



COUNTY OF NEVADA

COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Board Agenda Memo

MEETING DATE: May 24, 2022

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Alison Lehman, County Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Resolution approving Grant Award Agreement with Sierra Commons for \$36,000 for the “Community Resiliency Grant” funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and authorizing the Chair to sign

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the Resolution.

FUNDING:

This “Community Resiliency Grant” award to Sierra Commons in the amount of \$36,000 will be funded with Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars.

This award is one of three awards recommended for funding from the second round of the “Community Resiliency Grant” program totaling \$140,000.

There are no General Fund dollars used for this agreement and no budget amendment is needed.

USE OF FUNDS:

This agreement will fund Sierra Commons for the following general purposes:

- ☒ Mitigate financial hardship, such as declines in revenues due to impacts of periods of business closures, and/or suspended business activities such as revenue generating fund raisers due to social distancing requirements or other public health orders; and
- ☒ Support for programmatic services that assist in addressing the economic hardship experienced by the Grant Recipient and/or the negative economic impacts experienced by its customers.

And specifically, Sierra Commons' Startup Accelerator will support high-tech innovators in Nevada County with a goal of launching 2-3 scalable companies by the end of 2024 by providing support such as outreach, networking events, cultivating an investor-network, and providing an inspirational space for technology-based startups.

BACKGROUND:

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (“ARPA”) (H.R. 1319) is a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus package passed by Congress and signed by President Joseph Biden on March 11, 2021 in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and associated economic challenges.

On April 27, 2021, staff brought a preliminary ARPA Expenditure Plan to the Board for direction. The plan included a recommendation to allocate 30% of ARPA funds (\$5.8M) to “Community & Economic Resiliency” projects. This includes four grant programs and one loan program as listed in the table below.

On July 27, 2021, the Nevada County Board of Supervisors passed and adopted Resolution 21-339 approving the Request for Applications (RFA) and award selection procedures for the Community Resiliency Grant Program and authorizing the Purchasing Division to advertise for qualified applications.

On November 9th, 2021, the Nevada County Board of Supervisors passed and adopted resolution 21-480, approving the award of \$1,991,884 in 32 “Community Resiliency Grants” funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

However, it was later determined that one award totaling approximately \$100,000 could not move forward. It was determined that it was in the best interest to reallocate the funds through a competitive process. The second round of “Community Resiliency Grants,” totaling \$140,000 was released March 18, 2022.

For this second round, guidelines and format were consistent with the first, with the exception being that the RFP focused eligibility specifically on business serving entities who had not received a previous Community Resiliency grant. The County formed a 4-person evaluation panel, comprised of two community leaders and two staff members, who reviewed and scored the responses to select the top ranked entities. The evaluation panel presented its recommendations to the County Executive Officer, Alison Lehman, who developed the final recommendation.

Criteria and Scoring: The evaluation panel relied on the criteria listed in the RFA, which requested applicants to describe:

1. the economic harm the organization experienced because of the pandemic;
2. how their proposal directly responds to the negative economic impacts of the pandemic;
3. how their proposal will provide ongoing community benefits with impactful, measurable outcomes;

4. how they will leverage additional partnerships, funding, and other resources as part of their proposal; and
5. demonstrate their capacity to manage, implement, measure and report on the grant.

Evaluation Panel reviewed and scored responses to select the top ranked entities based on the weighted evaluation criteria in the RFA (see below).

Award agreement and reporting requirements:

This individual Grant Award Recipient Agreement was developed with the Grant Award Recipient and reviewed with the Auditor-Controller to ensure Grant Award Recipient is in good standing with the County.

Grant Award Recipient will enter in the attached “Grant Award Recipient Agreement” with the County. Grant Award Recipient will use the ARPA monies to cover only those eligible costs identified in the RFA and necessary for the COVID-19 public health emergency in accordance with federal guidance. Grant Award Recipient shall be responsible for reimbursement to County of any grant funding provided under this agreement that are determined by federal or state officials to be unauthorized expenditures. Grant recipients will provide quarterly reports beginning in the first quarter of FY 2022/2023.

Funds may cover costs from March 3, 2021 through December 31, 2024. However, funds may be used to assist businesses and nonprofits for economic harms experienced prior to March 3, 2021, and in this program the County is requiring that funds must be spent by 12/31/24. Awardees will be required to submit quarterly “Project and Expenditure Reports” until the funded project is complete.

To promote transparency, quarterly reports will be posted on the County of Nevada’s American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) web page.

Recommended action:

Therefore, staff recommends the Board adopt the attached Resolution approving the Grant Award Agreement with Sierra Commons and authorizing the Chair of the Board of Supervisors to sign grant agreement with the Grant Award Recipient.

Item Initiated by: Ariel Lovett, Projects Administrator

Approved by: Alison Lehman, County Executive Officer