



LEGAL DEPARTMENT
200 South Third Street
Yakima, Washington 98901-2830

March 30, 2021

Mr. John Midgley
ACLU of Washington Foundation
P.O. Box 2728
Seattle, WA 98111-2728

Re: *Montes v. City of Yakima*: Settlement Agreement
Mentorship-Internship Program Status

Dear Mr. Midgley:

I hope this letter finds you well. As you know, up until the COVID-19 pandemic, the City was utilizing the \$100,000.00 settlement funds set aside as part of the *Montes* case to fund a yearly program providing mentorships and internships to local high school students interested in government and government participation. That program, unfortunately, could not be operated last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The City fully intended to operate the program this year, 2021, however, we are still in the midst of the pandemic, with high rates of positive tests in Yakima County. City Hall remains closed to the public, and meetings are being held via Zoom. Not all City personnel have been vaccinated, and the schools just recently started in-person learning in the Yakima School District.

Due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, the City intends to again postpone the Mentorship-Internship program for one year, and re-start the program in 2022. The City looks forward to again hosting local high school students, providing them with Councilmember mentors, and summer internships in one of the City's divisions or departments. However, we cannot do so this summer based on the current circumstances. Unless I hear from you otherwise, I will assume that the City's plan to postpone is acceptable to the ACLU. If not, please contact me immediately to further discuss the program.

Hopefully the pandemic will be far behind us in 2022 and we will be able to provide the mentorship and internship opportunities to students in the Yakima School District as we have in the past. Stay safe, and thank you for your continued coordination on this program.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Sara Watkins
City Attorney

cc: Connie Mendoza, Human Resources Director