



Agenda Item Summary

File #: 23-00307

Agenda Date: 7/11/2023

Agenda Item Name:

Food System Workforce Agreement with Working Food

Presenter:

Sean McLendon, Economic Development & Food System Manager, 352-548-3765

Description:

This item is for consideration of an agreement with Working Food, Inc. to implement the Food System Workforce Development and Jobs Pipeline for Disadvantaged Communities Proposal approved by the Board on December 6, 2022.

Recommended Action:

Approve the agreement with Working Food, Inc., and authorize the Chair to sign the agreement.

Prior Board Motions:

On December 6, 2022, Commissioner Cornell moved to approve the preliminary project plan for Food System Equity Program, and the budget amendment. Staff was directed to bring back an agreement with a nonprofit entity with the ability to meet the project plan requirements. 2nd Commissioner Chestnut. The motion carried 4-0.

On May 23, 2023, item 23-00109, the Board of County Commission (Board) approved the Budget Adjustments to American Rescue Plan – State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds – Revenue Recovery. The fiscal note clarifies that the remaining American Rescue Plan – State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (ARP – SLFRF) qualify as Revenue Recovery and thus are being reported as such use. The budget amendment transfers the remaining balance of all qualifying revenue recovery funds from the ARP – SLFRF Fund 234 to a sub fund of the General Fund, Fund 052. All remaining balances of projects identified and allocated by the Board will remain funded and in process out of Fund 052. This action makes NO changes to the plan approved by the Board, just in the way funds are accounted.

Fiscal Note:

This project will be funded for two years for a total of \$250,000 from set aside funds 052.00.0064.564.82.53 ARP2021x015. Purchases of supplies or services from a non-profit organization or charitable youth organization made in accordance with § 255.60, Florida Statutes.

Strategic Guide:

Social and Economic Opportunity,

Background:

This agreement with Working Food, Inc. executes the Board's direction to implement a Food System Workforce Development Program and Jobs Pipeline Program for Disadvantaged Communities, as approved by the Board at their Special Meeting held on December 6, 2022. The project builds off evidence for food system workforce programs developed by the Board through their 2020-2021 locally funded Community Redevelopment Food System Grants. Project partners will include the workforce board, institutional and local non-profits engaged in food system economic development, farmers' markets, and ethnic-culturally specific food/meat producers. The partnership will build quality job opportunities for communities facing covid-based inequities in this sector and will also increase the local resilience of the food system. By creating better employment opportunities in our food system, we can bring greater economic stability to these disadvantaged communities. Culinary arts professionals may also act as ambassadors in their communities for healthier food choices.

Uses of Funds

Through this agreement, the Board will allocate \$250,000 over two years (\$125,000 per year) to Working Foods, Inc. for the entity to expand high-quality vocational opportunities in food systems in Alachua County, through two interlinked programs:

- Youth Program
- Community Kitchen Program

Approximately 100 individuals will be assisted with food-related vocational training over this time. This workforce development will increase the local resilience of the food system in our community by creating a Youth Leadership culinary arts jobs pipeline for youth in disadvantaged communities and the expansion of a jobs training opportunities through an existing Community Kitchen space. These programs will aid individuals who want and are available for work, via job training, assistance to individuals to start small businesses & development of job and workforce training centers focused on food system occupations from farmers to culinary arts professionals.

Program Goals, Awareness, Access, and Distribution

- a. This proposal targets food system employment opportunities for historically underserved, marginalized, or adversely affected groups in qualified census tracts or a combination of underlying income, employment, and COVID impacts.
- b. Alachua County piloted these programmatic responses using local funds in 2020-2021 with high participation of marginalized communities and great success. That pilot program has ensured that the 2022 expansion will be equitable and practical.
- c. The two programmatic responses target services to eligible populations based on their needs as youth entering a job pipeline and certification training for unemployed and underemployed workers. These responses recognize the differences in levels of access to benefits and services across groups.
- d. Having two programmatic responses also addresses problems with the underlying food system of the community at a holistic level from youth, workforce, and talent development to producer.

Promotion of the program and participation will be tracked by disaggregating outcomes by race, ethnicity, and other equity dimensions as part of the reporting requirements. These reporting requirements build upon the qualitative and quantitative reporting developed by the 2020-2021 pilot

program.