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# Gang prevention contracts set to be doled out

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Last Updated: Friday, Nov 23 2007 9:11 PM

Kern County supervisors are expected to hand out nearly \$1.5 million in contracts to local community groups Tuesday in an effort to prevent gang violence by funding after-school vocational training and child outreach programs.

Money has already been set aside for the gang prevention work, part of a comprehensive plan to halt gang violence and killing in Bakersfield that was crafted by a joint Kern County and city of Bakersfield task force.

Tuesday's action will simply award one-year-long contracts to groups picked by the county.

Contracts are proposed to be signed with:

Mothers Against Senseless Killings -- \$20,000 to conduct youth leadership and crisis intervention programs.

Stop the Violence -- \$20,000 to host community rallies and youth leadership programs.

Ebony Counseling Center -- \$225,000 to conduct after-school and community learning programs.

Garden Pathways -- \$257,985 for youth and parent mentoring.

Garden Pathways -- \$75,923 for after-school and performance arts programs.

Kern County Superintendent of Schools -- \$200,000 for youth and family services programs.

New Life Recovery and Training Center -- \$189,440 for vocational training programs.

Stay Focused Ministries -- \$499,455 for mentoring and crisis intervention programs and community outreach.

Most of the groups to get funding participated in the gang violence task force discussions.

Stay Focused, Ebony Counseling, Garden Pathways, the Superintendent of Schools and MASK were all listed as contributors to the joint city/county strategic plan.

This summer, Kern County Supervisor Michael Rubio recommended those strategic plan participants be given contracts to run the programs they helped design.

He recommended the crime prevention money be shared among Ebony Counseling Center, the Kern County Superintendent of Schools, Garden Pathways, MASK, Stay Focused and Stop the Violence.

Rubio said Wednesday the groups receiving money will be under close supervision by county officials to make sure their programs are meeting the goals of keeping children out of gangs.

There will be monthly reviews of their work, he said.

Contracts will be considered during the 9 a.m. session of the board.

#### Medical marijuana

Supervisors are also expected to approve a change in county medical marijuana ordinances to extend the licenses of current dispensaries for another year.

The move is designed to block the establishment of any new marijuana shops in Kern County.

Medical marijuana advocates have said the move creates an illegal ban on dispensaries because the current shops have voluntarily shut their doors to avoid raids from federal law enforcement agencies.

But supervisors have argued that since those license holders still have the right to open for business under state law and county ordinance, there is no illegal ban.

Tuesday's proposed ordinance changes include the addition of strict rules controlling where dispensaries are allowed to purchase the pot they sell to medical patients.

#### Loose change

Supervisors will once again take up their extensive debate over how to spend a midyear budget surplus during afternoon discussions.

About \$10.5 million of the \$17.9 million surplus is still unspent after two marathon sessions of board debate.

Debate at the previous meeting centered around whether the county could use the surplus as seed money for a large bond that would build roads and fire stations and other brick-and-mortar needs.

#### How to go

**The Kern County Board of Supervisors meets for morning and afternoon sessions at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Tuesday at the county administrative center, 1115 Truxtun Ave., across N Street from Rabobank Arena downtown.**

**You can also watch the meeting live on KGOV, the county's local cable television station. The station lists available channels at [www.co.kern.ca.us/gsd/KGOV](http://www.co.kern.ca.us/gsd/KGOV).**

**The board's agenda as well as some background materials are available online at [www.co.kern.ca.us/bos](http://www.co.kern.ca.us/bos).**

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