



DISCRETIONARY FUND COMMITTEE  
MEETING AGENDA, FEBRUARY 6, 2024 AT 12:00 PM  
HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE AND AT  
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA



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SUPPLEMENTAL MEETING

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – January 9, 2024
3. Public Comment (limited to three minutes)
4. New Business
  - a) Application Cover Letter
  - b) Verification of changes to Discretionary Fund Grant Application
5. Next Meeting – November 2024 (exact date to be determined by the Committee)
6. Adjournment

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DISCRETIONARY FUND COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES, JANUARY 9, 2024, AT 12:00 PM  
HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE AND AT  
FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA



The Discretionary Fund Committee convened at 12:02 p.m. on the above date to conduct a Wrap-up Meeting at the City Council Chambers, 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska and via teleconference with Council Member **Lonny Marney (Seat F)** presiding and with the following members in attendance:

Members Present: Thomas Alexander, Seat B  
Samantha Kirstein, Seat C  
Traci Gatewood, Seat D (remotely)  
Rachael Kvapil, Seat E

Members Absent: Karen Blackburn, Seat A

Also Present: Diana Hebel, Deputy Clerk I  
Margarita Bell, Chief Financial Officer  
Sarah Fuerst, Grants Administrator

### **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

a) Approval of Meeting Minutes – December 13, 2023

**Ms. Gatewood**, seconded by **Mr. Alexander**, moved to APPROVE the meeting minutes.

There being no objection, the minutes were APPROVED.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

a) Allocation of Funds Over Requested Amount

**Chair Marney** asked Ms. Bell to start off the discussion. Ms. Bell stated she believes the amount allocated to an organization should be no more than the amount requested, because a member could possibly allocate above the requested amount to influence the award amount. All members agreed.

**Mr. Alexander** reflected on what had happened this year with a couple of organizations receiving more than what they requested and indicated that was fine for smaller organizations. He stated, however, that it would have been helpful to consider the issue earlier.

**Chair Marney** asked Ms. Bell what would be done with the extra money. Ms. Bell explained that if the Committee awards funds based on the requested amount, then they should never encounter that situation.

b) Review of Discretionary Fund Grant Application and Committee Process

**Ms. Gatewood** asked for clarification as to what the process includes. Ms. Bell indicated that the process includes things like the application and timing. She referenced the handout titled, "Discretionary Fund Committee Policies and Procedures."

**Ms. Gatewood** explained that part of the application overview says that any organization, public or private, or any person may submit a discretionary grant application and proposal. She wondered whether that statement was too broad for a small pot of money. She also asked for history on why the Committee asks the applicants to make presentations. She pointed out that application question number 9, "Briefly describe the history and goals of the applicant" should be clarified and that number 10, "Demonstrate how the funds will promote or enhance tourism, and/or contribute to economic growth in the city of Fairbanks" could be rewritten to include check boxes for "promote," "enhance," and "contribute," and to ask for a description of how the applicant plans to carry that out. **Ms. Gatewood** then asked why the Committee asks to see proof of use of the logo. She also questioned whether it would be too much to require an audit of smaller organizations. She suggested adding to the last sentence above the signature line that the signer acknowledges that an incomplete application will not be considered for grant funds.

**Chair Marney** clarified, regarding the requirement for an audit, that it would pertain only to applicants who are awarded \$100,000–\$500,000.

**Ms. Kirstein** read an article on market trends for 2024 for non-profit businesses, indicating that fundraising will not be easy in 2024. She stated that because of the trends and people may be relying too much on the City's funds, she would like to discourage people from requesting more than they need. She stated she proposed that the request amounts be set between \$0–10,000 and \$10,000–\$25,000, with the latter requiring more description and explanation, and to cap it off at \$25,000. Regarding the sections addressed by Ms. Gatewood, **Ms. Kirstein** stated that the application is straight forward. She stated that before an applicant signs the application, they must look at the checklist and the logo is on the checklist.

**Ms. Kvapil** stated that as someone who used to write grants, she is in favor of applicants acknowledging use of the logo. She stated that it is not difficult for a recipient to track how their activities benefit Fairbanks, and it would be fair to ask for that information. She shared that one of the things stated during the presentations that altered her scoring was when an applicant was asked how they came up with the amount they requested and they replied that they determined they were only getting a percentage of their request, so they inflated their request to try to get a larger amount.

