the vote. The public has been very strong with their demand for transparency and to the extent that this move would have

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any negative effects on the availability of documentation, any kind of information in the personnel files for the police, I would not want to move those positions to it. Again we're still kind of trying to understand exactly what that impact any open records impact will be and hopefully we're going to continue to have these conversations and clarify exactly what any potential again , we want transparency to the extent that it's going to be a negative effect on transparency, that's a concern. And we'll have to discuss it further. >> Councilmember Kelly, thank you. >> And councilmember vela, you bring up a good point related to transparency. I believe the best government is one that's done in the open and is transparent. But I'm not quite sure if there would be any limitation as to the open records requests or transparency by moving these positions in. And so I'm hoping maybe the city manager might be able to speak to that for us so

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we can get clarification on. >> Yeah. >> And council members and mayor I can get more information, but these this move was made because of operational inefficiencies. There was a period early in my appointment when we had police officers that went several pay periods without getting paid overtime and so those officers simply weren't responsive to the needs of that department. That may and Bruce, you may have some additional information. So it's really intended to just for operational efficiency. We it's not intended to do anything else . Yeah, perfect. Perfect for the operational piece. >> Certainly that came came to light and I think I've discussed it with several of you. The it is an operational impact. More importantly though, to the transparency piece, I think I was a little confusing when we tried to put a memo out a few weeks ago on G file a file, B file, all kinds of files that that are that are carried out in chapter 143. So the personnel file that you're talking about, councilmember, is completely available via public information

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request through through corporate hr, a corporate hr has always retained and does retain the personnel files of all police employees, police officers by statute, the only files that the G file file is the file that the police department retains through internal affairs and Pio. And what have you. And those are those are those are investigations before discipline. Once discipline is meted out, that that file is sent back to corporate hr and is available for public information . This move wouldn't have anything to do with that

at all . Thank you. >> I appreciate that. The a filing of the chapter 143 governs civil service rules for police officers. A file says what the public can see has to be able to see. And then, of course, the G file is kind of, you know, the exact opposite. You know what the public is not allowed to see. And I just like

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I said, I just wanted to get some additional clarification actually, I might follow up with with law. Just to go over it with with y'all's attorneys and just to make sure that that I'm understanding the impact. Like I said, I have no problems at all with operational concerns. I completely understand the operational concerns is my only concern is making sure that that that we're being as transparent as we possibly can be. Yeah, the goal is to be as transparent as we can be. >> Subject to the state law that has certain limitations. Those limitations, of course, as we all understand and limit even what we can do with prop a, because 143 controls, unless there's an agreement that allows for otherwise. But there's no question that what the goal here is, is to be as transparent as the law currently allows. Absent a contract with the police association, councilmember Kelly , then councilmember Fuentes, I

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was just going to thank the city manager and interim city manager for explaining that. >> I think it's really important so that we understand what will be affected. I do support the change that is in the budget currently. I cannot support this budget amendment. Thank you, councilmember Fuentes, and then councilmember Ryan alter. >> And I apologize. Councilmember alter thank you, mayor. >> And to your point, wanting to ensure the utmost transparency, it would seem that what would allow us the utmost transparency is to keep these positions within H.R. Thank you, councilmember Ryan. >> Alter any councilmember qadri. >> I was wondering if Mr. Alexander could answer a question related to the building services aspect of this element and as he walks down, really my question is what other departments have their own kind of in-house S building services separate from your global reach ? I just want to understand the

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kind of the practicality of this and if we've seen it work differently when you're not in control versus someone else. >> Good afternoon, mayor. City manager, council members. I'm Jared Alexander. The business service officer for business service department. To your question, there are several departments around the city that have their own facilities, but I don't know if this that answers the questions that they're asking as far as transparency from a facility perspective, especially in a tactical environment, especially tactical in a short term, it really doesn't make any difference if they have their own facilities, if there's some support, then we provide support to them. Usually they're doing more of a

level one changing hvac system, hvac filters or doing doorknobs or something like that. Very something very simple. Anything beyond that, if it's within our scope, we'll do that for the city because our city of Austin. So that's where bsd comes in at. Did that answer your question?

