Strategic Partnership Grants Committee
June 4, 2026
1:00 – 2:30 pm
200 College St, Room 310

In attendance:
Committee Members:
Present: Ann Flynn, Charlie Beck, Dede Styles, Mark Mickey, Ray Hemachandra

County Staff: Rachael Sawyer, Samantha Kirk, Angelyn Johnson

Opening Remarks
Ray Hemachandra called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes
Mark Mickey made a motion to approve the minutes from April 2, 2026, and Ann Flynn seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Old Business
- There was no old business.

New Business
- Grant approvals
  - The Board of Commissioners adopted the budget which included the Strategic Partnership funding recommendations.
  - Staff held grantee kickoff meetings this week, and contracting is underway.
  - There will be some type of committee/grantee connection in the fall. This may be a grantee showcase event or site visits.
- Committee membership
  - There are currently three vacancies on the committee. Mark Mickey and Ann Flynn are eligible for reappointment and have submitted their application.
  - Staff will forward committee members an email to share within their networks to help recruit applications for the committee.
- Presentation to Board of Commissioners
  - The committee's annual update to the Board of Commissioners is scheduled for August 18 at 5:00 pm.
  - Ray Hemachandra and Charlie Beck volunteered to be the presenters. Staff will schedule time with them to plan the presentation.
- Funding Process Reflection
  - Committee members feel the focus of Helene skewed applications
    - They would like clarification if the Helene focus was a one-time focus or if it will continue in future grant cycles.
    - Could consider phasing it out instead of hard stop.
    - Committee members feel it can be a need within the application without it having to be a scoring category.
    - Many applications were not truly Helene-related but they added a Helene aspect to their every day work due to the Helene requirement in the grant guidelines

        - The Helene focus attracted more organizations and more awareness to this fund
        - If continue the Helene focus, consider how direly affected the organization is and the evidence of it.
    - During individual grant consultations, give specifics to emphasize what need they emphasize in their application such as what need they serve, their track record, capacity to carry out project.
    - There were very few application for Option 1 ($10,000 or less)
        - Consider raising the amount for Option 1 to $20,000
        - Perhaps create a simpler application for Option 1
        - Consider small score incentive for grant program
    - The committee would like to keep the limit of only allowing one application per organization.
    - Consider implementing a cap for the number of consecutive years an organization can be funded
    - Smaller organizations can't afford grant writers. They need better opportunity to receive awards.
    - Consider if the requirement that an organization must be at least 2 years old to apply for funding should be re-implemented (unless there are catastrophic circumstances like COVID or Helene)
    - Clarify capacity question to have them focus on capacity to carry out proposed project (such as who is going to have what role)

Announcements:

- Due to some issues with the property The Blessing Project is renting, they are pivoting to just mobile and popup sites until they can secure a new location. Their budget and funded project will be adjusted to reflect this new focus.

Adjournment:

Charlie Beck made a motion to adjourn. Ann Flynn seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Next Meeting – There is no meeting in July. The next meeting will be August 6, 2026, 1:00 – 2:30 pm – 200 College St Room 310.