



Jesse Arreguín
Councilmember, District 4

CONSENT CALENDAR
March 25, 2014

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Councilmember Jesse Arreguín
Subject: The Persian Center for the Persian New Year Festival: Relinquishment of Council Office Budget Funds to General Fund and Grant of Such Funds

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a Resolution approving the expenditure of an amount not to exceed \$500 per Councilmember, including up to \$500 from Councilmember Arreguín, to the Persian Center for the Persian New Year Festival with funds relinquished to the City’s General Fund for this purpose from the discretionary Council Office Budgets of Councilmember Jesse Arreguín and any other Councilmembers who would like to contribute.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION:

No General Fund impact; \$500 is available from Councilmember Arreguín’s Council Office Budget discretionary account.

BACKGROUND:

On Tuesday, March 18, 2014 from 6-10 p.m. on Durant Avenue between Shattuck and Milvia Streets, the Persian Center hosted a Chahar-Shanbeh Souri celebration to commemorate the New Year.

Chahar-Shanbeh Souri in Farsi means “Eve of Wednesday” because the New Year festival is always held on the last Tuesday of winter. This festival includes the ritual of jumping over a bonfire which has been handed down since ancient Zoroastrian times.

This annual event is designed to not only help strengthen the sense of identity and integrity of all Iranians and Iranian descendents but to educate and celebrate the Iranian culture with the larger community. This free, family-friendly event is a wonderful community building experience. It helps promote greater understanding of the Iranian culture but also celebrates the rich diversity of our community.

The City of Berkeley has in the past provided needed funding to help make this event happen. However, no city funding was approved for the event this year, making it difficult for the Persian Center to help organize this wonderful event. Approval of this expenditure will provide needed funding for this important community-building event.

CONTACT PERSON:

Jesse Arreguín, Councilmember, District 4 981-7140

Attachments:

- 1. Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. XXXXX

AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF SURPLUS FUNDS FROM THE OFFICE EXPENSE ACCOUNTS OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS TO THE PERSIAN CENTER FOR THE PERSIAN NEW YEAR FESTIVAL

WHEREAS, Councilmember Arreguín has surplus funds in his office expenditure account 010-0242-410-55-01; and

WHEREAS, on Tuesday, March 18, 2014 on Durant Avenue between Shattuck and Milvia Streets, the Persian Center will host a Chahar-Shanbeh Souri celebration to commemorate the new year; and

WHEREAS, Chahar-Shanbeh Souri in Farsi means “Eve of Wednesday” because the New Year festival is always held on the last Tuesday of winter. This festival includes the ritual of jumping over a bonfire which has been handed down since ancient Zoroastrian times; and

WHEREAS, a California non-profit tax exempt corporation the Persian Center seeks funds in the amount of \$500 to cover the costs of the materials, foods, music, setting up of the children’s activities, and bringing in of crafts vendors and cultural organizations; and

WHEREAS, the provision of such funds would fulfill the following municipal public purpose: to educate and celebrate the Iranian culture with the larger community; to increase revenue to local businesses; to build community and promote greater understanding of the Iranian culture; and to celebrate the rich cultural diversity of our community through this multi-cultural event.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that funds relinquished by the Mayor and Councilmembers from their council office budgets of up to \$500 per office shall be granted to the Persian Center for the Persian New Year Festival.