



MEMO TO CITY COUNCIL

Request to Include Topic on the City Council Agenda

From: Jacob Cluff **Meeting Date:** March 26, 2024
Presenter: Jacob Cluff **Estimated Time:** 15 mins
Topic: Neighborhood Grants Program FY 2024

Recommended Council Action:

Approve recommendations for allocation of FY2024 budgeted funds for top-scoring Neighborhood Grant applications.

Background:

The City Council allocated \$50,000 in the FY2024 budget for the Neighborhood Grants Program (NGP), with the intent to expand citizen input into developing projects that highlight neighborhood identity and pride and further Meridian's vision to be a premier community in which to live, work and raise a family. The program's goals seek to create opportunities for long-term civic engagement by community members, build stronger relationships between elected officials, city staff, the community, and other agencies, and inspire projects that leave lasting impacts across Meridian's community.

The Neighborhood Grant Program Started in May of 2021 and is entering its third year. The program receives applications from various individuals, businesses, non-profits, homeowners' associations, and service groups. During the FY24 application process, the City received seven (7) applications, with five (5) of the Seven (7) applications meeting the minimum requirements to be considered. Staff followed up with all interested applicants to ensure correct and complete information was provided with the submissions.

Applications were scored individually by a panel consisting of City Council members as defined during program development and roll-out. The scoring matrix allocated points across six categories, including project description, the inclusion of volunteer assistance to execute, timeline efficacy, project impact, project budget, and outside recommendations or support.

Below is a table depicting the type of project, the group who submitted the request, a summary, and the estimated cost of each. The projects requested nearly \$45,000, with an average funding request of approximately \$9,000.

Funding Request

Proj No.	Project Type	Requestor	Group	Brief Summary	Funding Request
2024-01	Tree and planet	Vineyard HOA	Vineyard HOA	Tree Management and Removal	\$7,000.00
2024-02	Common Area	Vineyard HOA	Vineyard HOA	Common Area Management	\$7,624.00

2024-03	Books	Meridian Library Foundation	Meridian Library Foundation	Books for the Meridian Library District	\$10,000.00
2024-04	Memorial	David's Hope	David's Hope	Memorial in Meridian Cemetery Remembering Pregnancy and Infant Loss	\$10,000.00
2024-05	Park Improvement	Meridian Senior Center	Meridian Senior Center	Seating and picnic improvements in Kleiner Park	\$10,039.97

Project Scoring

Proj No.	Project Type	Requestor	Group	Brief Summary	Average Score	Scoring Total
2024-01	Tree and planet	Vineyard HOA	Vineyard HOA	Tree Management and Removal	68.75	275
2024-02	Common Area	Vineyard HOA	Vineyard HOA	Common Area Management	68.75	275
2024-03	Books	Meridian Library Foundation	Meridian Library Foundation	Books for the Meridian Library District	90.00	360
2024-04	Memorial	David's Hope	David's Hope	Memorial in Meridian Cemetery Remembering Pregnancy and Infant Loss	83.75	335
2024-05	Park Improvement	Meridian Senior Center	Meridian Senior Center	Seating and picnic improvements in Kleiner Park	87.50	350

Discussion:

The NGP is based on applications received, the program goals, and the scoring results. The Council should consider the best funding allocation.

This program is in its third year, and changes and adjustments will continue to be made to ensure the program is as efficient as possible in future years. These will include streamlining the scoring process and continuing to market and uniquely engage the City of Meridian residents.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends award of funds to the top three scored projects, as listed in the scoring table below. This recommendation is based on a few factors discussed below the scoring table.

Proj No.	Project Type	Requestor	Group	Brief Summary	Funding Request	Average Score	Scoring Total
2024-03	Books	Meridian Library Foundation	Meridian Library Foundation	Books for the Meridian Library District	\$10,000.00	90	360
2024-05	Park Improvement	Meridian Senior Center	Meridian Senior Center	Seating and picnic improvements in Kleiner Park	\$10,039.97	87.5	350
2024-04	Memorial	David's Hope	David's Hope	Memorial in Meridian Cemetery Remembering Pregnancy and Infant Loss	\$10,000.00	83.75	335

The projects are ranked using average points based on the scoring criteria. Additionally, each of the three recommended projects has some element of agency partnership, whether with the City

or non-profit. This will aid in project execution. Based on the applications and discussions with leadership and management, the three projects are manageable from a resourcing and project management perspective.

As a note, the Vineyard HOA projects were placed fourth and fifth in the evaluation. These two projects scored significantly lower when looking at all applications. Additionally, due to the Vineyard HOA projects requesting funding for improvements on portions of private property, staff does not recommend funding these projects.

The total funding of the top three projects is \$30,039.97, which is \$19,960.03 less than the budgeted program allocation. While funds remain in this program year, staff feel the three recommended projects will serve the community well and recommend that these three projects move forward in the contract process.

<end>