

**MINUTES OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'
SPECIAL MEETING OF AUGUST 31, 2021 AT 10 A.M.**

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met in special session on August 31, 2021, in the Commission Chambers, 200 College Street, Room 326 in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 10 a.m. where and when the following business was transacted:

The Chairman called the meeting to order with the following members present:

Brownie Newman, Chairman
Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Commissioner
Amanda Edwards, Commissioner
Robert Pressley, Commissioner
Parker Sloan, Commissioner
Terri Wells, Commissioner
Al Whitesides, Vice Chair

Staff present: Avril Pinder, County Manager; Sybil Tate, Assistant County Manager; Dakisha Wesley, Assistant County Manager; Jennifer Barnette, Budget Director; Taylor Jones, Emergency Services Director; Nathan Pennington, Planning Director; Rachael Nygaard, Strategic Partnerships Director; Tim Love, Intergovernmental Relations; Lamar Joyner, Clerk to the Board; Michael Frue, Senior Staff Attorney

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and acknowledged the passing of firefighter Garrett Presnell of Black Mountain Fire Department.

- **Tropical Storm Fred Response**

Taylor Jones, Emergency Services Director, explained the flooding and emergency response due to Tropical Storm Fred on August 17th. They answered 170 calls to 911, saved over 80 people, and assisted the rescue team in Haywood County.

- **Tropical Storm Fred Emergency Assistance Needs**

Nathan Pennington, Planning Director, stated that staff conducted windshield damage assessment and proposed addressing neighborhood access for removal of storm debris in key locations. EMS, Planning, Building Inspections, and Agriculture & Land Resources staff will be consulted during the evaluation of each location.

Vice Chair Whitesides moved to approve the budget amendment for the allocation of up to \$500,000 to address emergency impacts from Tropical Storm Fred. Commissioner Beach-Ferrara seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

- **ARPA / Local Recovery Fund Discussion**

Rachel Nygaard, Strategic Partnerships Director, explained the American Rescue Plan Act/Local Recovery Fund with an overview of the process. The overview included information about the request for proposals (141), consideration of initial awards (\$11,309,495). Next steps were discussed along with the associated timeline. The Commissioners discussed the process of hearing proposals from applicants and the community.

Vice Chair Whitesides motioned to move forward with the process of allocating the first half of \$50.7 million funds for approved proposals. Commissioner Pressley seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

- **Closed Session**

Commissioner Pressley moved to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a) (3) to hear legal matters and the pending trial in the matter of The Estate of Lila Marie Pickering, through personal representative, Gregory S. McIntyre v. Buncombe County DSS (18 CVS 3971; Buncombe County Superior Court) with no possible action anticipated following the closed session. Commissioner Beach-Ferrara seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

The Board heard the legal update and had discussion regarding the matters. No action was taken.

Commissioner Sloan moved to go back into open session. Commissioner Edwards seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

Vice Chair Whitesides moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Beach-Ferrara seconded and the motion passed 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 12:41 p.m.



LAMAR JOYNER, CLERK
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



BROWNIE NEWMAN, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Tropical Storm Response

Presented by

Taylor Jones, RN, NRP

Director

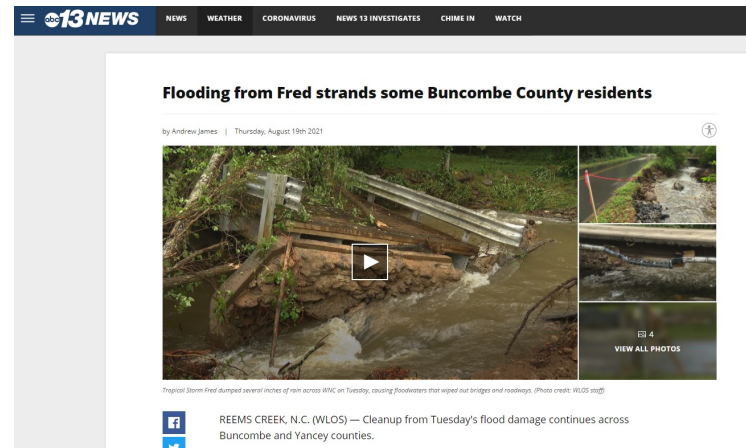
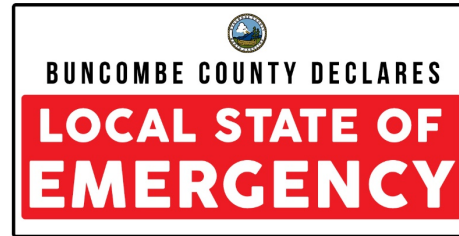
Emergency Services Department



