

BOARD MEETING DATE: September 4, 2020

AGENDA NO. 9

**PROPOSAL:** Appropriate Funds and Amend Existing Contract for Consultant Services for South Coast AQMD's Why Healthy Air Matters Program and the Environmental Justice Outreach and Initiatives, Appropriate Funds for the Clean Air Program for Elementary Students, and Modify Existing Board Approved Policy

**SYNOPSIS:** At the August 7, 2020 meeting, the Board discussed expansion of the Why Healthy Air Matters (WHAM) Program and the elementary school education program. These actions are to amend the contract for consultant services for WHAM to add \$1,000,000 per year in FY 2020-21, FY 2021-22, and FY 2022-23; amend the contract for consultant services for the Environmental Justice Outreach and Initiatives to add \$100,000 in FY 2020-21 and the amount of \$260,000 per year in FY 2021-22 and FY 2022-23; and appropriate \$100,000 per year in FY 2020-21, FY 2021-22, and FY 2022-23 for Clean Air Program for Elementary Students (C.A.P.E.S.), modify the existing Board-approved policy requiring the transfer of 20 percent of annual penalty money received that exceeds \$4 million from the General Fund to the Health Effects Research Fund (48). Prior to making any transfers to the Health Effects Research Fund (48), the identified penalty money would instead be used to fund WHAM, Environmental Justice Outreach and Initiatives, and C.A.P.E.S. If enough funding is not available for these programs in FY 2021-22 or FY 2022-23 based on this formula, further Board action will be required.

**COMMITTEE:** Administrative, August 14, 2020; Recommended for Approval

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

1. Appropriate \$1,100,000 from the General Fund Unreserved (Unassigned) Fund Balance to the Legislative, Public Affairs & Media FY 2020-21 Budget, Services and Supplies Major Object, Professional & Specialized Services account;
2. Amend the existing contract with Lee Andrews Group, Inc. for consultant services for the WHAM Program to add \$1,000,000 per year for FY 2020-21, FY 2021-22, and FY 2022-23 out of the General Fund;

3. Amend the existing contract with Lee Andrews Group, Inc. for consultant services for Environmental Justice Outreach and Initiatives to add \$100,000 in FY 2020-21 and \$260,00 per year in FY 2021-22 and FY 2022-23 out of the General Fund for the consultant to secure the additional 20 elementary schools;
4. Appropriate \$100,000 per year from the General Fund Unreserved (Unassigned) Fund Balance to the Legislative, Public Affairs & Media FY 2020-21, FY 2021-22, and FY 2022-23 Budgets Services and Supplies Major Object, Professional & Specialized Services account for the District to purchase and secure needed products and equipment for the C.A.P.E.S. program;
5. Modify the existing Board-approved policy requiring the transfer of 20 percent of annual penalty money received that exceeds \$4 million from the General Fund to the Health Effects Research Fund (48). Prior to making any transfers to the Health Effects Research Fund (48), the identified penalty money would instead be used to fund WHAM, Environmental Justice Outreach and Initiatives, and C.A.P.E.S. The funding amount would be up to \$1.2 million in FY 2020-21 and up to \$1.36 million in FY 2021-2022 and FY 2022-23, respectively. Any remaining penalty money based on the formula stated above will continue to be transferred to the Health Effects Research Fund (48); and
6. If enough funding is not available in FY 2021-22 or FY 2022-23 based on this formula, which is 20 percent above \$4 million received in penalty monies, for WHAM, Environmental Justice Outreach and Initiatives, and/or C.A.P.E.S., further Board action will be required to determine the funding source for these projects.

Wayne Natri  
Executive Officer

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### **Background**

South Coast AQMD has a long history of K-12 educational outreach to teachers and students in the South Coast Air Basin through programs and events, especially within environmental justice communities. These activities have been effective in raising awareness about South Coast AQMD and air quality issues among teachers and students and their families.

In February of 2015, Dr. Burke and the Board launched the Environmental Justice Community Partnership (EJCP), to strengthen South Coast AQMD's relationships with stakeholders in environmental justice communities and to help clean the air. In October 2015, the Lee Andrews Group, Inc. was contracted to support EJCP outreach efforts and programs.

In February 2019, the Board created the WHAM program to reach out to high schools in the South Coast AQMD four county region to educate students about air pollution and its effects in their communities. Additionally, staff created the Clean Air Program for Elementary Students (C.A.P.E.S.), formerly known as the Clean Air Rangers Elementary School program. Both programs have resulted in reaching several thousand people living within South Coast AQMD's jurisdiction. Additionally, South Coast AQMD's educational outreach inspires students to build air quality friendly lifestyles, get involved in their communities, and consider academic and professional careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM), as well as public policy.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, South Coast AQMD must adapt its K-12 educational outreach to provide both distance learning and, when possible, in person activities such as hands-on experiments and guest speakers. Many schools will be teaching in a hybrid environment with both distance and in-person elements. Additionally, developing specific South Coast AQMD curriculum and videos will create a foundation to present the region's unique air quality challenges, which will help disadvantaged communities, including those in the AB 617 program. The new distance and hybrid learning environments have presented challenges for school districts. These challenges require South Coast AQMD to create new methods of outreach to highlight the benefits of our K-12 programs, especially to those students most significantly impacted by air pollution.

