

MINUTES

Committee Members in attendance: Al Whitesides, Brandy Bowman, Chavaun Letman, Jane Hatley, Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Leslie Anderson, Mistie Reising-Cogbill, Philip Belcher, Rich Johnston, Robert Pressley, Susan Mims, Wendy Wieber

County support staff in attendance: Rachael Nygaard, Michael Frue, Burnett Walz

Welcome and agenda review by Jasmine Beach-Ferrara.

Virtual meeting reminder: Identify yourself when speaking. All votes will be conducted by roll call. This is a public meeting. If any community members are in attendance, there will be a time for public comment at the end of the meeting.

Meeting Minutes: Philip Belcher made a motion to approve the minutes from March 2 and March 23. Al Whitesides seconded motion. Vote by roll call vote was unanimous in approval.

Old Business

- Reminder of grant review and meeting schedule:
 - April
 - Regular meeting on April 6 extended time from 12:00 to 2:30 pm
 - Additional meeting on April 20 extended time from 12:00 to 2:30 pm
 - Possible additional meeting (if needed) on April 27 extended time from 12:00 to 2:30 pm
 - Recommendations due to Budget Office by April 30
- Universal Pre-K ad hoc group
 - The group has been meeting and have been focusing on the framework, looking at scope and definitions. They have participated in meetings with other NC counties that have a universal pre-k model and are reviewing other existing models nationwide. The County's Performance Management department is helping with the process. The recommendations will be brought to this committee in May and will be taken to the Board of Commissioners in June. This will not be a fully developed model designed in the limited timeframe. The committee planned not to meet in May, however, the committee will need to meet to review the ad-hoc group's recommendations.

New Business

- Grant funding recommendations
 - The committee will present 2 scenarios for funding recommendations. One will include the \$851,444 Asheville City Schools local funding, and one that does not.
 - There are 2 current projects that are committed for multi-year funding, and those are included in the spreadsheet. One is YWCA and one is Buncombe County Schools.

- There is an item on the scenarios for Avery Creek. This is a result of the situation because of ACS relocating classrooms for the new school year. Buncombe County administration has been contingency planning and talking with the organizations that may be impacted. The county reached out to Buncombe County schools to see if they had space for these classrooms. They have funds for a modular classroom and could house a preschool classroom at Avery's Creek. This is preliminary, but the school has submitted funding costs that would be associated with this modular classroom (such as fencing, etc.). It will not exceed \$100,000, and they can have the classroom ready for the new school year. Community Action Opportunities will have to move 1 classroom out to make room for Asheville City Schools and that could be located at Avery's Creek. Their other option is to take the classrooms outside of Buncombe County. The committee voiced concern about the racial makeup of students at Avery's Creek. The location is also a great distance from the current location.
- There was a discussion about the Asheville City School's application and updated project proposal. It feels rushed and community members have voiced concerns that they feel it is being pushed on them. Teachers feel this will contribute to greater segregation of groups, and they won't have access to the resources that they currently have at the one site.
- Burnett presented the current scoring data for applications
 - The spreadsheet will be sent to committee members after the meeting for them to complete their recommended funding levels for each project.
 - The committee will have 2 additional days to review/revise their scores and Burnett will then send a revised spreadsheet with the finalized scores on Friday morning. The deadline for submitting funding scenarios is April 19, 2021.
- The committee voted to accept the Asheville City Schools' revised application. There were 7 votes in favor and 4 votes against.
- There was a discussion about committee members being able to complete the funding recommendations if they didn't complete the scoring due to a potential conflict of interest. Michael Frue from County Legal weighed in on this topic. It was decided that since there were no true conflicts of interest and since the funding scenario is based on the overall committee scores, they are able to complete the funding recommendations. This is an advisory board and the ultimate decision for funding these projects belongs to the Board of Commissioners.

Announcements

- There were no announcements

Public Comment

- There was no public comment

Next Meeting: Next meeting is April 20 at 12:30 pm.