**Chair Marney** stated he believes the use of the logo is important, and the City should be getting that recognition. He pointed out that, of the applications that were rejected, five were rushing to get their applications in at the last minute. He added that one of the last-minute applicants was at the City Clerk's Office at 5 p.m. on the last day. He shared that for the last two years, the City has held a question-and-answer session to try to help organizations with their applications, but it appears it has not been successful as there are still a number of denials and only two people attended the session.

**Mr. Alexander** agreed that use of the logo is important and should remain part of the application process. He indicated that an audit would be too much for smaller organizations. He stated that the Committee needs to stick to the application process and pointed out that others have worked hard to comply with the process and have tried to do things right.

Ms. Bell addressed some of the questions the Committee asked previously. She stated that if the Committee would like to change who may apply for the grant, it can make a recommendation to the City Council for a change to the Fairbanks General Code (FGC). Regarding the annual report, she stated that it is due in the Finance Office by October 31. In regard to the logo, Ms. Bell said she was around at the time the use of the logo was added as an application requirement and that it came about because there were organizations receiving

funds but not recognizing the funding source. In response to the issue of requiring an audit, she shared that the City Council is considering which monetary threshold would be appropriate to require an audit but that most of the agencies that apply would likely be below that level. She added that the FGC requires the submittal of employees' salary. She explained that the requirement for an explanation of income in excess of 10% was added because there were agencies reporting high miscellaneous income without explaining what it was. Ms. Bell stated, in response to the recommendation to cap the grant award amount, that there may come a time when a new project or an organization warrants a higher award than \$25,000.

**Ms. Kirstein** asked that the Committee focus more on the checklist.

**Ms. Gatewood** explained that her stance has changed in regard to the logo and that she can see that there is value in the presentation meeting. She stated the only thing she feels that can be done to help applicants is to make sure the application and checklist is as clear as possible.

**Chair Marney** added that Ms. Bell has an open-door policy up to the application deadline if any applicants need clarification or have questions. He asked Ms. Bell about not being able to find use of the logo by Fairbanks Economic Development Corporation (FEDC) and Explore Fairbanks. Ms. Bell explained that those organizations receive direct funding, so they do not have the same requirement to use the logo; she added that they do recognize the City.

**Chair Marney** asked the Committee if FEDC and Explore Fairbanks should be required to use the Discretionary Fund logo.

**Mr. Alexander** pointed out that if the logo is required, it should be required for everyone. The Committee agreed, and **Chair Marney** decided to take the recommendation to require use of the logo by FEDC and Explore Fairbanks to the City Council.

**Ms. Gatewood** stated that she disagrees with capping the request amount, because a bigger entity with a larger impact on the economic development of Fairbanks may then be limited when seeking funds to match their needs. She further indicated there is a need to be concise and direct on what is asked on the application. She suggested that question 10 be reworded to include checkboxes where the applicant would be asked to check all that apply, then explain how they will accomplish the items checked.

After some discussion regarding whether some organizations are trying to find other funding sources, **Ms. Gatewood** suggested that if the number of sponsors or degree of sponsorship is important, perhaps it could be asked on the application.

**Ms. Kvapil** reminded the Committee that some funding sources come with limitations on what funds may be used for, and the application would have to have room for explanations.

**Chair Marney** reminded the Committee that one of the goals is to simplify the application.

Ms. Bell indicated that the changes as discussed can be implemented. **Chair Marney** asked if all agreed, and the members indicated in the affirmative with a nod. Ms. Bell said that she can work with the Clerk's Office to make the changes to the application based on the Committee's conversation, and the changes could be presented at another meeting.

The Committee verified the changes would include:

- Question 9 – Briefly describe the history and goals of the organization or what is the mission statement of the organization.
- Question 10 – The funds will be used to: (Check all that apply)  Promote,  Enhance,  Contribute, to economic growth – “Describe how you will accomplish this below.”
- Add a statement before the signature line acknowledging that an incomplete application will result in being ineligible for grant funding.

### **NEXT MEETING**

**Chair Marney** asked about setting a November meeting date. Clerk Hebel explained that the Clerk’s Office would send a Doodle Poll when the meeting time is closer.

Ms. Bell stated that another meeting may be needed to confirm the application changes.

