

MEMORANDUM



DATE: July 27, 2023

TO: Assembly Finance Committee

FROM: Angie Flick, Finance Director

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SUBJECT: Assembly Grants (Community Grants) Process

The purpose of this memo is to provide a set of options for discussion to the Assembly Finance Committee (AFC) regarding the process for reviewing and awarding Assembly Grants, also known as Community Grants, for the upcoming budget cycle. There are many options and variations available to the AFC for managing the granting process. This memo speaks to three options: A pre-budget process similar to the Marine Passenger Fee model, a post-budget process, and the status quo.

The Assembly has awarded grants annually to fund various programs and projects which benefit the community in a large range of amounts for both one-time and ongoing operations. Throughout this memo and discussion, there are a few terms and groups that I would like to define.

Partner Agencies – these are organizations that are regularly awarded grants for their ongoing operations; and some act as a conduit granting agency on the Assembly’s behalf.

Non-Competitive Grantees – some organizations are regular annual recipients of grants because they are performing a function on behalf of CBJ.

Operating funding – the normal ongoing expenditures for an organization to function: staff, rent, utilities, basic supplies.

One-time funding– funds that are utilized for a unique project or purchase that does not recur and has an end date. Examples might include: the purchase of a piece of land or equipment; a one-time study or event.

Option 1: Pre-Budget Process

In this scenario, staff would solicit grant applications in the same general time frame and manner as the Marine Passenger Fee process. December 1st would start the grant solicitation period. A list of projects/grants would be compiled and available for public comment no later than January 15th. The comment period would close February 15th. The City Manager’s recommendations will be available no later than March 1st and included in the Manager’s recommended budget. The Manager will provide the AFC with all applications and comments.

Through the application process, grantees will indicate the nature of the funding request (funding of operations or one-time funding), what other funding sources they are pursuing and how their request meets a community need. Grant applications will be evaluated against Assembly Goals, the Legislative Priority List, the CIP and 1% Sales Tax Schedule. Grant applications that are more suited to the Assembly’s conduit granting agencies (JEDC, JAHC, JCF) will be directed to make application through those agencies. Of note, JAHC’s grant deadline is mid-April and JCF’s is the first week in March; providing applicants sufficient time to meet those deadlines.

In this scenario, the Assembly would likely decide to exclude certain partner agencies and non-competitive grantees from this process and request the Manager include the appropriate grant funding in the Manager’s recommended budget. The Assembly should decide which organizations are in these categories. However, in looking over past grant recipients, the following organizations would likely be categorized as Partner Agencies

and Non-Competitive Grantees:

- Juneau Arts and Humanities Council (JAHC) – Partner Agency
- Juneau Economic Development Council (JEDC) – Partner Agency
- Travel Juneau – Partner Agency
- Juneau Community Foundation (JCF) – Partner Agency
- Southeast Alaska Association for the Education of Young Children (AEYC) / Childcare – Partner Agency
- Juneau Festival Committee – Non-Competitive Grantee
- Douglas Fourth of July – Non-Competitive Grantee
- Parents for Safe Graduation – Non-Competitive Grantee
- Better Capital City (KTOO and Alaska Committee) – Non-Competitive Grantee

Partner agencies can be scheduled to present an update on their organization at any time throughout the year, rather than utilizing budget development AFC meetings for that purpose. The vetting process for the other grant applicants is done prior to the budget work of the AFC, so that grant applicants will not need to present at AFC meetings during April and May.

Option 2: Post-Budget Process

In this scenario, the Assembly Finance Committee would determine an amount of funding for competitive grants to be solicited, reviewed, and awarded starting in July. The funding amount would be determined through the normal budgeting process and appropriated with the budget approval. Either staff or a granting committee (as determined by the AFC) would then solicit grant applications in July and make awards up to the funding approved by the Assembly. If desired, a complete packet of applications and minutes can be provided to the AFC after the grant awards are complete.

Similar to Option 1, the Assembly would likely decide to exclude certain partner agencies and non-competitive grantees from this process and request the manager include the appropriate grant funding in the manager's recommended budget. Partner agencies can be scheduled to present an update on their organization throughout the year to the AFC.

Option 3: Status Quo

The Assembly Finance Committee may desire to follow the same process as in previous years. In this scenario, grant requests can filter to the AFC through a variety of channels, or the AFC can solicit grant requests with a deadline for submission. In conjunction with the AFC Chair, staff will schedule grant applicants for presentation to the AFC over the course of one to two meetings. The AFC can then make recommendations for inclusion in the budget.

In this scenario, partner agencies will be included in the presentation schedule. Non-competitive grantees will be included in the manager's recommended budget.

Staff Recommendation

Assemblymembers always have the privilege of bringing ideas and projects to the Assembly through various committees for consideration of support. Staff recommends the AFC select Option 1, a process modeled after the Marine Passenger Fee project process for soliciting, reviewing, and recommending funding for Assembly Grants. This process provides for public notice of the opportunity, public comment and evaluation of the request against stated Assembly priorities. The AFC will receive information on all grant applications. The pre-budget process provides greater flexibility in addressing large, one-time requests from organizations. These can be accommodated in the other options; however, knowing about them early increases the flexibility in addressing the needs.