



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:
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Agenda Item Number: 4

Agenda Date: September 27, 2022

In Control: Municipal Utilities Committee

DEPARTMENT: Finance Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Troy Elliott

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Customer Delinquencies

SUMMARY:

SAWS to provide an update of the status of customer delinquencies including the utilization of ARPA assistance funds to date.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In March 2020, SAWS issued a moratorium to prevent disconnections for delinquent accounts after the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic related to COVID-19. Over the 19 months that the moratorium on disconnections was in place, SAWS delinquent account balances increased from \$14 million at the end of February 2020 to \$57.1 million by the end of September 2021.

In September 2021, the SAWS Board approved the COVID-19 Relief Plan to help delinquent

customers avoid service disconnection and bring their accounts current. Delinquent balances were temporarily suspended for customers enrolled in the SAWS Affordability Discount Program to provide the opportunity to obtain federal disaster recovery funds to offset the delinquent balances for low-income customers. Residential customers that were not enrolled in SAWS Affordability Discount Program were incentivized to pay a portion of their delinquent balances in exchange for forgiveness of any remaining delinquency.

In March 2022, SAWS entered into an agreement with the City of San Antonio to provide up to \$10 million from the City's allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for qualifying delinquent residential customers. The agreement provided various requirements to be eligible for the assistance, including the period for eligible charges, applications for qualifications, and limits on the amount of assistance for eligible customers. The agreement was amended in May 2022 to streamline the application of the ARPA funds for delinquent customers residing in Qualified Census Tracts.

As a result of these efforts to address customer delinquencies, SAWS delinquent account balances have decreased to \$38.9 million as of the end of August 2022.

ISSUE:

Briefing by SAWS on the status of customer delinquencies including the utilization of ARPA Assistance funds to date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for briefing purposes only.