

\$800,000:

Assisting local small businesses

Citrus County Chamber of Commerce
Presentation to Citrus County Board of County Commissioners
February 9, 2021



Issue:

- \$4.7 million in remaining CARES Act funds were transferred to County general fund when they could not be spent within the State-imposed deadline
 - General fund is more restrictive than CARES Act
 - General fund spending on businesses is limited to economic development or business expansion (i.e., not for business retention)

Florida Constitution:

- Article VII, Section 10:
 - *Neither the state nor any county, school district, municipality, special district, or agency of any of them, shall become a joint owner with, or stockholder of, or give, lend or use its taxing power or credit to aid any corporation, association, partnership or person...*
 - From: Opinion Letter to Citrus County Administrator, November 13, 2020, from Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson, Attorneys at Law

Florida Statutes:

- Section 125.045: grants counties the power to use public funds to assist private businesses so long as it furthers “economic development.”
 - (2) *The governing body of a county may expend public funds to attract and retain business enterprises, and the use of public funds toward the achievement of such economic development goals constitutes a public purpose. The provisions of this chapter which confer powers and duties on the governing body of a county, including any powers not specifically prohibited by law which can be exercised by the governing body of a county, must be liberally construed in order to effectively carry out the purposes of this section.*
 - (3) *For the purposes of this section, it constitutes a public purpose to expend public funds for economic development activities, including, but not limited to, developing or improving local infrastructure, issuing bonds to finance or refinance the cost of capital projects for industrial or manufacturing plants, leasing or conveying real property, and making grants to private enterprises for the expansion of businesses existing in the community or the attraction of new businesses to the community.*
 - From: Opinion Letter to Citrus County Administrator, November 13, 2020, from Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson, Attorneys at Law

Issue:

- Money can no longer be spent in the manner for which it was originally intended under CARES; i.e., to assist existing businesses that have been economically hurt due to pandemic

BOCC vote of December 1, 2020

- Allocated \$1,000,000 to Chamber to support local businesses

Chamber submitted Proposal for initial \$200,000

- PPE Micro Grant for Businesses – Total Allocation:
\$100,000
 - For business Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) expenses up to \$2,500 incurred between March 1 and December 15, 2020.
 - Small Business Retrofit / Infrastructure – Total Allocation:
\$100,000
 - For business adaptation and modification expenses related to COVID-19. Grant is up to \$10,000 for expenses incurred between March 1 and December 15, 2020.
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- Result: BOCC determined they could administer these grants

Remaining \$800,000

- Chamber Committee Members:
 - Tabitha Wells, Accountant, Wells Business Solutions and Chamber Board Chair
 - Don Taylor, President, Economic Development Authority for Citrus County
 - Jim Green, SCORE Nature Coast
 - Dr. Jim Harvey, Acting President (ret.), College of Central Florida
 - Carl Flanagan, MBA, Banker
 - Chamber Staff: Josh Wooten, President/CEO; Ardath Prendergast, Vice President / Operations & BRE
- Task:
 - To recommend a plan to allocate the remaining \$800,000 within general funds parameters re economic development / business expansion

Rehire Furloughed Employees

Allocation:	\$300,000
Purpose:	For businesses to rehire employees furloughed due to COVID; up to \$2,000 for each rehire
Suggested timeframe:	Deadline: 12/31/21
Suggested Criteria:	<u>Local businesses</u> who furloughed 1 or more employees due to COVID for a minimum of 2 months between 3/15/20 – 1/31/21, and during a period not covered by PPP. Eligible for up to \$2,000 per rehire; rehire must be at least 6 months (documented).
Who:	County (or Chamber, as a subcontractor)

Workforce Expansion

Allocation:	\$300,000
Purpose:	For businesses that expand their workforce with new hires; up to \$2,000 for each hire
Suggested timeframe:	Deadline: Until funds exhausted
Suggested Criteria:	<u>Local businesses</u> with targeted industries that increase their workforce after 3/1/20 and hire at or above prevailing wage for the position. Eligible up to \$2000 per new hire.
Who:	County Economic Development Director

Fiber to Inverness Airport

Allocation:	\$50,000
Purpose:	Installation of fiber to the Inverness Airport / Business Park
Suggested timeframe:	Issue funds upon BOCC approval; earmark to economic development fund
Suggested Criteria:	Propose allocating \$50,000 be moved into the County's economic development fund to be earmarked toward this project.
Who:	County / Economic Development Director

“Shop Local” Education Campaign

Allocation:	\$50,000
Purpose:	“Shop Local” Business Education / Marketing Campaign
Suggested timeframe:	Issue funds upon BOCC approval; spend funds within 6 months
Suggested Criteria:	To advertise and educate our local citizens on the advantages of shopping local
Who:	Chamber *The Chamber is uniquely qualified to take on this role and could leverage matching dollars to increase reach and awareness. This campaign would be branded as “Brought to you by the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners and the Citrus County Chamber of Commerce.”



College of Central Florida

Allocation:	\$40,000
Purpose:	For reeducation of displaced employees / education of new employees
Suggested timeframe:	Issue funds upon BOCC approval
Suggested Criteria:	To be spent in highest impact programs; i.e., nursing, digital media technology, etc.
Who:	College of Central Florida



Withlacoochee Technical College

Allocation:	\$40,000
Purpose:	For retraining of displaced employees / training of new employees
Suggested timeframe:	Issue funds upon BOCC approval
Suggested Criteria:	To be spent in highest impact programs; i.e., welding, construction trades, auto mechanics, etc.
Who:	Withlacoochee Technical College



Citrus Construction Academy Mobile Shop

Allocation:	\$5,000
Purpose:	Creating a workforce for the construction trades
Suggested timeframe:	Issue funds upon BOCC approval
Suggested Criteria:	To be used to outfit the repurposed school bus as a mobile shop to expose kids to the benefits of learning a trade
Who:	Citrus Construction Academy



SCORE Nature Coast

Allocation:	\$12,500
Purpose:	For SCORE Nature Coast to assist struggling and/or expanding businesses through mentorship
Suggested timeframe:	Issue funds upon BOCC approval
Suggested Criteria:	Per SCORE's internal guidelines to assist businesses that are struggling and /or need to re-envision their marketing / business plans
Who:	SCORE *SCORE has been invaluable during COVID to help our businesses navigate through the red tape of grants and loans. Over \$129 million has come into Citrus County as a result. This money would help them continue to assist businesses



Florida Virtual Entrepreneur Center (FLVEC)

Allocation:	\$2,500
Purpose:	Toward sponsorship of FLVEC to continue to highlight and promote local small businesses
Suggested timeframe:	Issue funds upon BOCC approval
Suggested Criteria:	FLVEC has criteria to feature local entrepreneurs on their website.
Who:	<p>Florida Virtual Entrepreneur Center</p> <p>*FLVEC is an online directory connecting Florida's entrepreneurs and providing small business resources and educational webinars. Citrus County has participated in FLVEC for 2 years through sponsorship contributions by Citrus County, Chamber, SCORE, EDACC, CCBA, CareerSource CLM</p>



Florida Virtual Entrepreneur Center (FLVEC)

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Hillary Dube & Ross Rivkin

[HNR Gunworks](#)

Inverness

“ After our article on FLVEC.com we saw an increase in business from new customers and previous customers! I sent out a link to the article to everyone in our e-mail blast list and the response was great. I believe that this website and write up helps small businesses like ourselves as it brings our brand and image to life. It is just myself and my husband running our gun shop and as young business professionals I believe reminding clients of our local small business roots is important. Keep up the good work and thank you! ”

Questions?