

**RESOLUTION****ROCK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Planning & Development  
Committee  
INITIATED BY



1/24/2022  
DATE DRAFTED

**\*\*Modifying the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Small Business and Nonprofit Grants Program**

**WHEREAS**, the County Board of Supervisors passed Resolution 21-7A-283 on July 8, 2021 to create an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Small Business and Nonprofit Grant Program; and

**WHEREAS**, the intent and related spirit of this grant program is to provide a financial lift to applicants that have been negatively impacted by the ongoing economic disruptions caused by the pandemic, particularly for disadvantaged groups and those lacking the capacities to make successful funding applications for COVID-19 relief; and

**WHEREAS**, implementing modifications to the grant program's eligibility requirements will assist with driving this much needed financial assistance to businesses and nonprofits throughout Rock County; and

**WHEREAS**, the presence of COVID-19 continues to demonstrate the need for creative, as well as different, financial tools that contribute in a positive manner toward establishing a resilient, strong and sustainable economy; and

**WHEREAS**, the County of Rock has a responsibility, as well as an opportunity, to assist its small business and nonprofit community by modifying this existing ARPA grant program; and

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Rock County Board of Supervisors, duly assembled this 27th day of January, 2022, authorizes and approves the modification of the ARPA Small Business and Nonprofit Grant Program.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the amended eligibility criteria are that an applicant must be:

- independently owned, with their main office in Rock County;
- an existing small business that operates as a limited liability company, partnership, independent contractor, a sole proprietorship, or a 501(c)(3) nonprofit;
- an organization with less than \$1 million in revenue and/or sales annually;
- an organization with at least 1 (one) employee, but no more than 25;
- an organization that was in operation prior to March 15, 2020;
- an organization that experienced a decrease in sales, revenue, income and/or profits since 2020 due to the pandemic;
- an organization that has not obtained more than \$20,000 of direct, pandemic-related relief from the federal PPP and/or EIDL programs, or any combination thereof;
- compliant, and up to date, with any outstanding tax obligations, and is not on the Wisconsin Department of Administration's ineligible vendor list under s.77.66, Wis. Stats; is not on the Wisconsin Department of Correction's sex offender list; and is not on the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's debarred contractor list.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the County Board continues to delegate the administrative, fiscal and program management of this modified ARPA Small Business and Nonprofit Grant Program to the County's Planning, Economic and Community Development Department.

FISCAL NOTE:

The grant program is funded through the County's ARPA allocation. No additional funds are being requested.

Sherry Oja  
Finance Director

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:

These changes are consistent with ARPA guidelines and will increase the access of small businesses and nonprofits to these funds.

Josh Smith  
County Administrator

LEGAL NOTE:

The County Board is authorized to take this action pursuant to Wis. Stat. §§ 59.01, 59.02, 59.03, and 59.51. The County Board is authorized pursuant to the ARPA to articulate appropriate conditions on ARPA expenditures so long as those conditions fall within qualified ARPA expenditures.

Richard D. Greenlee  
Corporation Counsel

**Committee Action**

Planning & Development Committee

Planning & Development Committee recommended this resolution for approval by a unanimous voice vote.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

### Modifying the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Small Business and Nonprofit Grants Program

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, various programs – at all governmental levels – have been developed and deployed to provide financial relief for the business community. Since things remain extremely fluid, program rules, regulations and guidance are continually evolving. Moreover, while improvements have been made with respect to increasing funding access, federal data demonstrates that gaps among constituency groups exist. As a result, there remains a demand for COVID-19 related relief; and this is particularly true as new pandemic variants continue to sweep across the nation.

As a result, this current Resolution modifies the original July 8, 2021 Resolution (#21-7A-283) by expanding the overall small business and nonprofit eligibility criteria, as it concerns organizational structure and industry-sector representation. While small businesses engaged in hospitality, retail, and business / personal services (along with nonprofits structured as 501(c)(3) that are primarily focused on cultural, social and/or tourism related functions) remain a priority for the grant program, these modifications open-up funding for construction, manufacturing and various other industry sectors that were originally categorized as ineligible. That said, small businesses primarily engaged in gambling, tobacco, vaping, alcohol, or firearms sales; payday lending, lobbying, multi-level marketing or direct sales; and financial, religious, and educational institutions remain ineligible for this grant program.

Another modification addresses the program's original strict prohibition as it concerns the receipt of federal PPP and/or SBA EIDL funding. As such, this Resolution establishes a not-to-exceed figure of \$20,000.

While this Resolution does not change the types of materials, information or data required to make an application – it does recognize the program's forward, as well as backward, looking lens. For example, an applicant will be required to supply 2021 information and data, along with comparable materials from 2020 and 2019, to demonstrate the pandemic's ongoing negative impacts to its business and/or nonprofit. Feedback from any number of sources suggests the small business and nonprofit community's COVID-19's recovery remain a work in-progress. Nonetheless, the program's grant award formula of one dollar of negative COVID-19 impact(s) to one dollar of grant funding (i.e., capped at \$10,000 per eligible applicant) remains unchanged.

These modifications do not alter the original Resolution's contracted small business consulting services, which are available from the University of Wisconsin's Small Business Development Center; nor do they impact the supportive (self-serve) services available through the Arrowhead Library System. Direct access to these customizable, free-of-charge services represents an important and value-added tool that grant applicants and recipients – as well as applicants to and borrowers of the County's COVID-19 Emergency Small Business Loan Fund – can utilize to ensure organizational resiliency, strength, and sustainability.