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City Manager's Report
November 14, 2023, City Council Meeting
Prepared by: M. Cleve Morris, City Manager
Item #: 12.2

Subject: Consider sending a letter to the California Department of Public Health requesting they deny the 2023 reauthorization of Sierra Harm Reduction Coalition's services for a syringe exchange program in El Dorado County and the City of Placerville.

Recommendation: Authorize the Mayor and Chief of Police to sign and transmit a letter to the California Department of Public Health requesting they deny the 2023 reauthorization of Sierra Harm Reduction Coalition's services for a syringe exchange program in El Dorado County and the City of Placerville.

Purpose: To provide express opposition to the California Department of Public Health regarding the reauthorization of Sierra Harm Reduction Coalition's services in El Dorado County and the City of Placerville.

Strategic Plan Strategy: Health & Public Safety

Background: On June 27, 2023, the City Council received a presentation on Sierra Harm Reduction Syringe Services Program (SSP). At that meeting, the Council voted 3-1 with Councilmember Clerici absent, to send a letter to the State Department of Public Health (CDPH) recommending against reauthorization of the program in El Dorado County. The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors took similar action at their meeting. Sierra Harm Reduction provides a Syringe Exchange Program to drug users to reduce accidental overdoses and reduce the spread of disease.

On September 1, 2023, the County was informed that the State had reauthorized the program in El Dorado County despite strong objections by the City and the County. On October 13, 2023, the City and County were again contacted by CDPH offering to consult on this issue. On November 8, 2023, Vice Mayor Neau, Chief Wren and City Manager Morris and County representatives from Administration, the Sheriff's office and the District Attorney's office, met with CDPH to further discuss this issue and voice our objection to the program in El Dorado County. No decision was made by CDPH at that time, and it was requested that if further information is available that it be forwarded to them.

Discussion: City Staff in consultation with County officials are recommending that another letter be sent to the State outlining our objections to the SSP. The attached draft letter has been prepared by Chief Wren and Mayor Saragosa for consideration.

Options:

1. Authorize transmittal of the letter as outlined.

2. Revise the letter and authorize transmittal.
3. Do not approve the letter.

Environmental: NA

Cost: Minimal staff time to research and prepare the letter.

Budget Impact: None

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "M. Cleve Morris". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

M. Cleve Morris, City Manager

Attachments:

Att. A: Draft Letter