



Legislation Text

File #: 19-0932, **Version:** 1

TO: Mayor Richard C. Irvin

FROM: Daniel Barreiro, Chief Community Services Officer

DATE: November 5, 2019

SUBJECT:

Approval of the 2020 Quality of Life Grants in the amount of \$898,000.

PURPOSE:

To approve the 2020 Quality of Life Grants by resolution. This approval is necessary in order to award and process 2020 grants.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Aurora's Quality of Life Grant program was implemented in 2007. Over the years dozens of organizations have been funded serving thousands of residents. The grants were included in each annual city budget. Recently changes have been made to the Quality of Life Grant program. Phase 1 included reopening the application process.

After the downturn in the economy there was pressure on city funds reducing the amount of grant funds available. The QOL grant process was closed and the number of funded applicants gradually shrunk through attrition. The only new programs funded came from the CDBG application process. These programs were deemed important but were not a good fit with CDBG. While the Gaming Tax Fund revenues continue to decrease, the Mayor's Office and the Innovation Department wanted to help more organizations by opening up the application process. The Quality of Life grant application process was opened up in 2018 resulting in 38 applicants and the funding of a total of 29 organizations which was nearly a 100% increase.

DISCUSSION:

The 2020 QOL Grant program continues to evolve. Phase 2 of the Quality of Life changes was implemented this year with the expansion of the QOL grant review committee this year. The committee helped review and score the 38 grant applications. The committee consisted of Dan Barreiro (Community Services Division), Skyy Calice (Police Department), Adrienne Holloway (Innovation & Core Services Department), Chuck Nelson (Mayors Office), Chris Ragona (Community Development Subdivision), and Simon Rodriguez (Youth Services Subdivision). After scoring the applications, six applications were not recommended for funding. In addition, some application amounts were too small to require grant reports and were recommended to be treated as sponsorships. These applicants will only be required to submit an annual report instead of the quarterly reports. The funding strategy for 2020 was based on level funding for past recipients and about a 40% award for new applicants. A few programs dropped out from previous years and some of the new applicants were not recommended for funding.

New Developments for 2020: Phase 3 of QOL process improvement includes the use of grant management software. With the help of IT, we were able to review a list of providers nationally and reduce the list to 3 potential providers based on the functionality needed as well as price. We are hopeful, that we can get this new software up and running during the first quarter of 2020. This will permit us to collect grant reports, metrics and outcomes from funded agencies using the new software and also produce reports. Presently, we receive quarterly reports but they are not in a database that can generate reports and dash boards. The new grant management software will also assist with future grant applications for Neighborhood Festival Funds and CDBG as well as other programs to create a streamlined review process. The new software will simplify the review and scoring process and it will provide a vehicle for changing the manner in which grant decisions are made.

Site visits will be a priority in 2020. The results of site visits will be captured in the new grant management software. These results can then be printed and shared with grant review committee members for future reference.

Account numbers where funds have been requested for 2020 budget:

215-1302-419.53-25: \$268,500
215-1302-419.50-50: \$ 59,500
215-1370-440.50-30: \$290,000
215-1360-450.53-26: \$165,000
255-3536-421.50-05: \$115,000

IMPACT STATEMENT:

The 2020 Quality of Life Grants will support 32 agencies. These funds will support two local food pantries as well a regional food bank. While a few senior programs are supported the majority of agencies funded consist of educational and youth serving organizations. Also included are 3 local museums.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommends adoption of this resolution authorizing the funding of the 2020 Quality of Life Grants.

cc: Public Health, Safety and Transportation Committee



CITY OF AURORA, ILLINOIS

RESOLUTION NO. _____

DATE OF PASSAGE _____

A Resolution Approving the 2020 Quality of Life Grants in the amount of \$898,000

WHEREAS, the City of Aurora has a population of more than 25,000 persons and is, therefore, a home rule unit under subsection (a) of Section 6 of Article VII of the Illinois Constitution of 1970; and

WHEREAS, subject to said Section, a home rule unit may exercise any power and perform any function pertaining to its government and affairs for the protection of the public health, safety, morals, and welfare; and

WHEREAS, the City of Aurora's Quality of Life Grant program has supported dozens local non-profits since 2008, and

WHEREAS, the Quality of Life Grant program has helped serve thousands of people, and

WHEREAS, the financial support of local non-profit partners is critical to continue to provide a wide range of programs and services, and

WHEREAS, the Quality of Life Committee has reviewed the 2020 QOL applications and made recommendations for funding for 2020, and

WHEREAS, funds are requested in the 2020 budget in the following accounts: 215-1302-419.53-25: \$268,500 215-1302-419.50-50: \$59,500, 215-1370-440.50-30: \$290,000, 215-1360-450.53-26: \$165,000 and 255-3536-421.50-05: \$115,000.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Aurora, Illinois, as follows: subject to the approval of this item in the 2020 budget, the 2020 Quality of Life Grants are approved and incorporated as part of the 2020 City of Aurora Annual Budget.