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Council approves \$17,000 in donations to nonprofits

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Posted by Alexa Hemkenon June 7, 2013

The Foster City Council continued its tradition of donating public money to local nonprofits despite one councilman's philosophical stance against the funding. A combined \$17,000 was given to seven nonprofits, mostly to charities helping the county's needy, such as Samaritan House and Parca. The charities requested between \$1,000 to more than \$10,000. Each May, the Council votes on donating money to charities, and while in previous years the Council has donated upwards of \$20,000, recent budget deficits resulted in more cautious votes. "We continue to work very hard in the city of Foster City," said a representative for HIP Housing, noting a 27 percent increase in the number of clients helped who are residents, up to 61. One senior who has been working with the nonprofit for eight years said she gets "peace of mind" in knowing housemates in the house-sharing program are "checked out" and interviewed. Rental prices in San Mateo County for a one-bedroom apartment start at \$1,950, which prices out people not making at least \$84,000, say affordable housing representatives. "My issue is never the wonderful work that you do," said Vice Mayor Charlie Bronitsky. "I think it's fantastic, it's essential, it's needed in our community." However, people should make their own decisions about which nonprofits to donate to, he argued. Councilman Herb Perez said he supported many of the donations because they could prove to be "budget relieving" for cities. He voted against funding the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center because they are not "effective in the delivery of services." A total of \$35,394 was requested. All councilmembers voted against funding Peninsula Television. Foster City already contracts out to KMVT Community Television to televise public meetings. Funding included \$1,000 to Call Primrose, \$2,500 to HIP Housing, \$2,000 to the Shelter Network, \$1,500 to PARCA, \$500 to Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center, \$9,000 to Samaritan House and \$500 to StarVista.

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