



## **REPORT TO TOWN BOARD**

**FROM: Andrew J. Quarnstrom, Township Supervisor**

**DATE: November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

**SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2019/2020 Budget Amendment, Ordinance 2019-1103**

**A. Introduction:** The purpose of this Ordinance is to amend the FY 2019/2020 budget by transferring \$70,000.00 from non-designated Township funds to the annual operating budget for the purposes of Prosperity Gardens Operations.

**B. Recommended Action:** The Township Administration recommends approval of this Ordinance.

### **C. Summary:**

In September of 2019, the Town Board voted to purchase 301 N. First Street in Champaign in order to take over operations for the non-profit Prosperity Gardens. Because the purchase occurred after the 2019/2020 budget approval, funding for Prosperity Gardens wasn't included in the 2019/2020 fiscal year budget. This Ordinance allows the Supervisor to transfer \$70,000 of unrestricted funds to the Township Supervisor's fund, including \$25,266 to line 80100100-50100 (Salaries Scheduled), \$4,959 to line 80100100-50200 (Group Medical and Life Insurance), \$5,311 to line 80100100-50210 (IMRF/SURS Payment), \$4,364 to line 80100100-50211 (FICA Payments), \$100 to line 80100100-50212 (Township SUI Payments), and \$30,000.00 to line 80100100-51100 (Activity Specific Supplies) to facilitate general operations of Prosperity Gardens.

### **D. Background:**

**1. Prosperity Gardens:** Prosperity Gardens, Inc. was a 501c3 organization whose mission was to provide a hands-on garden-based education and green business employment opportunities. Created in 2010, it has served thousands of youth in our community with its mission in mind. Headquartered in the 300 block of North First St., Prosperity Gardens had gardens on the east and west side of First Street as well as in the Beardsley Park neighborhood. Prosperity Gardens owned the land at 301 North First Street and held licenses with the City of Champaign to use the land located at 306 and 306.5 North First Street and in the Beardsley Park neighborhood. Prosperity Gardens, Inc. was in the process of dissolution and was seeking an individual or entity to assume its property and assets, ideally to continue its mission.

**2. CU @ Work:** The Township, in partnership with CU at Home, started the CU @ Work program in August of 2018. At its inception, the program operated one day a week for 5 hours per day. Daily participant numbers ranged from 5-12 with an average number of participants of 8 per day. In February 2019, the program added another 5-hour workday. Participants receive \$10 per hour of work at the end of their shift and receive a meal provided by the Township or CU at Home. In addition, participants have the opportunity to receive case management, which is optional but not mandated. As of July 1, 2019, the program had employed over 70 homeless individuals, both men and women.

Much of the work that has been done thus far with CU @ Work participants is beautification work. Crews have done extensive litter abatement throughout Champaign including downtown, mid-town, Campustown, and the Interstate 74 corridor. Crews have collected over 125 truckloads of garbage since the inception of the program.

In addition to the obvious success of beautification throughout Champaign, the program has provided income and case management for multiple participants and allowed a few participants to find permanent housing and or permanent employment. It has been widely covered in local media and received syndicated coverage throughout the nation in September of 2018.

**3. Budgeting:** The Township has operated in the black since the current administration took over in 2013. Since 2013, the Township has increased its net real estate assets by 1 million dollars. The Township serves hundreds of individuals annually and has continued to add programming such as CU @ Work and the Emergency Rental Assistance Program. The monthly grant for residents has increased 25% and our GA numbers have remained steady. The Township continues to find new and effective ways to help those in need while balancing service to others and financial stability of Township funds.

The Township's unrestricted account balance (non- budgeted) as of June 30, 2018 was \$810,389. The Township has seen slight increases in its unrestricted fund balances since 2013 with the continued goal of keeping 6 months of operating costs unrestricted or about \$500,000.

Since the purchase of Prosperity Gardens did not take place until after the FY 2019/2020 budget was approved in June of 2019, funds are not currently budgeted for additional personnel to staff the Prosperity Gardens project or to cover operational expenses for the remainder of the fiscal year. The transfer of \$70,000 of unrestricted funds will facilitate operations of Prosperity Gardens for the remainder of the FY 2019/2020 budget.

**E. Alternatives:**

1. Approve Ordinance 2019-1103, An Ordinance Amending the City of Champaign Township Budget and Appropriation for FY 2019/2020. This will transfer \$70,000 from the Township's unrestricted funds to the FY 2019/2020 budget for Prosperity Garden's operations.
2. Do not approve Ordinance 2019-1103, An Ordinance Amending the City of Champaign Township Budget and Appropriation for FY 2019/2020, and provide staff further direction.

**F. Discussion of Alternatives:**

**Alternative 1** approves Ordinance 2019-1103 and allows the Township to transfer \$70,000 from the Township's unrestricted funds to the FY 2019/2020 budget for Prosperity Gardens.

**a. Advantages**

- Approving the ordinance will provide the funding for Prosperity Garden's operations including staff and operational costs for the remainder of the fiscal year.

**b. Disadvantages**

- Restricting the \$70,000 and allocating it to the FY 2019/2020 budget will slightly decrease the unrestricted balance of the Township.

**Alternative 2** would not approve Ordinance 2019-1103.

**a. Advantages**

-Leaves the \$70,000 in unrestricted funds.

**b. Disadvantages**

-Prevents the Township from moving forward on Prosperity Garden's operations.

**G. Community Input:** Input can be given during the public comments section of the meeting at which this item is considered.

**H. Budget Impact:** Should the Ordinance be approved, the unrestricted fund balance will decrease by the approved amount of \$70,000. This still leaves more than 6 months of operating costs in unrestricted status yet allows the Township to move forward with staffing and operations of Prosperity Gardens.

**I. Staffing Impact:** Approximately 3 hours of staff time were needed to write this report.

Prepared by:

Andrew Quarnstrom  
Township Supervisor