



Agenda Item Summary

File #: 25-00500

Agenda Date: 6/16/2025

Agenda Item Name:

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Community Resource Center- Willie Mae Stokes Community Center

Presenter:

Claudia Tuck, Community Support Services Director, (352) 231-0058
Satori Days, Community Stabilization Program Manager

Description:

Alachua County Community Support Services has identified the Willie Mae Stokes Community Center as a potential community resource center in support of improving access for social services to individuals who live in Micanopy and the surrounding rural communities. At the direction of the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners staff conducted a survey of the Willie Mae Stokes Community Center to learn more about services provided.

On December 10, 2024, On December 10, 2024, the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) held a discussion regarding community centers as it relates to financial difficulties. The Commissioners elected to have a broad discussion regarding community centers in Alachua County. Below is the Commission motion.

Motion: Commissioner Prizzia stated that she would like to discuss community centers in a broad conversation as several of them are struggling in the current economy rather than just discussing the need in High Springs. She would like to discuss this at a Policy Meeting. County Manager Lieberman stated that a Comprehensive discussion of Community Centers will be scheduled for March with the appropriate staff.

The Department of Community Support Services created a need-based survey to assess the status of community centers across the County. The Willie Mae Stokes Community Center completed the survey. On April 1, 2025, at the BoCC meeting, Community Support Services presented the findings of the survey of all respondents including the Willie Mae Stokes Community Center.

Commissioner Cornell moved the following:

- 1. That staff identify for the Commission of the list which of these entities are municipally run versus run by nonprofits and/or volunteers, 501c(3) and provide that back to the Commission by email is fine.*
- 2. Request any operating budgets that May or May not exist relating to these entities and provide that back to the Commission by email is fine.*

3. *That the Commission refer to staff to work with the Community Foundation and the Children's Trust and develop recommendations with regards to both the amount and a method or process for potential funding in fiscal year 2025-2026.*

4. *Staff be utilized to help these organizations gather that information.*

5. *Explore opportunities to utilize surplus and government access to resources and software for support of these centers.*

6. *Bring back recommendations for support of a community-wide resource guide that works.*

The motion carried 5-0.

Subsequently, on May 9, 2025, Community Support Services met with Bishop Chris Stokes of Willie Mae Community Center to discuss the center's survey response which will be included in an update to the BoCC. The center would like to expand its outreach and request unspecified funding to achieve its goals. At the current time, the center operates an afterschool program, summer programs, offers some assistance in the areas of financial assistance in paying rent and utilities, gently used clothing, food assistance, transportation assistance, and coordinates with UF Health and Mobile Bus to provide mobile health services.

Additional needs include at least three full-time staff, two vehicles (minibus and standard bus), and funding for building repairs and maintenance.