
Subject: FW: <EXTERNAL-SENDER>Ordinance 2023-19-51

From: Willy Dunne <wdunne907@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 12:29 PM
To: Turner, Michele <MicheleTurner@kpb.us>
Subject: <EXTERNAL-SENDER>Ordinance 2023-19-51

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the KPB system. Please use caution when responding or providing information. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender, know the content is safe and were expecting the communication.

Hi Michele, would it be possible to print this out and distribute to Assembly members before the Finance Committee meeting?

Dear Assembly Members,

I'm writing to comment on Ordinance 2023-19-51 that would modify the existing Opioid Settlement Fund grant program.

While I would love to see as much money as possible distributed to as many valid entities as possible, the fact that the Opioid Settlement only provides a limited amount of funding for Opioid Abatement services requires us as a Borough to spend that money wisely and efficiently to prevent, treat and support recovery from Opioid Use Disorder (OUD).

The State of Alaska has published a schedule of payments to be received over an 18 year period by the State of Alaska. The Kenai Peninsula Borough will receive a fixed percentage of a portion of those funds and I would strongly suggest the Assembly look at developing a long term strategy of abatement as opposed to reacting haphazardly to payments as they trickle in.

It would also encourage the Assembly to consider some sort of cooperative funding program as opposed to the competitive grants currently in place. When the OSF grant program was first proposed I suggested that 5 awards was too many due to the limited nature of the funds available. Now, the Assembly is considering expanding to 8 awards which will dilute the effectiveness of any single program. I believe that some sort of cooperative grant or RFP program could result in more effective use of the funds to help save lives and improve the lives of those suffering from OUD, **along with** their families and our communities as a whole.

For example, two programs in the Borough, Megan's Place (harm reduction) and Kachemak Bay Recovery Connection (recovery support) currently compete against each other for OSF grant funds, but with a cooperative funding program, they could join forces to share a facility space, supplies, staffing (such as peer support and administrative), etc. Additionally, not all programs require the same amount of funds to accomplish opioid abatement strategies but the grant program only divides the funds equally among successful applicants.

Before you approve Ordinance 2023-19-51, which changes the rules of the grant program after the process was carried out (while eligible entities applied in good faith under a set of parameters that now would be altered). I respectfully ask you to consider a number of things:

- What is the optimum number of awards given the variable (although predictable) annual funding?
- How many eligible entities are there in the VBorough? This year there were 8 applicants but I would estimate there are dozens of eligible entities
- Would a cooperative funding program be more effective and efficient than a competitive grant program?
- Should grants (if you choose to go that route) be distributed on a regional basis in order to provide services to all Borough residents? As an example, the State of Alaska has chosen to distribute OSF grant funds to 3 entities per region among the 7 different regions in Alaska. Perhaps the KPB should choose a regional approach with Central, South and East regions each receiving 2 or 3 awards. In order to provide per capita equality served by regional awards, Assembly Districts could be a basis determining regions since each District contains roughly the same number of residents.

Finally, thank you for allocating and distributing the Opioid Settlement Funds. I was a member of the KPB Assembly when we chose to sign on to the Settlement in order to receive funds to abate the Opioid Epidemic. I also work directly with individuals and families affected by OUD and see the tragic impacts of the disease on a daily basis. I am grateful that we now have some funding and tools to help those currently suffering and those who will be in years to come.

Sincerely,
Willy Dunne
Fritz Creek, AK
907-299-6226