



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 16, 2018

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 2019 to FY 2021 Grant Awards.

ISSUE: Report of the Alexandria Fund for Human Services (AFHS) grant awards for FY 2019 to FY 2021.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Receive the report of the Alexandria Fund for Human Services FY 2019 to FY 2021 grant awards; and
- (2) Thank the members of the AFHS community grant review committee for their leadership in the review and allocation process.

BACKGROUND: The AFHS is the umbrella fund through which the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) coordinates and manages grants competitively awarded to non-profit and community agencies. The recently adopted FY 2019 City budget includes \$2.0 million in AFHS funding. Programs supported by AFHS funding address the health and human service needs of the City's young children, youth, families, immigrants, seniors, person with disabilities and individuals with low incomes.

In December 2014, the Alexandria City Council adopted a series of reforms recommended by a City Manager appointed study committee. The adopted reforms included: stronger alignment between AFHS and the City's Strategic Plan and other City Council approved strategic plans, consolidation of the three AFHS funds to a single fund, establishment of a multi-year grant cycle, improvement of oversight, monitoring and measuring of grant performance, establishment of a funding "floor" or level below which grant applications will be considered and introduction of additional technological changes to the online application process.

The Council subsequently approved five AFHS outcomes, which were developed based on the outcomes identified in the City's Strategic Plan and other adopted plans. Grant awards were to be made to organization's whose proposals successfully addressed one 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.

On December 7, 2017, staff provided City Council with an update of the process for announcing and administering the FY 2019 to FY 2021 grant program and a mid-point report of FY 2017 AFHS programmatic highlights and performance highlights. FY 2016 was seen as a transitional year, as grant recipients began the reporting outcomes against the newly adopted grant priorities. During this period staff identified the need for a new reporting format to support the outcome focus of the new grant priorities. Consequently, in FY 2017, AFHS staff worked with grant recipients on their outcomes, service activities, indicators and goals, to ensure consistency in reporting. A new reporting process was also piloted and instituted, introducing automated reporting processes for year-end reporting. To build capacity with AFHS agencies, DCHS staff provided technical assistance to agencies in refining outcomes and training in using the reporting tool. A comprehensive, three-year cycle report will be completed after the conclusion of FY 2018.

DISCUSSION: The AFHS Request for Grant Proposals was released on December 14, 2017. A subsequent pre-proposal conference was hosted on January 11, 2018. Applicants had until February 12, 2018, to complete and submit their proposals. A total of 67 applications were submitted for FY 2019 through FY 2021 AFHS funding consideration and funding requests totaled \$4.5 million. AFHS funding for FY 2019 is set at \$2.0 million. During the last grant cycle \$3.4 million was requested and \$2.0 million was available. Staff conducted a preliminary review of each application to determine the agencies' compliance with the Request for Grant Proposal requirements, past AFHS performance, experience relevant to the grant request and fiscal solvency. Applications and staff notes were shared with FY 2019 to FY 2021 Review Committee, which was appointed by the City Manager. The reviewers represent a cross-section of City Boards and Commissions and many have expertise and experience in health and human services. Several of the reviewers currently participate or have participated in similar grant-making processes. The reviewers were:

- *David Kaplan*, a member of the Commission on Aging.
- *Florencia Uriburu*, a former member of the Alexandria Community Services Board, and was also a member of the FY 2016 to FY 2018 Grant Review Committee.
- *Helen Morris*, the Chair of the Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy.
- *Joe Valenti*, a member of the Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee, and was also a member of the FY 2016 to FY 2018 Grant Review Committee, former Chair of the Economic Opportunities Commission, and former Vice Chair, 2014 AFHS Study Committee.
- *Kendra Martello*, the Chair of the Commission for Women.
- *LaDonna Sanders*, a member of the Economic Opportunities Commission.
- *Malka Zeefe*, the Chair of the Children, Youth Families Collaborative Commission.
- *Mark Tonsetic*, the Chair of the Social Services Advisory Board.
- *Michelle Smith-Howard*, the Coordinator of the Alexandria City Public School Citywide Early Childhood Programs, and is also a member of the Children, Youth and Families Collaborative

Commission and the Early Care and Education Work Group.

- *Mindy Lyle*, a member of the Planning Commission, and was also a member of the FY 2016 to FY 2018 Grant Review Committee.
- *Roy Shannon*, the Chair of the Alexandria Community Services Board.
- *Tricia Rodgers*, a member of the Public Health Advisory Committee and also a member of the FY 2016 to FY 2018 Grant Review 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 grant 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 longstanding service to serving Alexandria residents.

The reviewers had a period of 42 days to review and score the applications (roughly 2 weeks longer than in years past). Both subcommittees met at separate times on May 1, 2018 to finalize the scoring process.

Volunteers from each of the subcommittees, along with the DCHS Director and supporting staff met on May 10, 2018 to determine the grant allocations based on the scoring consensus reached during the review meetings.

In order to respond to the differential between the funding requests totaling \$4.5 million and the appropriated \$2.0 million, it was necessary for the grant allocation committee to create a funding formula that ensured an adequate number of programs received funding, and that programs funded could effectively deliver services. Funding requests under \$80,000 from new applicants were adjusted to 75% of their request, and funding requests \$80,000 or above from new applicants were adjusted to 50% of their request, as these programs were considered untested. Funding requests from applicants receiving FY 2018 funds were adjusted to their current level of funding. An additional 15% reduction to the adjusted amount was made to FY 2018 recipients who did not reach 75% or more of their performance outcomes during FY 2017.

Funds were allocated based on these adjustments, in the order of the review scores, until the remaining AFHS funds could not reasonably support an additional program. Therefore, the remaining funds were proportionally reallocated to high scoring and high performing FY 2018 recipients.

Twenty-two (22), or 33%, of the proposals submitted represented \$ 1.7 million in funding requests and were for new or previously unfunded programs in FY 2016 to FY 2018. AFHS grant allocations for FY 2019 to 2021 will support 43 programs. Consistent with the last grant cycle, a portion or 19% of these programs will be new AFHS grant recipients.

The list of the FY 2019 to FY 2021 grant applicants' proposed programs and services, brief program descriptions, funding request and recommended award amounts is enclosed as Attachment 1.

Staff will convene a meeting of funded programs to shortly after grant agreements are executed and conduct a session on the outcome evaluation and reporting processes for the FY 2019 to FY 2021 AFHS grant cycle.

Staff will also reconvene the reviewers obtain their feedback and recommendation for further improvements of the process.

FISCAL IMPACT: Funding for AFHS awards of \$2.0 million for FY 2019 is included in the City's FY 2019 adopted budget. Grant funding is intended to fund programs for a period of three years, however, grant recipients will be advised that funding for the subsequent two years is contingent upon appropriation of funding for the AFHS by City Council in FY 2020 and FY 2021 and their satisfactory program performance.

ATTACHMENTS: Alexandria Fund for Human Services Applicant Summaries and Recommended Grant Awards for FY 2019 to FY 2021

STAFF:

Debra R. Collins, Deputy City Manager

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