

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA TOPIC

An Ordinance authorizing execution of a grant agreement with The Bacon Family Foundation to accept \$700,000 in grant funding for Operation Water Rescue 425; amending the 2023-2024 budget of the Operating, Grants, Donations and Special Reserves Fund in the amount of \$700,000; and authorizing expenditures of said grant funds.

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Finance & Asset Management

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**ACTION**

The Bacon Family Foundation has raised \$700,000 to assist the City in launching Operation Water Rescue 425 that would incorporate the use of jet ski watercraft in the Bellevue Fire Department's existing water rescue program. This Ordinance would authorize execution of a grant agreement with the Bacon Family Foundation to accept \$700,000, amend the 2023-2024 budget, and authorize expenditures. This would allow the City to procure necessary equipment and take other actions to launch Operation Water Rescue 425.

RECOMMENDATION

Move to adopt Ordinance No. 6803

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

Water rescue on Lake Washington depends on mutual aid. The City of Bellevue also contracts for patrol services with the City of Mercer Island. With the discontinuation of King County Sheriff's program on Lake Sammamish, there is less access to emergency resources on that lake. Currently, the City of Bellevue has highly trained rescue swimmers who provide assistance in the water and extend access into the water using rescue paddle boards, calling for mutual aid vessels, and, if possible, commandeering a private vessel from a shoreline neighbor willing to help. The rescue paddle boards were donated by REI and allow effective response to water emergencies up to approximately 300 feet from shore.

A member of the Bacon family is alive today due to a successful water rescue, and members of the Bacon Family Foundation felt moved to approach the City with a desire to enhance the effective reach of rescuers on the water. After consultation with rescuers, the Bacon Family Foundation agreed to fund the addition of jet ski watercraft in the Fire Department's existing water rescue program. The vision for the enhanced water rescue program has been referred to by the Parties as "Operation Water

Rescue 425.”

Incorporating jet skis into the City’s existing water rescue program would provide for farther and more rapid deployment. Water rescue is coordinated among jurisdictions around the lake, and mutual aid is key to successful response. Community feedback in the development of the Fire Department’s strategic plan called for effective water rescue, and the City of Bellevue has been a mutual aid partner with lakeside jurisdictions. The offer from the Bacon Family Foundation accelerated the opportunity to pursue motorized watercraft. Having jet skis in Bellevue will also strengthen the regional water rescue system.

Entering into an agreement with the Bacon Family Foundation to accept a grant in the amount of \$700,000 would allow the City to procure all the necessary equipment, provide training, and launch operations for the next budget cycle. Anticipated start of Operation Water Rescue 425 is in 2025.

For use by emergency medical services, the vendor must build out equipment specific to first responder use and is likely to take up to six months from order date to delivery of the watercraft. Jet ski deployment will also require accompanying equipment such as floating docks/ports/lifts that tie up to an existing dock so that the watercraft can be driven on and off quickly and floating rescue sleds to be towed by the jet ski watercraft. The specialized sleds have handles to provide quick patient extraction (eg., cold, struggling swimmer) and a surface to provide patient care (boating accident EMT interventions). Other equipment would include communication radios, headsets, life jackets, and locking storage boxes (sometimes referred to as “dock boxes”) that can store the headsets and life jackets for use on the jet skis.

With this generous donation, the City will have up to two jet skis available on Lake Washington and up to two jet skis on Lake Sammamish. The grant also covers the cost of proper moorage, transport, and maintenance, which have been arranged in partnership with the Parks and Community Services and Finance and Asset Management Departments. One hundred percent of the Fire Department’s water rescue operational goals are met within this defined grant scope.

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

Washington State law (RCW 35A) and the City of Bellevue’s Comprehensive Finance and Asset Management Policies and Procedures (VI. Budget Adjustment & Amendment Process) state that Council approval is necessary for budget amendments that will cause the existing appropriation level for a fund to change.

Fiscal Impact

This Ordinance amends the 2023-2024 budget of the Operating, Grants, Donations and Special Reserves Fund to increase the appropriation by \$700,000 plus all applicable taxes in 2024 for the purchase of watercraft, dock improvements and applicable training associated with the Operation Water Rescue 425 program.

This grant from the Bacon Family Foundation covers all upfront costs; no additional General Fund resources are needed during this timeframe. Water rescue is part of the base budget of emergency medical services.

OPTIONS

1. Adopt the Ordinance authorizing execution of a grant agreement with The Bacon Family Foundation to accept \$700,000 in grant funding for Operation Water Rescue 425; amending the 2023-2024 budget of the Operating, Grants, Donations and Special Reserves Fund in the amount of \$700,000; and authorizing expenditures of said grant funds.
2. Do not adopt the Ordinance and provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS

Proposed Ordinance No. 6803

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

Grant Agreement with the Bacon Family Foundation to fund launch of Operation Water Rescue 425