Emergency Situation

August 17:

- 5.57 inches of rain fell due to Tropical Storm Fred
- Heaviest rainfall in 50 years
- Swannanoa River crested at 14.7 feet
- French Broad crested at 12.7 feet
- Multiple roadways underwater



Emergency Services Response Timeline

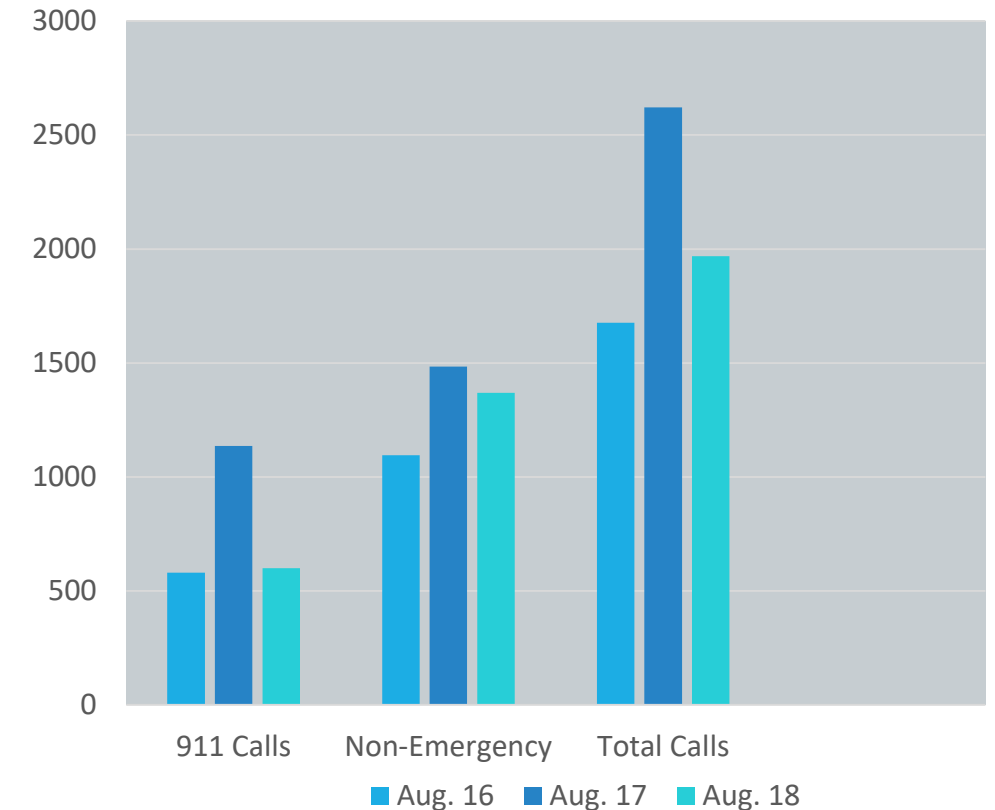
August 17:

- 4 p.m. - County and City government to send employees home early to ensure their safety
- 5 p.m. – Off duty emergency staff report
- 5:30 p.m. – EMS units report to aid Haywood County as a part of an Ambulance Strike Team request
- 7 p.m. – All ambulances fully staffed
- 8 p.m. – Shelter in place in effect for Grovemont, Red Cross opens shelter at Trinity Baptist Church
- 10:08 p.m. – Grovemont shelter in place lifted
- More than 80 swiftwater rescues by USAR Task Force 2 & Fire Depts.