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>> Pretty much. I appreciate it. Thank you, sir. Yeah. >> Councilmember qadri. >> Yes, sir. Thank you, mayor. Just a very quick comment. I'm just in favor of item 12 by councilmember Bella. I think it's just really important for transparency. So I appreciate him and his office on their work on this item. And bringing it forward. >> Thank you. And I do appreciate the clarification. >> Mayor. There there with regard to the opoa and the contract, it's a very complex interaction of laws and contractual relationships that that govern these. And that's that's the hesitation that it is a complex area. And I just want to make sure that there are no open records effects from this change. Great and the last item I'll pass on that one, we I think we've discussed planning. Okay. Thank you. >> All right. The next one is he just indicated we've already discussed so I'll now recognize councilmember Velasquez on a proposed amendment. >> Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Velasquez amendment for community violence intervention

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programing. This item will help provide community violence intervention initiatives to a wider area, reaching more at risk communities, and taking a public health approach to reduce ING the spread of violence. The work includes community violence, intervention in preventing gun violence, preventing youth violence and supporting healing in the community and thank you to council members Harper, Madison and vela for the co ship. >> Any questions? Councilmember vela councilmember Velasquez and I besides sharing the same initials, share our districts with very hot spots from a from a disorder kind of criminal perspective. >> We there have been very effective strategies in terms of breaking cycles of violence. A lot of times, you know, you have a shooting and then there's a retaliatory shooting and then there's another retaliatory shooting. And the goal of his

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amendment is to have people in there to stop that cycle of violence and prevent these shootings. I think that that it's a it's a it's a great concept. I feel like it has worked where it has been tried. Again, this is, I think, an important public safety amendment that and I fully support it. >> Other comments or questions. Councilmember Allison alter thank you. >> I think I was inadvertently left off as a co sponsor because we were we were working on this as well. And I just want to say that you know, this is work that our office of violence prevention is doing right now. And I've had an opportunity to talk with the peace

coalition that's on the ground doing this work in two areas as and I think it's a really, really promising Singh way forward to stop the cycles of violence that we're seeing concentrated in

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particular communities. The group is initially asking for much larger investment for what it would take to really address the about 300 individuals that they've targeted that we would want to be providing with services. I think this \$500,000 request is more reasonable and makes sense in terms of a scale up at this point in time. I will flag that there is likely another \$200,000 that's already in the budget to increase what they're doing. Now that hasn't been that hasn't been contracted yet so that we might want to think about that as we're moving as we're moving forward. But, you know, if we want to stop the cycles of violence, we really do have to be thinking about the prevention and we need to have trusted partners who are in those communities who are able to communicate and meet the needs of those who would

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otherwise be perpetrating the violence. I think this is where the cutting edge is. This is how we are going to really make change. So if the city manager believes in those programs and can see us investing a little bit more this year into those, I'd like to see us begin to scale those pilots. >> Other comments or questions I'll recognize councilmember Ryan alter on the next proposed amendment. >> Thank you very much, mayor. I'm not breaking any news here. When I tell everybody it is really hot outside and it's going to be for quite some time. But a way to reduce the impact of the heat is a greater tree canopy. Know more trees not only means more shade, but less carbon in the atmosphere and reduced heat island effect. So this amendment would increase the funding for the neighborhoods program to distribute 5000 additional trees , particularly in east Austin, which lacks the tree canopy that we see in west Austin. We

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unfortunately can't plant 50 year old trees. We have to the investments we make today make it possible for future generations to enjoy a robust tree canopy. And that's what this amendment will do for us. And I believe that without speaking for my friend Stuart and Bob over there, that this can come from the Austin energy, which has historically funded this program through dsd. So potentially not a general fund ask, but we'll get clarification on that. >> Comments or questions. Thank you. Council member, mayor pro tem. >> Not a comment or question on that one, but just wanted to flag I know we have a spreadsheet up here that we're all working off of, but for list six and list seven are shown as withdrawn because they are currently baked into the budget already. >> Very good. Thank you. I believe that's also

the true. Well, I'm not sure. Councilmember vela also had one that has been withdrawn. Do you want to comment on that?