**Chair Marney** stated that Clerk Hebel would send out a Doodle Poll for a February meeting to review and approve the application changes.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was declared ADJOURNED at 1:13 p.m.

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Lonny Marney, Chair

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Diana Hebel, Deputy City Clerk I

Transcribed by: DH



**CITY OF FAIRBANKS**  
DISCRETIONARY FUND COMMITTEE  
LONNY MARNEY, CHAIR  
800 CUSHMAN STREET  
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701-4615  
OFFICE: 907-459-6793  
FAX: 907-459-6787  
[lmarney@fairbanks.us](mailto:lmарney@fairbanks.us)

[DATE]

Dear Applicant,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 discretionary fund grant process! The Discretionary Fund Committee is here to help you succeed in correctly completing this year's application.

The Committee is made up of Fairbanks residents who want to make the city a better place to live and visit and invest in the future success of our beloved city. Over the years, the Committee has spent time improving the application, increasing the fund amount, and coming up with ways to help applicants achieve their goals. One such way was the implementation of a free Q&A session, and this year the session will take place at noon on Wednesday, October 16 at City Hall.

This year the Committee has changed the application in subtle ways: changed the wording in question 9; amended question 10 to require more specificity; and added wording in the certification statement to acknowledge that failure to provide required items in the application checklist on page 4 will result in removal from consideration. Please do not assume that if you provided information in the past, it counts for the current year's process. It does not! All application information must be completed and various attachments must be submitted, so please follow the checklist carefully. Unfortunately, there are still veteran and new applicants denied each year due to common application errors.

We want Fairbanks to continue to be a year-round destination, and we depend on your agencies to make that happen. We want visitors to relay their unforgettable experience in Fairbanks to their friends and family. We wish all applicants great success!

Sincerely,

The 2024 Discretionary Fund Committee

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Chair Lonny Marney

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Karen Blackburn, Seat A

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Thomas Alexander, Seat B

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Samantha Kirstein, Seat C

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Traci Gatewood, Seat D

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Rachael Kvapil, Seat E

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## Discretionary Fund Grant Application Guide

### READ THIS PAGE BEFORE COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

#### **OVERVIEW**

- The tax on the daily rental of rooms levied by Fairbanks General Code (FGC) Sec. 74-117 is for the primary purpose of funding services for the promotion of the tourist industry and other economic development and for the funding of services for the general public.
- Any organization, public or private, or any person may submit a discretionary grant application and proposal.
- Only one application per applicant will be accepted.
- A Committee has been appointed by the Mayor, with City Council concurrence, to review the proposals and make recommendations no later than the first Regular City Council Meeting in January.
- All grant funds must be expended in the year awarded.

#### **GUIDELINES**

- Applications must be received by the City Clerk's Office **no later than 5:00 p.m., Thursday, October 31, 2024**, or if mailed, postmarked no later than October 31, 2024, in order for the funding request to be considered. All applicants are required to **submit one original and seven unbound copies of the application**.
- City staff will review all applications for completeness. **Original applications** that are **not completed in full will not be considered** for funding.
- **Requests for the following cannot be supported:** loans, deficits, debt reduction, endowments, scholarships, and health and social services activities.
- There will be an opportunity for applicants to ask questions to City Finance Department staff at a **Q&A session at noon on Wednesday, October 16** at Fairbanks City Hall, 800 Cushman Street. Applicants may also attend the Q&A session remotely via Zoom: Meeting ID 822 0142 7541; Passcode 537073.
- All applicants must have at least one representative at the presentation meeting. The representative should be able to address financial and program questions. **Applicants that have no representative at the meeting will not be considered for funding.**
- No new information may be presented after the October 31 deadline, and no promotional items such as pens, bags or trinkets should be included with the application. Electronic presentations (e.g., digital media, PowerPoint, etc.) and hard copy handouts of any kind are prohibited at the presentation meeting.
- All successful applicants awarded Discretionary Funds are required to provide a report of expenditures with supporting documents (Discretionary Fund Grant Annual Report) to the Chief Financial Officer by October 31 in the year of award.

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**ROOM RENTAL TAX  
DISCRETIONARY FUND GRANT  
CITY OF FAIRBANKS  
2024 APPLICATION**

Original   
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This application is due no later than **Thursday, October 31, 2024** for fund distribution in early 2025.

