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Clerk 09/18/2003

A MOTION supporting the dedication of the solid waste division's rent owed to King County to regional health and human services.

WHEREAS, King County, over the past few years, adopted a number of long-range policies that prioritize competing needs while addressing the growing structural gap between the county's revenues and expenditures. In 2002, $41 million in cuts were needed to balance the general fund. In 2003, $52 million in cuts were needed. This structural gap will continue with projected shortfalls of $20 to 25 million for the foreseeable future, and

WHEREAS, the regional policy committee of the metropolitan King County council adopted a health and human services work plan in 2002, prioritized human services of critical importance to the region consistent with the King County framework policies for human services adopted in 1999 by Ordinance 13629 and reached agreement on a set of regional human services to be provided through a countywide partnership, and

WHEREAS, as part of a comprehensive review of county operations to implement efficiencies and best business practices, it was determined that the solid waste division owes rent to the county's general fund both for the division's use of the Cedar Hills landfill and for the benefits and associated revenue that the division has generated from the landfill, and

WHEREAS, the county at large, rather than the solid waste division, acquired title to the Cedar Hills landfill property in 1992 in accordance with a quitclaim deed from the state of Washington, and

WHEREAS, the solid waste division generates significant revenue from its use of the Cedar Hills

landfill and charging rent for the division's use of Cedar Hills is both legal and justified under the circumstances, and

WHEREAS, the county executive intends to pay this rent from efficiencies achieved within the solid waste system and therefore without increasing solid waste rates for this purpose, and

WHEREAS, with the assistance of a commercial real estate firm, the executive has preliminarily calculated that a fair annual rental value of the landfill property starting in 2004 will be approximately $7 million escalating at three percent per year until 2028, and

WHEREAS, the county executive intends to dedicate the rental payments to support critical regional human services in King County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

The metropolitan King County council directs that the solid waste division's rent owed to King County for the division's use of the Cedar Hills landfill be dedicated to health and human services.