Calls to 911 Center

- Answered 170 911 calls between 4-5 p.m. on 8/17
- Total calls on 8/17 (911 & non-emergency) were 2,621
- 80% of calls answered within 15 seconds
- No calls rolled over or re-routed
- Responding not only to flooding calls, but respiratory distress (COVID) calls



Emergency Communications

Shelter in Place Messaging

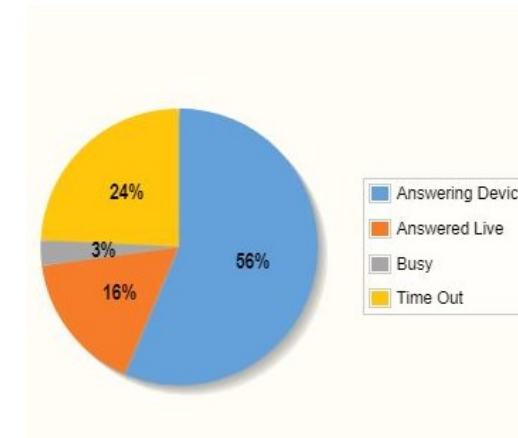
CodeRed –

- Calls to 198,840 residents
- Texts to 7,828 residents
- Emails to 3,739 residents
- Telecommunications for the Deaf (TDD) to 622 residents

Messaging in two languages

NextDoor Emergency Alerts – 21,016 impressions

Facebook Alerts – 28,130 reached



< Urgent Alert

This is a post from a Local Agency.

Buncombe County Government
Director of Communications and Public Engagement Lillian Govus · 1w

Emergency Alert. Buncombe County Emergency Services has multiple reports of evacuations taking place across our community. A temporary shelter is open at Trinity Baptist Church at 216 Shelburne Road for those who have been evacuated or need to evacuate from their homes. Duke Energy reports 7,064 people currently without power.

Posted to **Subscribers of Buncombe County Government**

85 Neighbors 32 Comments



Disaster Recovery

- Hotline established to track volume, with more than 300 calls – Candler and Barnardsville areas hardest hit
 - 201 reports of road damage
 - 147 reports of bridge damage
 - 107 reports of home/building damage
 - Approximately \$100,000 in damage to Buncombe County parks
 - 11 schools and 2 playgrounds in BCS sustained damage
- Hotline staffed by multiple departments, including HHS Ready Team
- Planning Department, Emergency Services & Fire Departments partnered to perform damage assessments
- Tax, Recreation Services, and Building Inspections helped Planning with damage assessment
- EMS/USAR Task Force 2 deployed to Haywood County to assist with rescue/recovery



Disaster Recovery

- Providing damage assessment information to NCEM for submission of disaster declaration request to FEMA



Discussion





Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: 8/31/2021

Department: Planning Department

Presenter(s): Nathan Pennington

Contact(s): Nathan Pennington

Subject: TS Fred: Emergency Assistance Needs

Brief Summary:

Staff has conducted windshield and damage assessment for the impacts of TS Fred. Based on input from Emergency Services, Planning, Building Inspections, and Ag and Land Resources there are immediate life safety issues that need to be addressed in advance of a formal State or Presidential Disaster Declaration. Staff proposes addressing neighborhood access points to allow for emergency services vehicles to enter a neighborhood and removal of storm debris to alleviate impacts to public health and safety.

Staff proposes using the following criteria to determine which access sites should be repaired immediately. The access point should be repaired, if it

1. Creates a public health and safety issue, and;
2. Impacts an area with 10 or more owner occupied dwelling units served, and;
3. Is served by a single access point that provides vehicular ingress and egress to the neighborhood, and;
4. Has been significantly damaged and cannot be used by emergency vehicles, and;
5. Is not managed by a third party, and;
6. The median residential property tax value served by the access point is below the median residential property tax value.

Staff proposes using the following criteria to determine where stream debris should be removed immediately. The stream debris should be removed, if it

1. Creates a public health and safety issue, and;

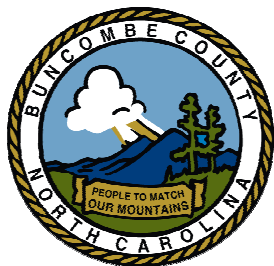
2. Severely threatens a residential and/or commercial structure(s) and/or infrastructure, and;
3. Is in a stream that is not managed by a third party, and;
4. The median residential property tax value impacted by the stream is below the median residential property tax value.

Emergency Services, Planning, Building Inspections, and Ag and Land resources staff will be consulted during the evaluation of each location.

Staff recommends allocation \$500,000 to address immediate life safety issues created by TS Fred. If a State and Presidential Disaster Declaration is declared, all funds will be reimbursed.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action: Discuss criteria and provide staff with feedback. Allocate up to \$500,000 to address emergency impacts from TS Fred.

County Manager's comments and Recommendation: Manager recommends approval as presented.



