



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** MAY 20, 2015

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

**DOCKET TITLE:**

Consideration of the Alexandria Fund For Human Services FY 2016 - FY 2018 Grant Awards.

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**ISSUE:** Report of the Alexandria Fund for Human Services (AFHS) grant awards for FY 2016 through FY 2018.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** That City Council:

- (1) Receive the report of the Alexandria Fund for Human Services FY 2016 to FY 2018 grant awards; and
- (2) Thank the members of the citizen review panels of the AFHS for their leadership in the review and allocation process.

**BACKGROUND:** In December 2013, the Alexandria City Council adopted reforms to the Alexandria Fund for Human Services to ensure the alignment of grant priorities with the goals and indicators of the City's Strategic Plan and other approved strategic plans. On December 13, 2014, the City Council approved the recommended revised AFHS approach, which reflected the alignment of AFHS grant priorities with established City priorities, including the City Council Strategic Plan, the City Manager's Performance Plan, other City Council approved plans (e.g., the Aging Master Plan, Housing Master Plan and the Children and Youth Master Plan), and community indicators and measures. The Council also approved five outcomes, which were developed based on the outcomes identified in the aforementioned plans. Grant awards were to be made to organization's whose proposals successfully addressed one or more of the following five outcomes:

1. Children and youth are school and career ready.
2. Children and youth are socially connected, emotionally secure and culturally competent.
3. Individuals, families and seniors are economically secure.

4. Individuals, families and seniors have access to health and mental health resources.
5. Individuals, families and seniors are assisted in preventing and remedying crises.

In addition, the following reform recommendations were implemented:

- A three year funding cycle was established and funds were consolidated in a single fund.
- Extra points were awarded to proposals for innovation, joint applications, dollar-for-dollar matching funds, and longstanding service to Alexandrians.
- A grant award funding “floor” of \$10,000 was established.
- The online application process was improved by adding such features as an Excel spreadsheet for the budget.

**DISCUSSION:** There were a total of 61 applications seeking AFHS funding for FY 2016 through FY 2018. The applications were reviewed by a team of grant reviewers, appointed by the City Manager to serve one term. The reviewers, who are all residents of Alexandria, represent a cross-section of the community and many have considerable expertise and experience in human services. Several of the reviewers currently participate or have participated in similar grantmaking processes. Information on the reviewers was also provided in an FYI memorandum to City Council earlier this month. The reviewers were:

- *Julie Bosland*, consultant and the former Deputy Director, of the Institute for Youth, Education and Families National League of Cities, was also a member of the Alexandria Children & Youth Master Plan Design Team.
- *Emily Bryan*, Principle, of Cooley Public Strategies, a public affairs and issue advocacy firm that specializes in issue management, public advocacy, procurement and government relations, is also a member of the Alexandria Community Services Board.
- *Jason Dechant*, Researcher with the Institute for Defense Analysis, is a member of the Alexandria Social Services Advisory Board and is the former Chair of the Alexandria Fund for Human Services Study Review Committee whose recommendations led to its revision.
- *Robert Eiffert*, Program Manager with the Long Term Care Coordinating Council, Fairfax County, is the Chair of the Commission on Aging and former Director of the Alexandria Agency on Aging.
- *Angie Godfrey*, Program Specialist with the Office of Head Start, US Department of Health and Human Services, is also the former Chair, Alexandria School Board.
- *Mindy Lyle*, Business Development Director for Leo Daly, international architecture, interior design, planning and engineering firm, is a member of the Alexandria Planning Commission.
- *Sonia Price*, attorney in private practice, is a member of the Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission, and was also a member of the AFHS Study Committee.
- *Tricia Rodgers*, Program Officer, at the Northern Virginia Health Foundation, is the immediate past chair of the Alexandria Childhood Obesity Action Network, and is a former staff member, Alexandria United Way.
- *Clarence Tong*, Legislative Manager, Environmental Defense Fund, a nonprofit environmental advisory group, is a member of the Alexandria Budget and Finance Affairs Advisory Committee, and was also a member of the AFHS Study Committee.
- *Florencia Uriburu*, Contract Specialist, Alexandria Renewal Enterprise, which has responsibility for construction, operation, maintenance and improvement of the sewage system, is a member of the Alexandria Community Services Board.
- *Joe Valenti*, Director Consumer Finance, Center for American Progress, a policy research and advocacy organization that addresses economic issues, is the Chair, Economic Opportunities Commission, and the

former Vice Chair, AFHS Study Committee.

The Review Committee was divided into two subcommittees, with one group reviewing applications submitted to respond to Grant Priorities 1 and 2 and the other Grant Priorities 3, 4, and 5. The reviewers evaluated and scored each proposal based on the following criteria:

- Demonstration of Need
- Program Design
- Outcomes/Evaluation
- Organizational Capacity
- Budget and Budget Justification
- Support and Collaboration
- Additional Points - innovative solutions, joint applications, dollar-for-dollar match, and long standing service to serving Alexandria residents.

The reviewers had a period of approximately 30 days to review and score the applications. The first subcommittee, which reviewed Grant Priority Outcomes 1 and 2, met on April 29, 2015 to finalize the scoring process. The second subcommittee met on May 6th to complete the same for applications for Outcomes 3, 4 and 5.

Two volunteers from each of the subcommittees, along with the Director of the Department of Community and Human Services met on May 7<sup>th</sup> to determine the allocations for the applicants based on the scoring consensus reached during the review meetings. The applicants requested a total of \$3,370,717. The funding available in the FY2016 budget is \$1,996,430.

In order to respond to the differential between the requests and the appropriated dollars, the Review Committee utilized an approach of funding proposals with decreasing funding from the highest scores to the lowest. In addition, the proposals that scored in the lowest 20% were determined to not receive any funding. The highest rated proposals for existing programs received 85% of their funding request. The remaining proposals for existing programs received 75%, 65% and 55% of their funding request, respectively. Proposals for new programs were also awarded 85%, 75%, 65% and 55% of their funding request based on their scores, with an additional 10% reduction over their adjusted requested amount as they were considered to be untested. Previously funded programs that did not reach 50% or more of their performance outcomes for FY 2014 also received an additional 15% reduction from their requested amount. Sixteen (16) or 26% of the proposals submitted were for new or previously unfunded programs. AFHS grant allocations will support 47 programs. Of that total, nine (19%) new programs will be funded.

The list of the FY 2016 - FY 2018 grant applicants' proposed programs and services, with brief descriptions, and funding levels are enclosed as Attachment 1.

While the initial responses from the reviewers regarding the revised evaluation process were positive, staff will reconvene the reviewers to obtain their feedback and recommendation for further improvements of the process. Staff will also convene a meeting of funded programs to expedite the processing of the agreements and to conduct a session on the outcome evaluation process.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

Funding for AFHS awards of \$1,996,430 for FY 2016 is included in the City's FY 2016 budget. Grant funding is for a one-year period July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014. Copies of all of the proposals are available for

review at DCHS, 1900 N. Beauregard Street.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1 - Alexandria Fund for Human Services Summary Chart

Attachment 2 - Alexandria Fund for Human Services Grant Awards for FY 2016 - FY 2018

**STAFF:**

Debra R. Collins, Deputy City Manager

Kate Garvey, Department Director, DCHS

Deborah Warren, DCSW, LCSW, Director, Center for Children & Families, DCHS

Ronald Frazier, Director, Office of Youth Services, DCHS

La'Keisha Flores, Acting Fiscal Officer III, DCHS