



Richland County Council
Community Grant Committee Meeting
MINUTES
December 7, 2022 – 3:30 PM
Council Chambers
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29204

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Livingston, Gretchen Barron, Jessica Mackey, and Cheryl English

NOT PRESENT: Yvonne McBride

OTHERS PRESENT: Anette Kirylo, Tamar Black, Lori Thomas, Patrick Wright, Angela Weathersby, Abhijit Deshpande, Sarah Harris, and Aric Jensen.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chairwoman Cheryl English called the meeting to order at approximately 3:30 PM.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a. **October 18, 2022** – Ms. Barron moved to approve the minutes as distributed, seconded by Mr. Livingston.

In Favor: Livingston, Barron, Mackey, and English

Not Present: McBride

The vote in favor was unanimous.

3. **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA** – Ms. Mackey moved to adopt the agenda as published, seconded by Ms. Barron.

In Favor: Livingston, Barron, Mackey, and English

Not Present: McBride

The vote in favor was unanimous.

4. **ITEMS FOR ACTION**

a. **Review and Recommendations for Community Impact Grants** – Ms. Lori Thomas, Assistant County Administrator, noted when the committee previously met the intent was to fund these grants prior to the end of the fiscal year. This would allow 6 months for the groups awarded funding to complete their projects. Due to the fact, these are General Fund dollars these funds must be spent within the given fiscal year or the funds are no longer expendable or able to be allocated to the recipients. When the grant application period closed on November 23, 2022, there were a total of 33 applications received totaling over \$400,000. Those applications were reviewed and the list was narrowed. A color-coded list was then provided to committee members.

While the groups/projects in orange may qualify, they fall outside the June 30, 2023 deadline for completion. The groups in green have received County funds from other sources in 2023. The

groups in yellow either had projects that were not in compliance with the Community Impact Grant guidelines or had received funding from the Discretionary Grants earlier in the year. Committee members were able to score the applications through Zoom Grants and make recommendations on the amount to provide the entities. The proposed allocation of funds totaled \$321,945.75. The total amount available for allocation is \$300,000; therefore, a determination on adjustments will have to be made by the committee.

Ms. Mackey requested Ms. Thomas to clarify the votes on the provided spreadsheet.

Mr. Abhijit Deshpande, Budget and Grants Management Director, stated if the group received 3 “yes” votes they would be approved, and if a group received zero “yes” votes they were not approved.

Ms. Mackey inquired if the amount listed for the items that did not get “approved” was included in the total.

Mr. Deshpande responded the way Zoom Grants works you can decline an application, but still recommend a funding amount.

Ms. Mackey inquired if we remove the dollar amounts for the entities that received zero votes, does that get us closer to the \$300,000?

Mr. Deshpande responded in the affirmative. Removing those dollar amounts would free up approximately \$42,000.

Ms. Thomas noted the total allocation would be \$279,445.75.

Ms. Barron inquired if the groups outside the fiscal year deadline were to be funded, will they be expected to modify their end date?

Ms. Thomas responded in the affirmative and all expenditures would have to be completed by June 30, 2023.

Ms. Barron inquired if staff will be speaking to the entities in advance to convey what is expected.

Ms. Thomas replied if the committee desires they could convey an award letter explaining to the entity that no funds will be reimbursed for expenditures made after June 30, 2023.

Ms. Barron inquired if it was clearly stated in the application the time period was from January 1, 2023, to June 30, 2023.

Ms. Thomas responded in the affirmative.

Ms. Barron inquired if any entities were disqualified because they did not meet the expenditure deadline.

Ms. Thomas replied in the affirmative. She noted it stated in the guidelines all funding must be expended by June 30, 2023.

Ms. Barron inquired if it stated that an application submitted that exceeds the expenditure deadline would be deemed ineligible.

Ms. Thomas responded it did not.

Ms. English inquired if there are any entities in the recommendation that are ineligible.

Ms. Thomas responded that none of the entities in the recommendation are ineligible.

Ms. Barron inquired if we have ensured that we are not funding the same project multiple times.

Ms. Thomas responded, to the best of their ability, they have done so.

Ms. Barron moved to approve staff's recommendation, with the exception of A. L. Downing Ministries, Carolina's Caribbean Culture Festival, Dance South Community Development Group, and Greater Waverly Foundation. The total of said recommendation will be \$279,195.75. Ms. Mackey seconded the motion.