**ORIGINAL APPLICATIONS THAT ARE NOT COMPLETED IN FULL WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.**

The Discretionary Fund Committee has been appointed by the Mayor, with City Council concurrence, to review the proposals and make recommendations no later than the first Regular City Council Meeting in January.

Applicant must provide the following information:

1. Name of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

2. Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

3. Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_

4. Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Website (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Current Board of Directors:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Is applicant a nonprofit organized under the laws of Alaska? Yes  No

Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN): \_\_\_\_\_

Alaska Business License # \_\_\_\_\_ City Business License # \_\_\_\_\_

7. Prior Discretionary Fund Grants awarded to the applicant:

Check this box if applicant has never received a Discretionary Fund Grant.

2024: \_\_\_\_\_ 2023: \_\_\_\_\_

2022: \_\_\_\_\_ 2021: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Amount of funding requested for dispersal in 2025:\*

\*This amount should match the total amount listed in Item #11. \_\_\_\_\_

9. Briefly describe the mission, history, and goals of the applicant or organization.

10. Select and describe in detail how funds will be used within the City of Fairbanks.  
promote tourism      enhance tourism      contribute to economic growth

11. Provide a budget and a brief narrative detailing the use of the funds for which the applicant is applying. If applicant is disbursing funds to other organizations and/or individual(s), provide a listing of all agencies and/or individual(s) represented and amount.

ITEM	AMOUNT
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
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_____	_____
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_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
	_____

**TOTAL AMOUNT\***

\*This amount should match the request listed in Item #8.

BUDGET NARRATIVE:

**Applicants that received a Discretionary Fund Grant in 2024 must provide the following:**

- A copy of the Discretionary Fund Grant Annual Report (**provide only the report** and no supporting documents); and
- Copies of documents or pictures that demonstrate use of the Discretionary Grant Fund logo to acknowledge the “City of Fairbanks Discretionary Fund Grant” as a sponsor. Do not provide promotional items in the application, such as pens, bags, or trinkets.

**All applicants must provide the following financial information (no more than two pages for each item):**

- Balance Sheet for the **last fiscal year** (last fiscal year should contain the full twelve months); and
- Balance Sheet as of August 31, 2024 or September 30, 2024; and
- Income & Expense Statement for the **last fiscal year** (last fiscal year should contain the full twelve months); and
- Income & Expense Statement for YTD as of August 31, 2024 or September 30, 2024; and
- Wage & Salary Information (Schedule A) for all employees for the **last, current, and upcoming year**; and
- A detailed listing of grouped miscellaneous or other income and/or expenses if they total 10% or more of the applicant’s total income and/or expenses.

**APPLICATIONS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WHEN SUBMITTED:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signed Application                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Discretionary Fund Grant Annual Report (If Applicable)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Balance Sheets                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Logo Documents (If Applicable)                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Income & Expense Statements          | <input type="checkbox"/> List of All Sub-grant Organizations (If Applicable)     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule A – Wage & Salary Statement | <input type="checkbox"/> Misc./Other Income and Expenses Listing (If Applicable) |

**A SIGNED ORIGINAL PLUS SEVEN COMPLETE COPIES OF THE SIGNED ORIGINAL MUST BE SUBMITTED.**

**LATE OR INCOMPLETE ORIGINAL APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.**

**NOTE: Completed applications must be received by the City Clerk's Office no later than 5:00 p.m., Thursday, October 31, 2024, or if mailed, postmarked no later than October 31, 2024, in order for the funding request to be considered.**

The Grant Recipient agrees to acknowledge the "City of Fairbanks Discretionary Fund Grant" as a sponsor whenever possible.

The agent's signature below certifies that this application is true and complete (must include a designated original and seven **complete** copies) and acknowledges that failure to provide any of the required items on the above checklist will result in this application being removed from consideration for funding.

**Signature of Agent/Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name of Agent/Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SCHEDULE A**  
**EMPLOYEE WAGE & SALARY STATEMENT**

Name of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Fiscal Year End: \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION TITLES	LAST FISCAL YEAR ANNUAL SALARY	CURRENT FISCAL YEAR ANNUAL SALARY	PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR ANNUAL SALARY
_____	_____	_____	_____
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ATTACH ADDITIONAL PAGES IF NECESSARY