

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE April 9, 2021

TO Honorable Members of the Workforce, Education and Equity Committee

SUBJECT **Financial Empowerment Centers Planning Grant – Item 21-496, April 28, 2021**

The following Office of Community Care (OCC) item will be considered by City Council on the April 28, 2021 Agenda:

Item Number 21-496: Authorize the **(1)** acceptance of a grant from the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund, Inc. for the Financial Empowerment Center Planning Grant in the amount of \$20,000.00 to support a Financial Empowerment Centers planning project for the period February 1, 2021 through January 30, 2022; **(2)** receipt and deposit of funds in an amount not to exceed \$20,000.00 in the Financial Empowerment Centers Grant Fund; **(3)** establishment of appropriations in an amount not to exceed \$20,000.00 in the Financial Empowerment Centers Grant Fund; and **(4)** execution of the grant agreement and all terms, conditions, and documents required by the agreement - Not to exceed \$20,000.00 - Financing: Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund, Inc. Grant Funds

Background

The Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund, Inc. (CFE) is a 501(c)3 that offers funding and technical assistance to help improve the financial stability of low- and moderate-income households by embedding financial empowerment strategies into local government infrastructure.

This item authorizes a contract with CFE to provide technical assistance and expertise in the planning of a long-term strategy for Financial Empowerment Center implementation in Dallas. Dallas will join a vibrant national learning community as part of CFE's latest cohort in their Financial Empowerment Centers initiative.

In 2020, the City of Dallas received a grant from CFE for the Financial Navigators program, which launched in March of 2021. The Financial Navigators initiative helps residents deal with the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, providing remote assistance in navigating critical financial issues and making referrals to other social services and resources. Trained Financial Navigators provide structured guidance over the phone to help people strategize around supports for disruptions to their income and other financial concerns. They help residents triage financial issues, identify immediate action steps, and make referrals to other services. Assistance includes managing expenses through prioritizing payments and when to make them, as well as maximizing

DATE April 9, 2021

SUBJECT **FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT CENTERS PLANNING GRANT – ITEM 21-496, APRIL 28, 2021**

income through ensuring receipt of federal payments, unemployment benefits, and other resources.

Additionally, for Fiscal Year 2021, the City of Dallas allocated funding to launch a new Financial Empowerment Centers Pilot program. Financial Empowerment Centers provide access to key financial empowerment services for residents anchored in free one-on-one financial coaching from trained financial coaches. Office of Community Care (OCC) is in the process of identifying local organizations to serve as pilot program partners through a competitive solicitation process.

Program Alignment

This action enables the City to accept \$20,000.00 in funding and support from CFE to implement a strategic planning process for long-term Financial Empowerment Center implementation.

The multi-month CFE Financial Empowerment Centers planning process will run concurrently with the planned pilot service, previously discussed in this committee. The procurement process to determine pilot implementation partners is underway and authorization of contracts with pilot partners is anticipated to come before Council by the end of May. The pilot will enable the launch of 2 Financial Empowerment Centers, up to \$750,000.00, and support of multiple direct assistance providers, up to \$500,000.00, with the allocated \$1,250,000.00 budget.

Support from CFE through the Financial Empowerment Center Planning Grant will enable the City to leverage our local financial empowerment centers pilot and the expertise of a national thought-leader in financial empowerment programming and to learn along with a cohort of other Cities. CFE funds will be able to support specific needs, such as training, data collection practices and support, and others identified through the planning process that can strengthen the implementation of the City-funded pilot to ensure a long-term and effective program model that is replicable and sustainable into future years. Additionally, completion of the Financial Empowerment Centers Planning process will make the City of Dallas eligible to potentially apply for future grant opportunities offered by CFE.

The outcome of the project will be a thoughtful and comprehensive implementation strategy for short and longer-term service delivery, integrating the learnings of the Pilot.

DATE April 9, 2021

SUBJECT **FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT CENTERS PLANNING GRANT – ITEM 21-496, APRIL 28, 2021**

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact myself or Jessica Galleshaw, Director of Office of Community Care.



Kimberly Bizer Tolbert
Chief of Staff to the Manager

- c:
- | | |
|--|--|
| T.C. Broadnax, City Manager | Jon Fortune, Assistant City Manager |
| Chris Caso, City Attorney | Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager |
| Mark Swann, City Auditor | Dr. Eric A. Johnson, Chief of Economic Development and Neighborhood Services |
| Biliera Johnson, City Secretary | M. Elizabeth Reich, Chief Financial Officer |
| Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge | M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira, Chief of Equity and Inclusion |
| Majed A. Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager | Directors and Assistant Directors |