

ALBANY CALIFORNIA



CITY OF ALBANY
1000 SAN PABLO AVENUE
ALBANY, CA 94706
www.AlbanyCA.org

DATE: 04/5/2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Albany City Council Members

From: Mayor Ge'Nell Gary

Re: Free Laundry program

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council fund the Free Laundry program for the next year at a rate of \$1250 a month or \$15,000 for the year.

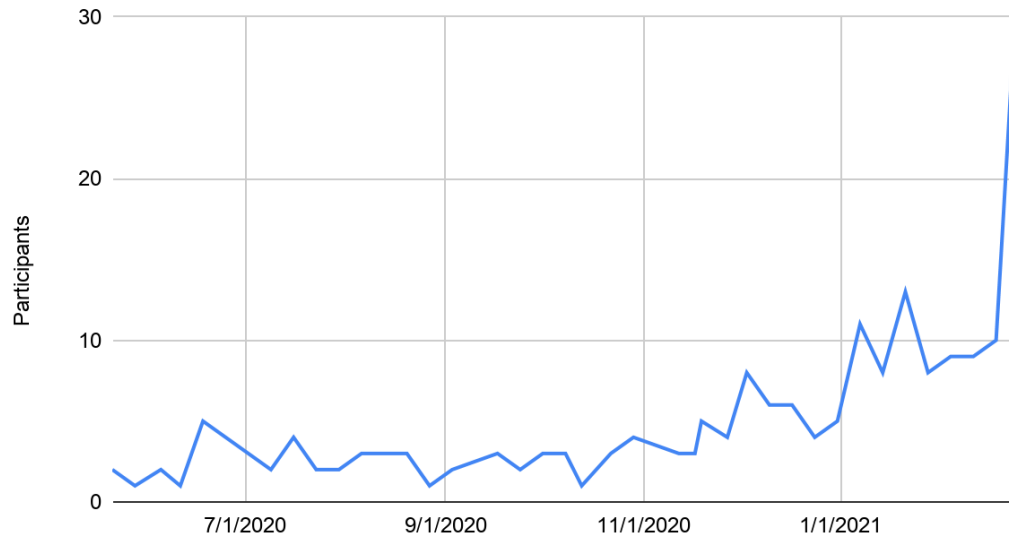
BACKGROUND

Albany's Diverse Housing Working Group has been active since 2012 when a large community of unhoused people lived on the Albany Bulb. In 2016, DHWG members initiated a free shower program at the AUSD Aquatic Center with the support of many local churches, community organizations and businesses. The program ran successfully for four years until the Covid-19 pandemic forced the closure of the pool and locker rooms in March of 2020. In the following weeks, DHWG made efforts to get phone numbers and contact information from guests in hopes of the reopening of the shower program within the upcoming year. Since then, DHWG has implemented a free laundry program to address the current needs of the community. Unfortunately, DHWG is unable to secure adequate funding to continue this much need service. Thus, it is my recommendation that the City fully allot funding for this activity.

DISCUSSION

The laundry program was initiated in May of 2020. Initial contacts were made to the shower guests, and DHWG was able to schedule just a few people a week by phone. However, community residents were never turned away unless they failed to abide by the rules regarding wearing masks and having their temperature taken while utilizing the facilities. Weekly participants are charted below. We peaked at 27 but generally have around 10 people a week.

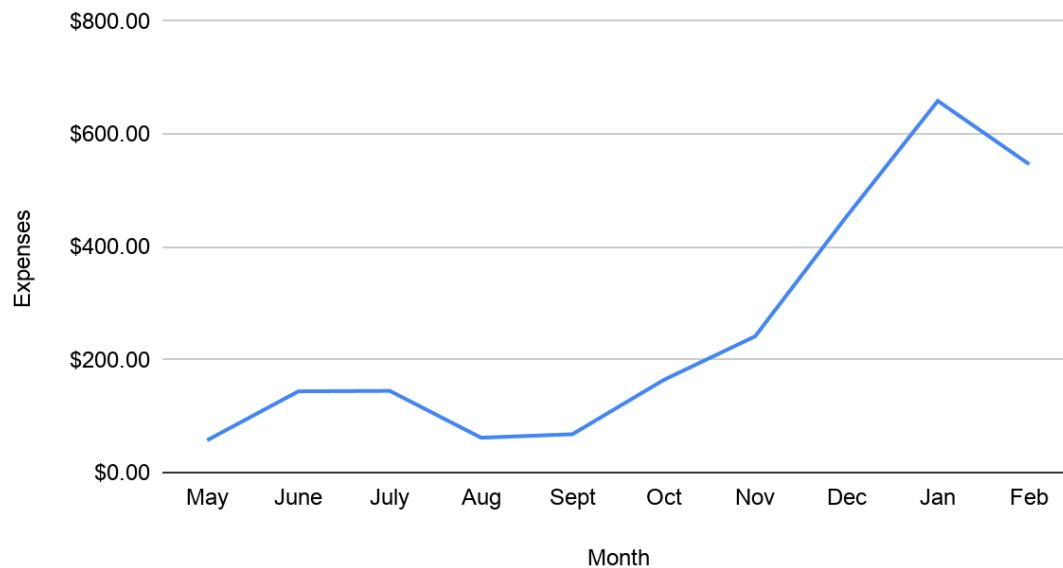
Participants



Additionally, DWHG was made aware of the laundry needs of people living in University Village through Brian Doss and his support of the food program operations. DHWG invited the students and families in with open arms in hopes representing community outreach efforts well. Thus, the need and time allocated has increased recognizing the need for increased funding to support laundry services and supplies.

The expenses for laundry services within last eight months of 2020 were \$1335. To date, DHWG has spent \$1204 in the first two months of 2021. Here's a graph of our expenses by month:

Expenses vs. Month



The initial funding for the laundry program was reimbursed by the Albany Community Foundation. The Albany Community Foundation provided grants totaling \$3600 which covered the following items: the utilization of washer & dyers, laundry soap, fabric softener, hand sanitizer Covid-19 protection and facilities clean-up supplies.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

DHWG laundry program services are provided by the Solano Cleaning Center, a local business making every effort to put minimal pressure on the environment.

SOCIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSIVITY CONSIDERATIONS

DHWG has found that the laundry program has offered opportunities for offsetting the financial burdens. Presently we have two volunteers, who help with the laundry operations and follow through of services i.e. sanitizing measures.

CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES

The City Council Strategic Plan Initiatives under the caption of Engaging Community should include these services that proportionally address the needs of Albany residents.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

St. Albans has allowed the DHWG to utilize their 5013© as a fiscal agent to receive donations. However, I am requesting that this free laundry program be funded through Albany Cares current budget resources.