

South Carolina Opioid Recovery Fund Board Meeting
January 11, 2024
Via Zoom

Call to Order

Board Vice Chair Aditi Bussells called the Board of Directors meeting to order at 4:07 PM via Zoom. Those in attendance via Zoom and constituting a quorum were:

Board Members Present via Zoom: Aditi Bussells, Toby Chappell, Steven Donaldson, Hon. H. Bruce Williams, Lisa Montgomery, Gary Mixon, Eric Bedingfield

New Business

Vice Chair Bussells began the revised GPS application review.

1. **York County.** Vice Chair Bussells said they did a good job responding to application concerns and opened the floor for discussion. Mr. Donaldson expressed concern over the revised application's general operations cost. DAODAS cut their funding and they are asking for help with existing expenses that are not evidence-based strategies to make up for this cut funding rather than absorbing these costs. He said the \$125k should be severed, and everything else is tied to evidence-based strategies and looks good. Hon. H. Williams asked if these costs are prohibited, or if this is simply not a standard the Board should set. Attorney Libet said while administrative services that are necessary for plan implementation are allowable and can be covered, these costs however do not seem essential and fall more toward the unallowable side. Board discussion about the standard the board would set by accepting these types of requests. Chair Bedingfield and Mr. Donaldson agreed these costs weren't appropriate. Motion to approve the application in the amount of \$547,944 accepted with the \$125,000 in inpatient operational costs severed, by Mr. Donaldson and seconded by Chair Bedingfield, m/c unanimous.
2. **Charleston County.** Mr. Donaldson recused himself. Vice Chair Bussells said she likes this application because the group had funds left over, so they revised the application and are now requesting a decreased amount and carried over funds which allows them to potentially apply some of those other allocated funds for future projects. They also did a good job revising and addressing Board concerns in their prior application. Motion to approve the application in the amount of \$632,768 by Chair Bedingfield and seconded by Hon. H. Bruce Williams, m/c unanimous.
3. **Chesterfield.** Mr. Donaldson said onboarding administration costs are in their line items and again in the 5% admin. costs, which seems like it is double request for admin. costs. If this is severed, it is a great application. Motion to approve the application in the amount of \$419,741.52 with the \$2,500 in onboarding administrative costs severed by Mr. Donaldson and seconded by Chair Bedingfield, m/c unanimous.

Florence County and City of Florence. Both political subdivisions listed House of Hope as a partner. Vice Chair Bussells expressed concern about the real estate portion, recommended severing this, and opened the floor to the board for comment. Mr. Chappell asked Staff how much of this request is for real estate

and how much is non real estate, and Staff responded that approximately \$69-70,000 is for the mortgage for the year, and the remainder of the request is for salaries, a handicapped vehicle, and other expenses. Mr. Donaldson also expressed concern about the mortgage cost but was fine with the personnel and vehicle costs. Vice Chair Bussells said funds should go to direct services rather than paying for real estate and mortgage payments. Attorney Libet added the potential property is mixed use and SCORF cannot fund the other uses. If the request is simply pertaining to homes that are solely used for an approved strategy, then it is acceptable. Staff said they will follow up with entity to ask if the mortgage is for existing female resident housing that will be used for transitional housing as a future goal of expansion. Mr. Chappell said the RV park is intricately linked and the Board should not fund an RV park. There was a Board discussion about how the group bought 140 acres and what they would do with it. Mr. Donaldson asked if they could make another revision to their application. Staff noted it could be partially approved and they could revise the real estate portion. Discussion with Hon. H. Bruce Williams and Vice Chair Bussells regarding decisions that are settlement based as funds must be used for opioid abatement issues and that would allow the Board to be good stewards of funds.

Vice Chair Aditi Bussells: "And I will say to Steve's comment earlier, I certainly as the Vice Chair, and as an elected official, don't want to set the precedent that there's going to be any political pressure that sways us in any way. We are an independent body that was tasked with this job. And so to me, that's something we can remove because we're going to make decisions based on what is in the settlement, and what we believe is best for South Carolina, not because so and so emailed us or called us. And so I want to make that clear to people that are listening as well as all of us and I think you all are handling this really well in terms of making sure that our applicants are successful, and that we're able to be good stewards of those funds. I'd like to make a motion for us to go ahead and approve this application while severing the mortgage payment and ask the applicant to give us a more clear understanding of how much of that property will be dedicated towards engaging individuals that have an opioid issue or in treatment or recovery, and then we can perhaps, in March, take a look at how we could support that, and how we could support a portion of their real estate. Can I get a second?"

Motion to approve application in the amount of \$250,000 for the City of Florence and \$374,052 for the County of Florence with \$56,252 for utilities and \$69,696 for the mortgage severed by Vice Chair Bussells and seconded by Mr. Chappell, m/c unanimous.

Hon. H. Bruce Williams said that applications should provide as much clarity as possible regarding real estate. Mr. Chappell added that he also wants to see property history to ensure arm's length transactions.

Motion that any future applications involving mortgages will include an appraisal of the property and additional information including property history by Mr. Donaldson and seconded by Ms. Montgomery, m/c unanimous.

Vice Chair Bussells asked Staff to put this on the SCORF website and get this new information to the applicants.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:39 PM.