



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

4B
Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: February 13, 2024

Title of Item: Business Development & Recreation Grant: Award funding

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION ONLY	Action Requested: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft)	<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing* <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i>
Submitted by: Mark Jeffers		Department: Administration
Presenter (Name and Title): Mark Jeffers, Economic Development Coordinator		Estimated Time Needed: 5 minutes
Summary of Issue: <p>The Aitkin County Economic Development Committee has received and reviewed grant funding requests for the Business Development & Recreation Grant Program. Grant applications and grant award summary are included.</p> <p>The Committee was unanimous on the recommendation. The Committee recommends and requests approval to award the following grant at this time:</p> <p>Nature Rocks, Long Lake Foundation \$2,000.00</p> <p>The purpose of this grant fund is to leverage county funds, private funds and volunteer efforts to increase small business development activities in Aitkin County, with an emphasis on increasing sustained tourism and recreation activities. Several organizations may submit a single application or organizations may apply individually. Organizations need only to commit one hundred dollars (\$100) in good faith to ensure commitment to the grant request. The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners, have approved funding to be used to directly impact the Community of Aitkin County by executing the Aitkin County Business Development & Recreation Grant.</p>		
Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:		
Recommended Action/Motion: Economic Development requests approval of a motion to award the recommended grants.		
Financial Impact: <i>Is there a cost associated with this request?</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$</i> <i>Is this budgeted?</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>Please Explain:</i> This funding is budgeted through the ARPA funding.		



Application for Aitkin County Business Development & Recreation Grant Program January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024

1. Grant requests should be submitted by EMAIL to:
mark.jeffers@co.aitkin.mn.us, subject line: BD&R2024 or
by mail to:
Mark Jeffers
Aitkin County Government Center
307 2nd Street NW, Room 316
Aitkin, MN 56431
2. Funding recommendations will be considered at the regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Aitkin County Economic Development Committee. Application deadline is **May 31, 2024**.
3. Committee recommendations will be submitted to the Aitkin County Board of Commissioners for final approval.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Project Name: Nature Rocks! A Fundraiser for Conservation

Date(s) of Program: Friday, June 21, 2024

Location of Program: Aitkin County Fairgrounds

Organization/Community Name: Long Lake Foundation benefiting the Long Lake Conservation Center

Person in Charge of Project: Bob Marcum, President Dave McMillan, Manager LLCC

Organization Mailing Address (Street Name or P.O. Box or Route and Box # and City and Zip Code):

28952 438th Ln Palisade, MN 56469

Contact Person's Phone #: 218-768-4653

Contact Person's Email: rmarcum@llcfoundation.org; dave@longlakecc.org

Description/focus/purpose of your organization:

The Long Lake Conservation Foundation is 100% volunteer-operated. We see value in providing people, especially youth, with resources to learn about nature and understand the importance of conservation. The foundation's purpose is to raise, receive, and appropriate funds with a goal to enhance environmental education at Long Lake Conservation Center.

The center is focused on living connected to the natural world. They inspire a deep appreciation of nature through hands-on, discovery based learning. Those that experience Long Lake Conservation Center develop skills and an appreciation for the natural world around them in the hopes of building a lifelong stewardship of the environment.

FUNDING:

Amount requested from Aitkin County \$ 2,000
(Minimum \$100.00, maximum request is 2,000.00). The Economic Development Committee may recommend to the Board of Commissioners to increase or decrease the amount awarded at their discretion. The Aitkin County Board of Commissioners grants the final approval for funding.

Amount of your organization's match \$2,000

Total projected budget \$37,963



PROJECT/EVENT DESCRIPTION: Be concise and complete; attach supporting information if needed.

Nature Rocks! A Concert for Conservation is a scholarship fundraising event headlined by the Kentucky Headhunters with Pert Near Sandstone and Whiskey River. This is the major summer fundraising event for the Long Lake Conservation Foundation. All profits from this event will go to support Long Lake Conservation Center so that youth to attend Outdoor School and summer camp. This is the concert's third year. We will continue to support our local community through utilizing area contractors and vendors. You can learn more about Nature Rocks at www.naturerocksconcert.com.

What do you hope to accomplish, how it will be done and specifically how the grant funds will be used?

There are a number of goals for this event. The primary goal is to raise money in support of Long Lake Conservation Center's environmental education mission. We are selling tickets to this event, seeking sponsors, grants, building local partnerships, and selling t-shirts and concessions. The budgeted projection is to raise \$20,000. This will be distributed to up to 3,500 youth during the 2023-24 school year. Other goals include building awareness for Long Lake Conservation Center's environmental education mission, and being an active part of life in Aitkin County, supporting its burgeoning entertainment-based brand. The grant funds will be used to execute the concert, including paying for band, stage, facilities, port-a-potties, media and incidentals. The event will be marketed on radio the Hubbard radio network and KKIN, press releases, paid newspaper advertisement, social media posts and paid digital media.

Explain how your project will bring visitors to or provide a positive and sustainable economic impact on Aitkin County.

This is the third year of Nature Rocks. We have partnered with Huff Entertainment Solutions to take this event to a new level, maximizing attendance and community involvement. Huff Entertainment projects an attendance of between 1,000 and 2,000 people for this show. Area businesses, including bars, restaurants and hotels directly benefitted from the concert. The event also directly paid numerous Aitkin County businesses, including Timber Septic, Hometown Lumber and Antoine Electric. Other businesses, including Block North and others, profited from providing services at the concert. We estimate that approximately 400 people from outside of the County will attend the concert. At previous events, we heard numerous comments about how "cool" Aitkin is. We anticipate that this year's event will similarly benefit Aitkin County.

List target audience:


The primary target markets are Aitkin, Brainerd, Grand Rapids, Duluth, St. Cloud and, to a lesser degree, the Twin Cities metro area.



4. **PROJECT BUDGET:** in the space below, provide a budget for the entire event.

Category	Grant Funds	Applicant Funds	Total
Bands	\$0	\$28,250	\$28,250
Sound, lights and stage	\$1,000	\$2,700	\$3,700
Huff Entertainment	\$0	\$1,413	\$1,413
Fairground Rental	\$500	\$500	\$1,000
Advertising	\$0	\$1,500	\$1,500
Port-a-Potties	\$500	\$500	\$1,000
Culligan Water Station	\$0	\$100	\$100
Insurance	\$0	\$500	\$500
Miscellaneous/incidentals	\$0	\$500	\$500
TOTALS	\$2,000	\$35,963	\$37,963

Contact Signature:

Name  *David McMillan* Date: 12-15-23

Business Development and Recreation Grant

Year	#	Facility Name	Project Name	City	\$ requested	\$ Awarded
2024	1	Long Lake Foundation	Nature Rocks	Palisade	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
	2	Growth Innovations/Aitkin, McGregor Chamber	Workforce Summit	County	\$ 2,000	
	3	Habitat for Humanity	Toolin' Tour	County	\$ 1,200	
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\$ 5,200 \$ 2,000
 \$ 18,000.00