



Agenda Item Summary

File #: 23-00522

Agenda Date: 9/12/2023

Agenda Item Name:

Approval of Budget Amendment for Small Farmer Grant Program

Presenter:

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

Description:

This item requests the approval of a budget amendment moving Revenue Recovery funds into the proper account lines for the Small Farmer Grant Program.

Recommended Action:

Approve the budget amendment JE# 2023-3547.

Prior Board Motions:

At the Board of County Commission's (Board) August 24, 2021 meeting, Commissioner Prizzia moved the following:

1. To provide up to an additional \$100,000 for grants that were in this program out of the local food funding that was set aside that scored a 30.0 or higher as well as \$100,000 for next year. The motion carried 3-1 with Commissioner Wheeler voting "Nay" and Commissioner Alford out of the room.
2. Award three pilot grant applications to Dominic Purcell \$3,245 (score 39.0) and Raquel Penabella \$5,000 (score 39.0) and a partial funding award of \$1,755 to Karen Pierce (score 38.7).

The motion carried 4-0 with Commissioner Alford out of the room.

Mr. McClendon stated that if additional funding is granted the staff will fully fund Karen Pierce's request.

Fiscal Note:

Budget amendment JE# 2023-3547 moves \$200,000 into fund 052.17.1770.552.82.53 to fund approximately two rounds of Small Farmer Grant requests.

Strategic Guide:

Social and Economic Opportunity

Background:

This budget amendment puts Revenue Recovery funds in the appropriate account number to pay

applicants approved by the Board's 2021 motion leaving funding for an equivalent number of awards in 2024.

The Clerk's Office has given staff guidance on how to proceed with this round of payments. This program will not be treated as an award but as a grant. Twenty-five percent of the awarded funds will be forwarded to applicants without the reporting documents (receipts and pictures). The remaining 75% of the funds due can be paid with a second invoice and close-out documents.

Per the Board's 2021 motion, 24 applicants met the scoring criteria to be paid. As of August 24, 2023, of the 24 applicants authorized for payment by the Board's 2021 direction, one is no longer farming, and 11 have submitted invoices and W9 forms for payment. The majority (8) are asking for a partial payment of 25% in funds, and the remainder have supplied all close-out documents and are requesting all their authorized funds as a reimbursement.

Staff will continue to work with all applicants who have not submitted paperwork to pay them their authorized funds.

Before the close of 2023, the Small Farmer Grant team will meet to discuss improvements and clarifications to the grant process. These will be brought to the Board for approval before launching requests for new applications in early 2024. The next round of awards is targeted for early Summer 2024.