

MERCURY-REGISTER

Money for job skills: City Council approves grant funding for nonprofits to help teens

By MARY WESTON - Staff Writer

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OROVILLE — With a little help from the city, the Boys and Girls Club in Oroville is adding a new program to teach teenagers the skills they need to find jobs.

The club, located at the Southside Community Center, is one of three nonprofits whose programs are benefiting from the city's grant funding efforts.

The City Council voted unanimously Tuesday night to give \$151,000 in grant funding to the Oroville Boys and Girls Club to teach youth job hunting skills at the teen centers in the Southside Community Center and at Butte County Juvenile Hall.

About 90 percent of all the clubs funding goes toward programs for youth, said Courtney Farrell, chief development officer for the Boys and Girls Club of North Valley.

"Not only will this grant help the Boys and Girls Club, it helps the teens of Oroville," Farrell said.

Farrell said when it opened in Oroville in 2008, the club identified a need for job hunting and job retention training for teens in Oroville.

Before the meeting, Jon Rango, director of the Oroville club, talked about the new program the city had proposed to fund.

"The concept of it is really to focus on jobs, and basically to get our teens job ready," Rango said.

The club has five categories of programs, which includes education and career development.

Each of the nine clubs in the state tailor their programs to the needs of youth in their areas.

The club already has some career development programs, but many youth in Oroville also need

job hunting skills, Rango said.

The new program will teach teens how to craft a resume, fill out a job application, get through an interview and dress appropriately, he said.

The program will also inform teens about who might be hiring in the area.

Many teens in the juvenile hall program have absolutely no tools or skills to find a job.

Club caseworkers help the teens get identification cards and Social Security numbers. The new program will teach them skills to find a job, which will help prevent them returning to juvenile hall.

Funding for the program came from an \$800,000 grant the city was awarded by the State Department of Housing and Community Development for home ownership and housing rehabilitation programs, said Pat Clark, director of business assistance and housing development.

The grant had a public service activity component, so city staff asked the council to approve an agreement with the Boys and Girls Club.

The club in turn proposed to use the funding to expand the youth development programs.

The council also unanimously approved sub-recipient agreements with Catalyst and the Oroville


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YMCA for \$75,000 each, after holding a public hearing on using home ownership programs to public service activities.

The funding was associated with a Community Development Block Grant from 2009-10.

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