Strategic Partnership Grants Committee

Minutes

200 College St, Room 310
August 6, 2026, 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Board members: Ann Flynn, Charlie Beck, Dede Styles, Mark Mickey (virtual), Ray Hemachandra

Staff members: Rachael Sawyer, Samantha Kirk, Angelyn Johnson (virtual).

Opening Remarks

Ray Hemachandra called the meeting to order.

Minutes

Ann Flynn made a motion to approve the minutes from June 4, 2026. Charlie Beck seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Election of Officers

The current chair is Ray Hemachandra, vice chair is Ann Flynn, and the secretary role is vacant due to Liz Ward's departure from the committee. Ray Hemachandra asked for nominations or volunteers for these positions. Mark Mickey is interested and willing to serve as secretary. Ann Flynn is interested and willing to continue serving as vice-chair. Ray Hemachandra is interested and willing to continue serving as chair. Charlie Beck made a motion to elect Ray Hemachandra as Chair, Ann Flynn as Vice Chair and Mark Mickey as Secretary. Dede Styles seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Committee membership

There are currently three vacancies on the committee. Despite extensive outreach, we have only received two applications. Rachael will send information with the committee to share in their networks to help recruit. It was also suggested to share the information with UNCA's Lifelong Learning Institute.

Presentation to the Board of Commissioners

Ray Hemachandra and Charlie Beck reviewed the presentation they will share with the Board of Commissioners on August 18. The committee requested staff to provide the presenters with historical data to use as talking points regarding the number of applications received, number of awards,

dollar amount requested and dollar amount awarded for the past couple of grant cycles. The committee appreciated seeing the impact data included in the presentation.

Fall Gathering

The Committee discussed hosting a fall gathering in lieu of site visits this year. They enjoy the site visits and being able to learn more about the funded projects. However, a fall gathering would allow all committee members to interact with all organizations, and it would also allow organizations to network together and potentially identify possible collaborations. The committee suggested inviting Commissioners to the Fall Gathering. Charlie Beck made a motion to not conduct site visits this year, but instead, host a fall gathering. Ann Flynn seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Staff will begin planning the fall gathering and bring more information to the September meeting.

Announcements

Rachael Sawyer provided an update about Pisgah the Legal Services contract. Instead of specifying their Justice for All program, which only serves immigrants, the contract is for Civil Legal Services for low-income Buncombe residents. This allows funding to support all eligible county residents.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be September 3, 2026, from 1:00-2:30 pm at 200 College St, Room 310.

Adjournment

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