



City of Bowie

15901 Excalibur Road
Bowie, Maryland 20716

MEMORANDUM

To: City Council

From: Councilmember Ingrid S. Harrison

Subject: Resolution R-49-20 and the Bowie COVID-19 Recovery Assistance Program

Date: July 30, 2020

INTRODUCTION: The revised language below is proposed to replace the current language in Resolution R-49-20 Establishing the Bowie COVID-19 Recovery Assistance Program.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

During review of Resolution R-49-20 at the June 6, 2020 Council Meeting, the Council voted to provide a \$200,000 grant to the Bowie BIC in partnership with the Greater Bowie Chamber of Commerce (GBCC).

The initial request attached to the Memorandum dated May 14, 2020, Recommendations from the EDC, page 4, states that *\$300,000 to the Bowie Innovation Center (BIC) and the Bowie Chamber of Commers for the purpose of providing training and assistance for Bowie Based Small Businesses through the next 12 months...*

The request for \$300,000 did not pass and other recommendations were made and voted upon. Resolution R-49-20 was enacted, however, without specific funding designations outlined. The Bowie BIC was directed by Council and Staff to work with the GBCC regarding the funding.

The language needs clarity to allow both organizations to move forward in assisting Bowie businesses. Therefore, the \$200,000 should be equally divided between the Bowie BIC and the GBCC in two separate grants. The justification is provided below.

The Bowie BIC will use the funds to deliver specific assistance to the City's businesses to help strengthen their business operations and position them for business success during COVID-19. Specifically, the Bowie BIC will: develop a web portal specific to Bowie BIC programs and services; deliver a series of webinars and training activities on business topics for Bowie-based businesses; deliver technical business advice one-on-one (accounting, legal, online marketing, etc.) through Business Open Door Sessions; and, deliver a series of new Bowie CEO Business Resilience Boot Camps.

The Greater Bowie Chamber of Commerce will use the funding to provide meaningful and quantifiable COVID -19 relief for existing small and micro businesses registered in the City of Bowie and the Greater Bowie area, by making accessible resources that can ultimately stabilize and sustain business operations that have experienced interruption related to the ongoing pandemic. Specifically, the GBCC will: establish a business resource center that will provide consultation services and hands-on support; establish a walk-in Business Resource Center; create paid internship positions for one Bowie State University student and one Bowie High School student; and, create a series of webinars (minimum of 12) that will be focused on counseling their existing membership and non-members in the greater Bowie area with establishing and strengthening their foundations.

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend that Council adopt the revised language for Resolution R-49-20 and provide two separate grants from the \$200,000 in the amount of \$100,000 each. We also recommend that Council obtain a revised Statement of Work from each organization detailing the work to be performed over the 12-month period.

Current Language

There shall be a grant to the Bowie Business Innovation Center (Bowie BIC) to use in partnership with the Greater Bowie Chamber of Commerce for the purpose of providing training and assistance for Bowie-based small businesses through the next 12 months. This grant will be included in the annual operating grant to the Bowie BIC and will be administered by the City's Economic Development Office.

Revised Language

There shall be a \$100,000 grant to the Bowie Business Innovation Center (Bowie BIC) to use for the purpose of developing and delivering online services to include: a web portal specific to Bowie BIC programs and services, a series of webinars and training activities on business topics for Bowie Based Business, technical business advice one-on-one (accounting, legal, online marketing, etc.) through Business Open Door Sessions, and a series of new Bowie CEO Business Resilience Boot Camps. The 12-month funding period shall commence on the date of initial issuance of allocated funds. The City shall be responsible for administering the funds.

There shall be a \$100,000 grant to the Greater Bowie Chamber of Commerce (GBCC) for the purpose of developing and delivering services to include: a Business Resource Center, internship opportunities for two Bowie students, a series of webinars, business development sessions and monthly counseling for their 150 members and other micro-businesses currently impacted by COVID-19 through the next 12 months. The 12-month funding period shall commence on the date of initial issuance of allocated funds. The City shall be responsible for administering the funds.