



CITY OF BANNING STAFF REPORT

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Douglas Schulze, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Laurie Sampson, Assistant City Manager
Jeff Platt, Director of Homeless Services

MEETING DATE: January 14, 2025

SUBJECT: Opportunity Village Gift Card Policy

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and file.

BACKGROUND:

Our staff at Opportunity Village have implemented a program that rewards our shelter residents for continuing to better themselves by working to reestablish their identities, participating in drug and alcohol counseling and community events, and other requirements. The staff has found that by treating the residents with dignity and human decency, they advance toward this goal of self-reliance more rapidly.

JUSTIFICATION:

One of the key components of helping residents is restoring a sense of community, dignity and emotional well-being. When residents participate in community events such as clean up events in the parks and removal of homeless encampments, they begin to redevelop pride and commitment. The issuance of gift cards fosters dignity as they empower the residents to make personal choices and control over their lives. Making these choices also helps them develop financial literacy. A complete explanation of benefits is included in this report as Exhibit A.

The Gift Card Issuance Program is not available to all residents. There are parameters that allow them to participate as well as precluding some. The complete guidelines are included in this report as Exhibit B.

The requirement to obtain gift cards includes signing for receipt of these cards as well as having a W-9 on file in case the issuance of these gift cards exceeds \$600 per year. The list of cards issued and the status of each card and recipient is attached to this report as Exhibit C.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The fiscal impact of this program as of this fiscal year is \$4,813.70 including activation fees.

ALTERNATIVES:

An alternative to issuing Visa gift cards can be to offer store specific gift cards such as, Walmart or Stater Bros. This would avoid the activation fees.

BUDGETED?:

No

CONTRACT/AGREEMENT:

No

ATTACHMENTS:

1. [Exhibit A OPV Gift Cards Why We Do It.pdf](#)
2. [Exhibit B Gift Card Participation Requirements.pdf](#)
3. [Exhibit C Gift Card Tracking.pdf](#)