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>> That's just the transfer center in discussion with staff. I'm comfortable that they're moving forward on it and we're good. >> Very good. Thank you. Members that as you know, as just pointed out by the mayor pro tem, that takes us to the end of the tracking system that we've been utilizing today. But I want to be careful and make sure is there something else? Is there something that ought to be on this tracking system that that is not and I've missed it in some way or because I want to make sure we have everything laid out so that the manager and his staff is in a position to do what he suggested at the very beginning. Is there anything that I need to bring up as part of that? All right. Is there anything that anybody else would like to bring up at this work session before we end? Councilmember Fuentes, thank you, mayor. >> The ifc's, what's the process on that? Well I think what we will do on that, since those are not making a direct change to the only item we really need to pass, which is the budget, what

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we'll do is we'll take those up as separate items at the appropriate time after we've dealt with, you know, the budget items to get and what my plan had been was to get a motion next Wednesday on the 16th, get a motion on the budget, get a second, and then work through the budget amendments. >> I want to look back at the ifc's to see if we need to take any of those up. At the same time. Or if those are easily taken up as separate items. Once the budget is passed and out of the way and I'll get back to you on exactly how I think that might best work out, it looks to me like those can be taken up like normal. Ifc's and we'll take those up after the amendments. >> Yeah. >> Okay. Sounds good. >> Councilmember harper-madison it's actually more of a moment of personal privilege. >> Sure. I wanted to say congratulations to anybody with

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school aged kids. Summer is coming to a close. You get your money back, your refrigerator will have food in it. And also just say to our aid students Monday, start school. So congratulations on what I'm certain will be a successful school year. >> Great councilmember Kelly thank you. >> I'd like a point of personal privilege to you. I want to thank an intern who's been working with my office, Nolan screen. He's in the back of the room. Most of you in public safety know that he is very supportive of public safety. He was great to have in my office. We successfully put together the community emergency response team last week and we did a great job. So high five. Nolan, I'm going to miss you, but I know you'll be back. So thank you so much for everything that you do. Thank you. >> Councilmember qadri I

guess. >> I guess everyone's taking points of personal privilege. >> Might everyone has just got everyone. >> Just a few folks don't be making suggest. >> I'm sorry. >> Well, if anyone else wants to

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ask me. >> Yeah. >> Thank you. No I just want to thank, you know, for us getting to this place, our staffs were working really, really hard. These binders were built by I don't know if you can see how thick these are by staff in our office. I really do appreciate everyone's real hard work. And I'll also take a point of personal privilege. We had two birthdays in the office this month, and I would be remiss if I did not say happy birthday to Sarah. Barge is our chief of staff. Her birthday was on August fourth. And then Natalie Deller's birthday is on August 12th, which is this Saturday. So happy birthday. >> Excellent. Happy birthday. Councilmember Allison alter. >> Actually, I have a budget question. >> Oh, no, I just wanted to get a sense from the city manager's office on the timing of when we might be able to expect to be. >> There were a lot of shifts today, and I heard some folks pulling back some really big amendments, which has me excited about our ability to really get to a good place. But it sounded like there were a few things that you were going to be able