Ms. Mackey stated she is still reviewing the entities that have already received funding, and their votes/scores. She noted that we are now technically funding two programs.

Ms. Barron inquired if we stated, in the application, "If you receive other funding from the County that you could/could not apply?" or "Their application would not be received as well as someone applying for first-time funding?"

Ms. Thomas responded that the only distinct exclusion was the FY23 Discretionary Grant Funds.

Ms. Barron noted that we have to be careful in inserting additional criteria after we have published the application. If we say we are not going to fund someone that has previously received funds, we may be opening up ourselves to an appeal.

Ms. Mackey stated, in reviewing the recommendations, are the organizations applying for three years automatically guaranteed funding for all three years.

Ms. Thomas responded, on the discretionary application, it is clear they can request three years, but the funding is only granted for one year. The organization would have to apply again.

Ms. English inquired if the organizations that need to adjust their timeframe will be able to do so.

Ms. Barron noted she is also concerned about those organizations being able to meet the deadline, but staff indicated earlier that the grant letter would address this matter with the organizations. We pledged to give up to \$300,000. If we do not award all of the funds, we did our due diligence.

Ms. Newton requested clarification on the motion.

Ms. Thomas stated, for the record, the motion funds all of the organizations that have numerical values in the "Allowable Maximum Recommendation for FY 23", with the exception of the A.L. Downing Ministries, Carolina's Caribbean Culture Festival, Dance South Community Development Group, and Greater Waverly Foundation.

Ms. Newton inquired if the "Allowable Maximum Recommendation for FY 23" is synonymous with the recommendation or if it is only for information.

Ms. Thomas replied that it is for information. Per the Community Impact guidelines, for this application, the maximum for one year is \$15,000, and \$30,000 for three years. The \$30,000 would be divided over a three-year period.

Ms. Newton stated, for clarification, the organizations in green have received County funding, and are requesting additional funds for different programs within the organization. In the event, there is a recommendation for the same program within the organization, would Ms. Barron be in favor of funding the organization?

Ms. Barron responded that she would not. At that point, the allocation would not meet the guidelines.

Mr. Deshpande noted, if an organization has received more than one source of funding, staff will review the invoices, and if a duplicate invoice is received, the duplicate invoice will not be paid. Ms. Newton inquired if this needs to be a part of the motion, or we will presume it automatically happens because it is a part of the grant guidelines.

Mr. Deshpande indicated he does not think it is necessary to include it in the motion.

Ms. Mackey stated, when looking at one of the organizations in green, it has already been given \$75,000 in lump sum. The purpose of having the new subcommittee is a move to create more accountability and transparency, which is what we felt we were not getting with lump sum. She questions giving them additional funding when they have already received such a large sum of funding in lump sum, and the other organizations are in more strict categories.

Ms. Barron inquired if there is a way to move forward with the funding, as advertised, and insert other guidelines we see as a priority/concern. She stated she does not want to have any liability hanging over our heads.

Mr. Patrick Wright, County Attorney, responded that what the committee has done with regard to voting is fine. A consideration would be not to fund the organizations at a maximum of \$15,000.

Ms. Barron inquired if Ms. Mackey was in favor of not funding the organizations in green at the maximum amount since they have previously received County funding.

Ms. Mackey responded she was opposed to Ms. Barron's recommendation.

Ms. Newton noted there might be organizations that have unique programs, which make them worthy of receiving 100% funding.

Mr. Wright stated, a possible option, is to fund the organizations that received one vote at 50%.

Ms. Thomas noted if the committee were to approve the County Attorney's recommendation it would save \$20,000, but we would still be \$1,945.75 short. If the committee reduced the funding by 50% for the organizations in green, the total allocation would be \$249,195.75.

Ms. Mackey made a substitute motion to fund the organizations in green that received one vote at 50% (Career Development Center, Greater Columbia Community Relations Council, and Senior Resources) seconded by Mr. Livingston.

In Favor: Livingston, Barron, Mackey, and English

Not Present: McBride

The vote in favor was unanimous.

b. Other Items – There were no other items.

6. **ADJOURNMENT** – Mr. Livingston moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Mackey.

In Favor: Livingston, Barron, Mackey, and English

Not Present: McBride

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:13 PM.