



Committee: HHS
Committee Review: At a future date
Staff: Linda McMillan, Senior Legislative Analyst
Purpose: To introduce agenda item – no vote expected
Keywords: Casa Ruben, Pediatric Mobile Medical

AGENDA ITEM #6(F)
March 22, 2022
Introduction

SUBJECT

Special Appropriation to the Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget; Montgomery County Government; Department of Health and Human Services; Pediatric Mobile Medical Vehicle; \$450,000 (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves); and Amendment to Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget Resolution 19-872, Section G, Fiscal Year 2022 Designation of Entities for non-Competitive Contract Award Status: Casa Ruben, Inc. Lead Sponsors: Council President Albornoz and Councilmember Friedson; Cosponsors: Councilmember Katz and Councilmember Navarro

EXPECTED ATTENDEES

None

COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

- Introduction only. Public hearing is scheduled for March 29, 2022.

DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

With approval of this funding, Casa Ruben, Inc., the Robert I. Schattner Foundation and Montgomery County would create a public-private initiative to use a mobile medical clinic to connect uninsured, under-insured, and under-resourced children and youth (ages 0-21 years) to healthcare and increase the number of children and youth who receive vaccinations needed for overall health and to enroll in school. The County will fund the purchase of the mobile medical clinic and the Schattner Foundation will provide matching funds of up to \$450,000 directly to Casa Ruben, Inc. to fund the staff and operating expenses. Casa Ruben Inc. and the Department of Health and Human Services will collaborate on target areas and connecting children and families to health care homes.

SUMMARY OF KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- Casa Ruben is a non-profit organization that provides comprehensive primary care, vaccinations, referrals to behavioral health care, and HIV and GBLTQ care predominately to low-income people, immigrants, and families of color. Casa Ruben provides these services with language and cultural competence. During the pandemic, Casa Ruben found that there were delays in children receiving their needed vaccinations and that this was a particular issue for newcomer children and children in certain under-resourced zip codes. These delays impacted children's ability to enroll in school. Casa Ruben has provided more than 7,000 immunizations to Montgomery County children during the pandemic.
- Mobile medical care has been shown to be cost effective and an effective way to reach under-served and disenfranchised communities that do not access mainstream healthcare.

- This initiative has three main objectives: (1) To improve vaccination rates among children and youth 0-21 years of age; (2) To provide developmentally appropriate primary care evaluations for children and youth who have missed their routine health care examinations; and (3) To address social determinants of health and linkages to care to youths 0-21 years of age.
- The Schattner Foundation invests in a range of health, human services, and education programs, with a goal to “make grants where they will do the most good...” The Foundation has generously agreed to match the County’s funding level. These funds will be provided directly to Casa Ruben to fund staff and operating expenses.
- The County has invested in efforts to address health disparities, eliminating barriers to accessing healthcare, and in reaching residents in their communities in innovative ways. Por Nuestra Salud y Bienestar and the African American Health Program/Black Physician Healthcare Network have leveraged partnerships with community-based organizations to reach residents who may not have otherwise accessed COVID vaccination and testing resources.
- Data being collected on COVID vaccinations continues to highlight certain zip codes and census tracts in the County where additional effort is needed to bring vaccination rates to levels equivalent to other areas of the County.
- The Racial Equity Impact Assessment transmitted on January 26, 2022, by the County’s Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice for the Immunization and Vaccines for Children Grant noted that since the collection of data on COVID vaccinations for children ages 5-11 began, consistently smaller shares of Black and Latino children - compared to their representation in the population – have received their first dose of the COVID vaccine...An equitable distribution would guarantee that all children are fully vaccinated and gain protection against COVID-19...

