



CITY OF WAUKESHA

Administration

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Common Council Item Number: 21-2131	Date: 4/19/2021
Submitted By: Ron Grall, Director of Parks, Recreation & Forestry Melissa Lipska, Parks & Forestry Operations Manager	City Administrator Approval: Kevin Lahner, City Administrator Click here to enter text.
Finance Department Review: Bridget Souffrant, Finance Director Click here to enter	City Attorney's Office Review: Brian Running, City Attorney Click here to enter text.
Subject: Review and act on an Agreement with the Department of Veterans Affairs for a Compensated Work Therapy program.	

Details: The Grounds, Buildings and Forestry divisions of the Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department have experienced a decline in the seasonal workforce in recent years, despite intensive recruiting and competitive wages. An avenue to supplement seasonal and temporary staff is through the Department of Veterans Affairs Compensated Work Therapy program. The VA's Work Therapy program is designed to assist Veterans to return to competitive, suitable, sustaining employment. The typical individual would participate in this program anywhere from six months to two years. Each individual would follow our current seasonal interview and training process. Each individual in the program has a Work Therapy counselor who checks in on a regular basis. They are contracted employees, and not directly employed by the City.

The contract and program have been reviewed by Brian Running, Marquise Vasquez and Kevin Lahner, and found to be acceptable.

Options & Alternatives:
 WPRF staff reviewed options & alternatives with both Rich Abbott and Kevin Lahner, and both agreed making the needed repairs this year would save money as costs will go up next year and keep borrowing down for next year. Using existing funds within the 2018 CIP Fund 420 Aviation Improvements was determined to be the best option.

Financial Remarks:
 The hourly compensation for each individual would be the same as current rates for seasonal maintenance employees with the Grounds, Buildings and Forestry divisions of the Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department. The VA would be reimbursed from our seasonal wages operating accounts in orgs 5520 (Parks), 5610 (Forestry), 5530 (Riverwalk) and 5532 (Frame Park). The Veterans would fall under the City's liability and worker's compensations coverages.

Executive Action:
 Recommend approval by Common Council of the Work Therapy Agreement with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Committee Recommendation:
 Approval of the Parks, Recreation & Forestry Board, with recommendation for approval to the Common Council.

