



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Housing and Human Services

2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way
Building B, Suite 103
Viera, Florida 32940

TO: James Liesenfelt, Interim County Manager
FROM: Juanita D. Jackson, Director Housing and Human Services Department
SUBJ: Citizen Efficiency and Effectiveness Recommendation #2025048

CEER #2025048, titled Restore grants to nonprofits to focus on homeless and at-risk residents, was received by the County from Heather A. Elko

Citizen Statement:

Nonprofits that serve basic human needs are buckling under the demands of a burgeoning low-income population. Nonprofit funding as it stands cannot keep up. Homeless people and inadequately sheltered people are a segment of our County population that need more assistance. Nonprofits are capable of providing services but need more funds. Temporary shelter, emergency help with utilities and food, mental health services, transportation to medical care—these are fundamental needs. Unfortunately, nonprofits run out of money on a regular basis and have to deny services to applicants.

It is appropriate and necessary to use public funds for this purpose. We are all in this together. Demarcations of city and county borders are not relevant in this current crisis. Our poorest citizens are suffering, and better-off citizens are dismayed at the condition of the poor people here in Brevard.

Citizen Recommendation:

The County should provide grant funding to nonprofits that serve unsheltered and inadequately sheltered residents, and their associated needs. This in effect would be a restoration of grant funding, with a more targeted focus, that had been in place for decades but was halted by commissioners who were in office about 9 years ago.

BENEFIT: Enable nonprofits to serve County residents as they are designed to do, but in the current crisis are being overwhelmed. Prevent currently housed, at-risk people from becoming homeless.

1. The County should restore grant funding to nonprofits in a focused way, targeting human services providers.
 - a. In today's housing crisis at the level of basic shelter, grants should be made to agencies that specifically deal with our homeless or inadequately sheltered residents, with their associated needs.

2. Commissioners should review the past grants to nonprofits program that was highly approved by citizens, and fine-tune it for current needs.
3. The County should develop a new program for the crisis we are in. Don't worry about creating a program in perpetuity. The Commissioners can structure this grant program according to near, middle, and/or longer-range needs.
4. Quickly--time is of the essence--determine where the most pressing needs are. Go to street-level nonprofit providers to get feedback.
5. Don't make the grant process too cumbersome. Limit the hurdles and speed up the time frame, so that the nonprofits can immediately provide more assistance.
6. Don't fall back on an excuse that past commissioners used: "We don't want to pick winners and losers" (by awarding grants to some but not all). Those commissioners in effect made everyone losers, even better-off residents who are on the sidelines, watching with alarm the inadequacy of basic shelter and services that are desperately needed.
7. There is precedent for such action. In past times of emergency, the County has adjusted budgets and processes as needed. Examples include the housing meltdown when tax revenues dropped and the County cut hours and services, and the pandemic crisis that created administrative and reach-out needs beyond immediate County borders. We now are experiencing a time of emergency.

Staff Analysis:

From FY-2005 through FY-2021 the Brevard County Commissioners funded Community Based Organizations grants (CBO's) through Housing & Human Services utilizing request for proposals (RFP) process. In 2017, the Board of County Commissioners decided to phase out the Community Based Organization grant award process with the last year of funding in 2021 of \$102,040.

Since then, the Brevard County Commissioners have voted to support various community-based organizations. For FY 2024-2025 the following community-based organizations are funded through Housing & Human Services; 211 Brevard-\$73,600, Aging Matters-Meals on Wheels-\$60,000, Fire Watch-\$75,000, Crosswinds Youth Services- Juvenile Assessment Center-\$208,815, Space Coast Health Foundation- Child Protection Team/Medical Exams-\$86,000, and Brevard County Legal Aid-\$256,500.

Staff Recommended Action:

It is recommended the Board of County Commissioners reject CEER #2025048 because it does not enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of County government as required by Section 2.9.10 of the Brevard County Home Rule Charter as outlined in the staff analysis.

cc: Frank Abbate, County Manager

Horst, Rachel

From: CEER@brevardfl.gov
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:08 AM
To: Horst, Rachel
Subject: A new CEER Recommendation has been submitted as ID #2025048

Recommendation # 2025048

Dear CEER Administrator,

Speak Up Brevard Recommendation ID #2025048 has been submitted. Please login to the CEER Application to start the recommendation evaluation workflow.

Contact Information:

Group/Organization

Name Heather A Elko
Address 566 Thomas Barbour Dr, Melbourne FL 32935 6828
Phone (321) 427-8564
Email efeather2@bellsouth.net
Alternate Email

Recommendation Information:

Recommendation ID 2025048
Recommendation Title Restore County grants to nonprofits to focus on homeless and at-risk residents
Areas Affected
Department Affected
Current problem Nonprofits that serve basic human needs are buckling under the demands of a burgeoning low-income population. Nonprofit funding as it stands cannot keep up. Homeless people and inadequately sheltered people are a segment of our County population that need more assistance. Nonprofits are capable of providing services but need more funds. Temporary shelter, emergency help with utilities and food, mental health services, transportation to medical care--these are fundamental needs. Unfortunately, nonprofits run out of money on a regular basis and have to deny services to applicants. It is appropriate and necessary to use public funds for this purpose. We are all in this together. Demarcations of city and county borders are not relevant in this current crisis. Our poorest citizens are suffering, and better-off citizens are dismayed at the condition of the poor people here in Brevard.
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Attachments

Restore County grants to nonprofits to focus on homeless and at-risk residents.docx

Please do not reply to this e-mail, as it will go to an unmonitored mailbox.

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