Attached:

Appropriation Resolution

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Resolution No: _____
Introduced: _____
Adopted: _____

COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

Lead Sponsors: Council President Albornoz and Councilmember Friedson
Cosponsors: Councilmember Katz and Councilmember Navarro

SUBJECT: Special Appropriation to the Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget; Montgomery County Government; Department of Health and Human Services; Pediatric Mobile Medical Vehicle; \$450,000 (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves)
Amendment to Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget Resolution 19-872, Section G, Fiscal Year 2022 Designation of Entities for Non-Competitive Contract Award Status: Casa Ruben, Inc.

Background

1. Section 308 of the Montgomery County Charter provides that a special appropriation: (a) may be made at any time after public notice by news release; (b) must state that the special appropriation is necessary to meet an unforeseen disaster or other emergency or to act without delay in the public interest; (c) must specify the revenues necessary to finance it; and (d) must be approved by no fewer than six members of the Council.
2. Montgomery County is constantly in search of ways to connect all its residents with quality medical care. While many residents are connected to community clinics and health care providers, many residents, including children and young adults, remain uninsured or under-insured and disconnected from mainstream healthcare. This is particularly true for newly arriving migrant and asylum-seeking children. These children may lack any or parts of medical records and are in need of physicals and vaccinations in order to enroll in school. The COVID pandemic has disproportionately impacted under-resourced and underserved children and families. Data shows that many have fallen behind with recommended scheduled vaccines. Data from COVID response also shows that there are geographic communities in the County that continue to have barriers to care.
3. Mobile health clinics provide an effective way to connect people to healthcare who are disconnected due to lack of insurance, issues of trust, language, cultural competence, immigration status, lack of transportation, lack of nearby appropriate medical facilities or facilities that operate during non-traditional hours. Studies have shown that mobile health clinics are cost effective and can address both medical and social determinants of health, improving outcomes for underserved groups.

4. Casa Ruben, Inc., through its Silver Spring clinic, provides a range of health care to under-resourced and underserved Montgomery County children and families, many of whom identify as individuals of color, immigrants and/or low-income who are not eligible for, or cannot afford, health insurance. Casa Ruben, Inc. and the Robert I Schattner Foundation will enter into a public private partnership with Montgomery County to purchase, equip and operate a mobile clinic to: (1) improve vaccination rates among children and youths aged 0-21 years of age; (2) provide developmentally appropriate primary care evaluations for children and youth who have missed their routine health examinations; and (3) address social determinants of health and linkages to care for children and youth age 0-21 years of age. While under-resourced zip codes will be the target areas, no one will be denied access.

5. The Robert I. Schattner Foundation will provide up to \$450,000 to fund the Casa Ruben clinic’s staff and operating expenses to match the County’s investment. This appropriation will fund the purchase of the mobile medical van and equipment for Casa Ruben, Inc. The Schattner Foundation says its overriding goal is simple and straight forward – “to make grants where they will do the most good and where our gifts will make a real difference.” The Foundation supports a wide range of health, human service, and education efforts.

6. Notice of public hearing was given, and a public hearing was held.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland, approves the following actions:

1. A special appropriation to the FY22 Operating Budget of the Department of Health and Human Services is approved as follows:

<u>Personnel Services</u>	<u>Operating Expenses</u>	<u>Capital Outlay</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>
\$0	\$450,000	\$0	\$450,000	General Fund Reserves

2. The County Council declares that this action is necessary to act in response to a public health or safety emergency and to act without delay in the public interest.

3. The Council approves an amendment to Resolution 19-872, Section G, FY22 Designation of Entities for Non-Competitive Contract Award. The Chief Administrative Officer has recommended this action and stated that this action serves a public purpose

and is in the public interest. The FY22 Designation of Entities for Non-Competitive Contract Award Status resolution is amended to authorize a new contract with Casa Ruben, Inc. in the amount of \$450,000 with a purpose of, “Provides funds for the purchase of a mobile medical vehicle, vehicle wrap, and mobile clinic equipment.”

This is a correct copy of Council action.

Selena Mendy Singleton, Esq.
Clerk of the Council