ORDINANCE #21-08-09

BUNCOMBE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
Grant Projects Ordinance

BOARD MEETING DATE: August 31, 2021

WHEREAS, the Budget Director recommends and the Board now desires to amend the FY2021-2022 Grants Projects outlined below in Exhibit "A" to the budget,
NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners for the County of Buncombe as follows:

1. That the FY2021-2022 amendments listed in Exhibit A below be hereby adopted.
2. That this ordinance shall be effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED this 31st day of August, 2021.

Requesting Department: Budget

Budget Amendment Item: Tropical Storm Emergency Assistance Needs

Description:

Staff has conducted windshield and damage assessment for the impacts of TS Fred. Based on input from Emergency Services, Planning, Building Inspections, and Ag and Land Resources there are immediate life safety issues that need to be addressed in advance of a formal State or Presidential Disaster Declaration. Staff proposes addressing neighborhood access points to allow for emergency services vehicles to enter a neighborhood and removal of storm debris to alleviate impacts to public health and safety. Estimates are still being gathered and at this time the request is an amount up to \$500,000.

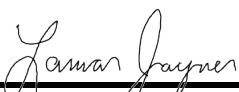
Funding Source:

It is anticipated to pursue state and or federal aid for reimbursement.

Exhibit A: Account Description	Increase (Decrease)	
	Revenues	Expenditures
Tropical Storm Fred Assistance expenditures Restricted Intergovernmental	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000
TOTAL	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000

ATTEST:

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR
THE COUNTY OF BUNCOMBE:**


Clerk to the Board

By: 
Chairman of the Board

Debris removal

**Cane
Creek**

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Debris removal

Pole Creek



Debris removal

**Bee Tree
Creek**



**Restore
Access**

**Ragsdale
Creek**





Coronavirus Fiscal Recovery Funds

Presented by



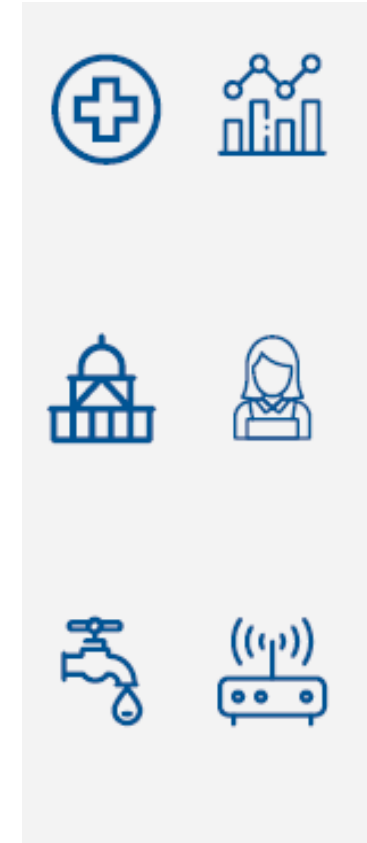
Today's Focus

- Recovery Fund Overview
- Request for Proposals
- Consideration of Initial Awards
- Next Steps



Recovery Funds

- American Rescue Plan Act federal aid to state & local governments
- Funds to turn the tide on the pandemic, address its economic fallout & lay the foundation for a strong and equitable recovery
- Direct, flexible funding
- Buncombe allocation - \$50.7 Million
- First half of funds received May 2021, second half scheduled for 2022
- Funds must be obligated by Dec 2024 & fully spent by Dec 2026

