



STAFF REPORT

Report To: Board of Supervisors

Meeting Date: December 6, 2018

Staff Contact: Ande Engleman, Chair of the Utility Finance Oversight Committee; Gayle Robertson, Carson City Treasurer

Agenda Title: For Possible Action: To adopt Bill No. 122, on second reading, an ordinance repealing the senior citizens assistance program for the payment of sewer use fees and water service and commodity charges and replacing those provisions with the Utility Ratepayer Assistance Program. (Gayle Robertson, grobertson@carson.org; Ande Engleman, andelee@aol.com)

Staff Summary: This proposed ordinance repeals in its entirety Chapter 12.04 of Title 12 of the Carson City Municipal Code, which sets forth provisions for applying discounts in certain utility rate payments for senior citizens based on household income. In place of those provisions, a new Chapter 12.035 is proposed to provide all residential ratepayers with payment assistance based on the federal poverty guidelines regardless of age, with such assistance to be made on a first-come, first-served basis and funded by certain charitable donations.

Agenda Action: Ordinance - Second Reading

Time Requested: 5 minutes

Proposed Motion

I move to adopt Bill No. 122, on second reading, Ordinance No. ____.

Board's Strategic Goal

Quality of Life

Previous Action

11/15/2018 - First reading of ordinance, with instructions by the Board of Supervisors to revise the provision establishing the assistance amounts as they correspond with the federal poverty lines, to reflect 80 percent assistance for ratepayers whose annual household income is between 0 and 125 percent of the federal poverty rate.

Background/Issues & Analysis

Under the existing provisions of Chapter 12.04 of Title 12 of the Carson City Municipal Code (CCMC), senior citizens are eligible for a discount in utility rate payments depending on the level of household income. This proposed ordinance repeals those provisions. In place of Chapter 12.04, a new Chapter 12.035 is established for the purpose of providing assistance for the payment of utility account invoices to all residential ratepayers based on the federal poverty guidelines regardless of age. Instead of a discounted utility invoice, however, the new provisions would establish a method by which utility ratepayers could make charitable contributions for remittance to an account, from which money would be withdrawn on a first-come, first-served basis for credit to the utility account invoices of residential ratepayers whose applications for assistance have been approved.

Additionally, this proposed ordinance establishes provisions concerning: (1) eligibility criteria for assistance; (2) the designation of a Third-Party Administrator to review and approve or deny applications for assistance;

(3) the application process; (4) the method and amounts of assistance to be provided; (5) an appeal process; and (6) certain prohibited acts.

This proposed ordinance was conceived by an informal working group comprised of Supervisor Karen Abowd, Supervisor Lori Bagwell, Utility Finance Oversight Committee Chairwoman Ande Engleman and Carson City Treasurer Gayle Robertson, with input from the Carson City Public Works Department and legal guidance and preparation by the District Attorney's Office.

This ordinance, if adopted, does not impose a direct and significant economic burden upon a business, and does not directly restrict the formation, operation or expansion of a business.

Applicable Statute, Code, Policy, Rule or Regulation

NRS Chapter 244; Article 2 of the Carson City Charter

Financial Information

Is there a fiscal impact? Yes No

If yes, account name/number:

Is it currently budgeted? Yes No

Explanation of Fiscal Impact: N/A

Alternatives

Do not adopt the ordinance or adopt the ordinance with additional revisions.

Board Action Taken:

Motion: _____

1) _____

2) _____

Aye/Nay

(Vote Recorded By)