At the August 7, 2020 meeting, the Board discussed expansion of the WHAM program and additional South Coast AQMD education programs to increase air quality awareness, especially in environmental justice communities throughout the region. Youth are often the agents for change within their families as they are inspired to make personal choices to help create a better environment for their families now and in the future. By increasing our youth's exposure to air quality issues in school, South Coast AQMD is also seeking to inspire students' academic and professional careers, as well as providing them with information they can share with their families.

To date, staff have volunteered to be trained and have been teaching both programs. Additional internal staffing or funding for contracts to implement these programs will be needed to manage these increased responsibilities. Staff will develop a proposal for subsequent Board consideration.

In June 2008, the Board established a Health Effects Research Fund and adopted a policy authorizing, upon annual Board approval, the transfer of 20 percent of annual penalty money received that exceeds \$4 million in receipts from the General Fund to the Health Effects Research Fund (48). The amount to be transferred is typically calculated at the end of a fiscal year and transferred to the Health Effects Research Fund (48) in the subsequent fiscal year. Board approval is being requested to modify the existing Board-approved policy to use these penalty monies (based on this formula) to fund

WHAM, Environmental Justice Outreach and Initiatives, and C.A.P.E.S instead of transferring them to the Health Effect Research Fund (48). In FY 2019-20, the penalty funds available for transfer in FY 2020-21 amount to approximately \$1.6 million. Instead of transferring these funds to the Health Effects Research Fund (48), staff is proposing to use a portion of the funds for these proposed contract modifications. The funding needed for these programs would be \$1.2 million in FY 2020-21 and \$1.36 million in FY 2021-22 and FY 2022-23. Any remaining penalty money based on the formula stated above will continue to be transferred to the Health Effects Research Fund (48). In FY 2021-22 or FY 2022-23, if the calculated penalty funds are insufficient, further Board action will be required to determine the funding source for these projects. All contracts contain stop work provisions that can be implemented if future funding is not available.

### **High School Air Quality Education Program**

In February 2019, South Coast AQMD sought to implement an air quality education program at 100 high schools in environmental justice communities within its jurisdiction. The program initially targeted 40 schools in Los Angeles County, and 20 schools each in Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties.

After a RFP process, the Lee Andrews Group, Inc. was contracted to support program development, outreach, and implementation of the high school air quality educational program in April 2019. The program, now known as WHAM, was successfully launched during the 2019-20 academic year in school districts resulting in the confirmation of 100 schools to participate in the program. The COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted the completion of the program, as teachers and schools scrambled to make the sudden switch to distance learning. The program was implemented in 33 schools and a total of 44 classrooms. The Lee Andrews Group, Inc. assisted with the research, design, development and implementation of all aspects of WHAM. The Lee Andrews Group, Inc. remains obligated to complete work at the remaining schools under the existing contract. Any new funds appropriated will be used to expand the program beyond the initial 100 schools that were targeted.

In March 2020, the Board approved the first of two optional one-year contract extensions with Lee Andrews Group, Inc. for assistance with the WHAM Program, based on the firm's effective performance during the first year of the contract.

The response to WHAM in the first year was positive, as many teachers and students had not heard of the South Coast AQMD and did not know about the local impacts of air pollution on residents living in their communities and the greater region. Additionally, WHAM was especially relatable for teachers and students at high schools within AB 617 communities. High schools located in AB 617 communities received specific presentations on the Community Steering Committees, Community Air Monitoring Plans, and Community Emissions Reductions Plans.

As part of the amended contract, and to expand the program per the Board's direction, Lee Andrews Group, Inc. will hire a Curriculum Specialist to design and develop an educational program for middle school students which can be offered via distance learning and/or in-person. The amended WHAM program will be offered to 100 middle schools and an additional 300 high schools each year for a period of three years within the South Coast AQMD's jurisdiction. After inclusion of those high schools already under contract, and the new schools expected to be added, it is anticipated that this program will reach 300 middle schools and 1,000 high schools. Lee Andrews Group, Inc. also will create videos, website content and website design as appropriate to support distance learning and connect with students in a familiar media format. Lee Andrews Group, Inc. will continue to assist in the research, strategy, project preparation, and program implementation for the second year of the program. These include an updated implementation plan, updating existing outreach materials and drafting new materials, facilitating and coordinating meetings with school districts, school administrators, and teachers, among other critical tasks.

To support the expanded WHAM Program, Lee Andrews Group, Inc. will need to:

- Hire two additional full-time staff dedicated to WHAM;
- Assign a eight-time Emmy Award-winning journalist working on other projects to assist WHAM half-time with writing and volunteer instruction;
- Assign current staff working on other projects to WHAM full-time;
- Hire a Curriculum Specialist to design and develop education program for middle school students;
- Assign a Senior Strategic Advisor working on other projects to assist WHAM quarter-time;
- Dedicate the Lee Andrews Group, Inc. Chief Executive Officer to assist WHAM quarter-time;
- Develop and produce videos; and
- Purchase and/or license additional software, including GIS, Salesforce, Smartsheet, and WebEx, among others.