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to work out in the base budget and it would be really helpful so we can use our time as wisely as possible to have a sense of the timing. >> Yeah, I think we'll begin as soon as we're done here. We're going to go huddle and my favorite conference room on the third floor, which is the finance conference room. So we'll start working on what what it looks like in terms of the resources available and the gap. We now have. Then we want to start working as hard as we can with the departments to figure out what can get fit into the \$1.3 billion budget, hope we'll be able to have a picture by the end of tomorrow and then start Monday. Start talking with each of your offices in terms of what those cuts look like and so that's kind of the plan right now. And also, we'll we'll inform you. We'll keep you. We've been I've been going over to the second floor a lot and I almost feel like a member of your staffs as I interrupt all your work in each of your offices. We'll stay as closely as we can to each of your offices that are we know the things that are important to you. So you can kind of know what our analysis is. And so if I'm given this moment also, I

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just want to, in addition to all the hard work that the council staff has done and certainly they've done that, I the items from council that appeared on the agenda for me yesterday when I was paying attention. I want the council to know that all the directors in this in this audience as well as the budget staff have been working overtime to get answers to your questions and to get all the work done. The

neighborhood meetings that we've had so that we can do the town halls, et cetera. An enormous amount of work. And when I looked at some of those items from council, I my shoulders sagged. Like, here's the staff that's been working so hard. We're being asked to go do more and I really would ask you guys to help us pace this kind of work so that they can get the breather they need between now and the 16th and post so that we can do our best work for you. And so whatever you can do to kind of temper or have the pace a little slowed so we can get the work done that needs to get done, not just for you, but for the citizens of the city. Councilmember qadri another point of personal privilege

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going off, going off of what the city manager said, yeah, I want to thank all the departments for answering all those many questions and I want to thank Carrie for going on a road trip. >> And I think hitting every single budget town hall that was not easy and we really appreciate it. >> Yeah, and she did a great job . And I've said it before, but I'll say it again. Councilmember Bella again, run off of that the budget question tool and the fact that we can ask those questions and get such thorough answers is so helpful for our offices, not only for this year, but like now that I've been here for more than one year, we look back at last year's, you know, I mean, it's just such a helpful tool. >> You can search them, you know, you can find them. And I since cerely appreciate that, I can't think of another governor that does that on such a detailed level. And so for you all to feel those questions and get us back, you know, oftentimes very detailed answers again, greatly appreciated. I know we put you all through a

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lot in the, you know, 4 or 5 week time frame that we work on the budget. But just sincere appreciation, not just from myself, but from my staff. >> So that as we wrap up that two things out of that. Number one is, again thanks from the mayor and council to you all the city staff that has done such a good job on getting us here. The second thing is that that implicit in what the council member just said is the goal. We're not there yet. We can't say we've crossed the goal line yet. But the goal was to develop as collaborative a process as we could and as a team so that this form of government works well and that's why we built in things like today, a day where we lay out amendments and everybody gets to hear the amendments as opposed to on the day we try to pass the budget, we have amendments, you know, flying back and forth. So to the manager and the staff and to this council, thank and our

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staffs thank you for helping make this a collaborative process so that we can we can make it work. I will be in closed to in part to answer the question that council member Fuentes asked a minute ago. I'll stay in close contact as issues if proposed amendment maybe get dealt with and handled along the way. So

that it'll make it easier for me to try to run the meeting next Wednesday. As we start and go through amendments. So just be aware that I'll do like we I've typically done and on the message board, probably the day before, I'm not sure I do anything before that, but the day before I will put up on the message board how I anticipate the next day will go. Again, just to reiterate what I said a minute ago, what I will probably what I will do unless something changes is I will first call for a motion to pass the budget and get a second so that we will

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have a budget on the table to discuss this. And then we will go through the amendments. Also note that we will be posted for Wednesday and that will also involve a public communication period because of the scheduled vote that would be occurring on the 16th. And of course, if we need the 17th and 18th, we will also be posted for those days. With that being said, and without objection, the work session of the Austin city council is adjourned at 1:44 P.M. On August 10th, 2023. Thank you. Members and good work. This was a good day. Thank you all.