

**SUBJECT: ORDINANCE NO. 1880, SERIES 2024 – AN ORDINANCE
REPEALING SECTION 13.12.105 TO ELIMINATE A WATER USE
REBATE PROGRAM**

DATE: JULY 16, 2024

PRESENTED BY: RYDER BAILEY, CPA, FINANCE DIRECTOR

SUMMARY:

Staff is requesting City Council approval of consolidating two existing City utility assistance programs by expanding Sister Carmen's, a well-respected local Non-Profit since 1978, existing Utility Assistance program, and by eliminating the City Administered Annual Senior Water Rebate Program.

These programmatic updates were presented and supported by Finance Committee at their June 20th meeting.

BACKGROUND:

In 2007, City Council, by Resolution 1515, adopted the Annual Senior Water Rebate Program for Louisville residents over the age of 65 and a household income of less than \$25,000. The Annual Rebate amount (\$100) and the maximum household income have not been modified since 2007. City Staff administering the program has seen recent participation at an all-time low.

An update to the City's Water Utility Assistance program was initially presented at the [May 16 Finance Committee](#) meeting. At that meeting, City Staff who administer the Annual Senior Water Rebate Program proposed adjusting the annual rebate amount and maximum household income to adjust for inflation since 2007. Calculated using a Regional CPI from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), this would increase the annual rebate amount from \$100 to \$150, and also increase the maximum household income from \$25,000 to \$40,000. This level is approximately 30-35% of Boulder County Area Medium Income per Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Staff also proposed lowering the age eligibility criteria from 65 to 60, to better align with our City Senior offerings.

Based upon feedback from the Finance Committee at their May 16th meeting, the Committee requested options to assist Louisville households in need, regardless of age. Staff returned and presented the recommended option at the [June 20 Finance Committee](#) meeting. The Committee recommended option would consolidate the two existing utility assistance programs by expanding Sister Carmen's, a well-respected local Non-Profit since 1978, existing Utility Assistance program, and by eliminating the City Administered Annual Senior Water Rebate Program.

The City of Louisville currently partners with Sister Carmen for Utility Assistance through the City's Non-Profit Grant Program. A portion of the City's annual funding awarded to Sister Carmen (roughly a third) at \$5,000, is earmarked for the Utility Assistance Program. These funds are distributed to Louisville residents based on need, there are no age or income requirements. Sister Carmen staff have mentioned to the fill the gap in need it would require approximately an additional \$5,000 - \$10,000 in funding support.

Staff met with Sister Carmen staff on May 22nd to discuss the Sister Carmen administered Utility Assistance Program. Discussion around potentially expanding the program was well received, especially with recent utility rate increases. Sister Carmen administers their Utility Assistance program year-round, provides assistance based on need, not age. During the meeting, Sister Carmen staff noted the following;

- 73% of Louisville Heads of Households who received Utility Assistance the past two years were under 60 years of age.
- 91% of All Households assisted by Sister Carmen were at or below 30% of Area Medium Income.
- The amount of water utility assistance ranged between \$200 and \$400 per instance.

By expanding Sister Carmen's current no age restriction, need based, Utility Assistance Program, the following would be accomplished;

- The Assistance Program would be based on need, not age or household income.
- The Assistance Program would be available year-round.
- Sister Carmen would be able to connect persons in need to other available resources.
- Sister Carmen would be able to assist persons currently enrolled in the City's program.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

Staff is requesting an additional \$5,000 in funding for a total of \$10,000 in Sister Carmen Administered Utility Assistance Program funding available under Account 101121-538420- Contributions and Grants.

The net fiscal impact of consolidating the two existing programs and expanding Sister Carmen's existing no age restriction, need based Utility Assistance Program by providing additional assistance would result in an estimated cost increase of \$3,800 to the City.

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Additionally, there would be an immaterial amount of City administration savings, as Sister Carmen would administer this program as part of the City's current Non-Profit Grant assistance.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the ordinance on first reading and set the public hearing for August 6, 2024.

ATTACHMENT:

1. Ordinance

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

**ORDINANCE NO. 1880
SERIES 2024**

**AN ORDINANCE REPEALING SECTION 13.12.105 TO ELIMINATE A WATER USE
REBATE PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, by Ordinance No 1515, Series 2007, the City Council recodified a “water rebate program” in Chapter 13.12 of the Louisville Municipal Code, known as the Annual Senior Water Rebate Program, and which Program has seen dwindling use over the years; and

WHEREAS, the City’s Finance Committee has recommended that such Program be eliminated as a City rebate, to be replaced with donations from the City to a local non-profit that will administer assistance to those in need on a broader scale; and

WHEREAS, by this ordinance, the City Council desires to repeal Section 13.12.105 of the Louisville Municipal Code, making such funds available for such purpose.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOUISVILLE, COLORADO:

Section 1. Section 13.12.105 of the Louisville Municipal Code is hereby repealed.

Section 2. If any portion of this ordinance is held to be invalid for any reason, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance. The City Council hereby declares that it would have passed this ordinance and each part hereof irrespective of the fact that any one part be declared invalid.

Section 3. The repeal or modification of any provision of the Municipal Code of the City of Louisville by this ordinance shall not release, extinguish, alter, modify, or change in whole or in part any penalty, forfeiture, or liability, either civil or criminal, which shall have been incurred under such provision, and each provision shall be treated and held as still remaining in force for the purpose of sustaining any and all proper actions, suits, proceedings, and prosecutions for the enforcement of the penalty, forfeiture, or liability, as well as for the purpose of sustaining any judgment, decree, or order which can or may be rendered, entered, or made in such actions, suits, proceedings, or prosecutions.

Section 4. All other ordinances or portions thereof inconsistent or conflicting with this ordinance or any portion hereof are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency or conflict.

**INTRODUCED, READ, PASSED ON FIRST READING, AND ORDERED
PUBLISHED** this ____ day of _____, 2024.

Christopher M. Leh, Mayor

ATTEST:

Meredyth Muth, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Kelly PC, City Attorney

PASSED AND ADOPTED ON SECOND AND FINAL READING, this _____ day of _____, 2024.

Christopher M. Leh, Mayor

ATTEST:

Meredyth Muth, City Clerk