### **Elementary School Air Quality Education Program**

In 2019, South Coast AQMD launched C.A.P.E.S., an elementary school air quality education pilot program. C.A.P.E.S. builds and fosters South Coast AQMD's relationships with school district officials, students, teachers and families. Staff coordinated and participated in assemblies that provided elementary school students located in environmental justice communities information on air quality and the health effects of air pollution. The assembly presentations included an interactive experiment, examples of how students could do their part to help clean the air, information on zero-emission equipment, and instruction on how to read the Air Quality Index. The program

provides air quality flags to the participating schools, and information packets on South Coast AQMD programs and air quality to send home for the families.

After issuance of an RFP, Lee Andrews Group, Inc. was contracted to support environmental justice outreach efforts and programs in February 2020. In the first year, staff presented C.A.P.E.S. to six schools throughout South Coast AQMD's jurisdiction, reaching over 2,028 students. The overwhelming majority of students had never heard of South Coast AQMD. The response was positive from the participants and schools and reached the majority of students at the school during their lunch recess. Schools have been inspired to continue learning about air quality and some have created Air Quality Clubs. Staff returned to some of the schools to present to student clubs and discuss ways they can help keep the air clean. Staff also returned to school sites to train school staff on how to use the South Coast AQMD mobile application to check air quality.

As part of the amended contract, Lee Andrews Group, Inc. will hire a Curriculum Specialist to design and develop an educational program for elementary students. The curriculum will be incorporated as part of the program and in packets for students to complete from home. Additionally, Lee Andrews Group, Inc. will produce educational videos as appropriate for the expanded K-12 programs. Students are engaged in distance learning and sharing videos is the best way to safely reach them and partner with schools. The videos will be focused on different topics such as Air Quality 101, the Air Quality Index, protecting the air and environment, and careers in STEM.

Additionally, Lee Andrews Group, Inc. will be responsible for expanding the number of schools participating in the program from five to twenty elementary schools per year within South Coast AQMD's jurisdiction. As part of the amended contract, Lee Andrews Group, Inc. will also assist in the outreach and evaluation of C.A.P.E.S. They will assist in reaching out to school district officials, administrators, principals, teachers, and other stakeholders. Lee Andrews Group, Inc. will assist in scheduling, project preparation, and coordination of the program with school sites. In order to maintain updated information and continue building relationships with elementary schools, Lee Andrews Group, Inc. will assist in coordinating annual follow-ups with the schools, drafting outreach materials, and website content. Furthermore, Lee Andrews Group, Inc. will retrieve evaluations from school sites and compile program data.

The additional funds for C.A.P.E.S. will be used for implementation, supplies, materials, equipment, and other necessary expenses. This will allow staff to expand the program and reach more students and families. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff will need to package materials individually for students. Furthermore, this funding will allow staff to develop additional materials to share with administrators, teachers, and families regarding C.A.P.E.S.

## **Proposal**

This proposal would:

1. Appropriate \$1,100,000 from the General Fund Unreserved (Unassigned) Fund Balance to the Legislative, Public Affairs & Media FY 2020-21 Budget, Services and Supplies Major Object, Professional & Specialized Services account; and
2. Amend the existing contract with Lee Andrews Group, Inc. for consultant services for the WHAM Program to add \$1,000,000 per year for three years out of the General Fund, starting in FY 2020-21; and
3. Amend the existing contract with Lee Andrews Group, Inc. for consultant services for the Environmental Justice Outreach and Initiatives to add \$100,000 in FY 2020-21 and \$260,000 per year in FY 2021-22 and FY 2022-23 out of the General Fund for the consultant to secure the additional 20 elementary schools; and,
4. Add Appropriate \$100,000 per year from the General Fund Unreserved (Unassigned) Fund Balance to the Legislative, Public Affairs & Media FY 2020-21, FY 2021-22, and FY 2022-23 Budget Services and Supplies Major Object, Professional & Specialized Services account for the South Coast AQMD to purchase and secure needed products and equipment for the C.A.P.E.S. program; and
5. Modify the existing Board-approved policy requiring the transfer of 20 percent of annual penalty money received that exceeds \$4 million from the General Fund to the Health Effects Research Fund (48). Prior to making any transfers to the Health Effects Research Fund (48), the identified penalty money would instead be used to fund WHAM, Environmental Justice Outreach and Initiatives, and C.A.P.E.S. The funding amount would be up to \$1.2 million in FY 2020-21 and up to \$1.36 million in FY 2021-22 and FY 2022-23, respectively.

## **Resource Impacts**

Sufficient funding is available from the General Fund Unreserved (Unassigned) Fund Balance for these contracts in FY 2020-21.