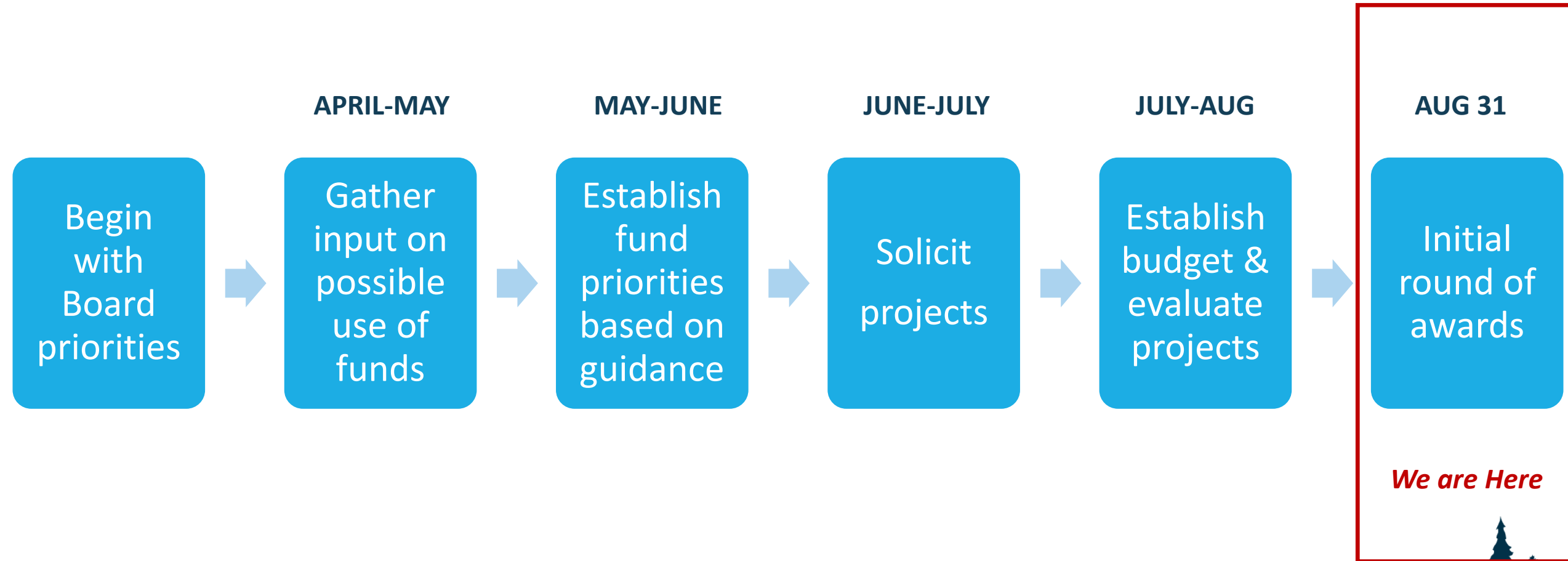


Eligible Uses of Funds

Eligible Category	Example Allowable Uses
1. Public Health	Vaccinations, Testing, Mental Health/Substance Abuse Services
2. Negative Economic Impacts	Household Assistance, Job Programs, Business Relief
3. Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities	Education Assistance, Healthy Environments, Housing Support, Homelessness Services
4. Premium Pay	Public Sector Employees
5. Infrastructure	Broadband, Water, Sewer
6. Revenue Replacement	n/a – Buncombe ineligible
7. Administrative	Staffing



Buncombe Process (First 6 months)



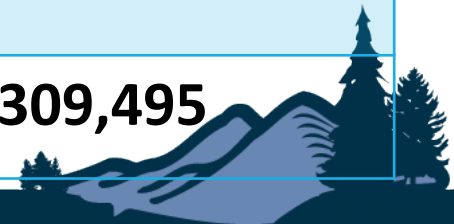
Request for Proposals

- Issued June 3, 2021; Closed July 15, 2021
- Outreach & engagement including funding workshop with nearly 200 registrants, new Recovery Funding website, multilingual access
- 141 proposals received
- Proposals screened for eligibility within RFP criteria, US Treasury Guidance & Public Purpose/Authority to Fund
- Proposals evaluated by staff review team based on criteria such as: project plan; equity impact; link to COVID-19; budget
- Commissioners received all proposals & provided individualized input on initial round of awards



Potential Initial Awards

Public Health	• COVID Vaccination Support: \$543,714 • COVID Contingency: \$1,000,000
Negative Economic Impacts	• One Buncombe Small Business Grants: \$500,000 • Center for Agricultural and Food Entrepreneurship, Building Capacity for Food Entrepreneurs: \$300,000
Disproportionately Impacted Communities	• Verner Center for Early Learning, Flexible Extended Care: \$419,309 • Homeward Bound, Permanent Supportive Housing Expansion, \$1,000,000 additional (total = \$3,000,000)
Premium Pay	• Buncombe County Incentive for COVID Risk: 1,040,000
Infrastructure	• Broadband Infrastructure Expansion: \$4,000,000
Administrative	• Fund Administration: \$606,472
	If Approved, Total Awards to Date as of 8/31/21: \$11,309,495



Next Steps

