DATE: March 9, 2020

TO: Board of Supervisors
   Jeffrey V. Smith, M.D., J.D., County Executive

FROM: David Campos, Deputy County Executive
      Protima Pandey, Director, Office of Women’s Policy

RE: Mini-Grants for civic activities regarding 19th Amendment Centennial

Under advisement from the Board of Supervisors meeting September 24, 2019 (Item No. 55), Board of Supervisors directed Administration provides this off-agenda report whether $75,000 is sufficient grant funding for planned civic activities to commemorate the Centennial of the 19th Amendment.

The Office of Women’s Policy (OWP), Division of Equity and Social Justice (DESJ) released two rounds of mini-grant applications to solicit funding requests from all over the County for the community towards this goal.

The application processes stated that the intent of the funding was for community members and groups planning activities or projects promoting democracy as it related to women’s suffrage and the continuing need for women, girls, and female identified individuals to solicit funds to actively participate, support, and promote their inclusion in the democratic system. The applicants were encouraged to include an educational component, outreach component, and/or training component relating to civic engagement around women’s suffrage. Sample activities were defined in the application process as including: Visiting an organization dedicated to advancing women for the vote, training material for a community event celebrating historical advancements of women, a site visit to a
woman’s monument, a focus group for transgender women voters, training for voter registration in limited English proficient communities, funding a speaker series for senior women veterans, or building an application to engage transitional age young voters.

The first round of mini grants was available for applicants to apply from October 1, 2019 till December 1, 2019.

OWP received 28 applications and funded 25 applicants in the first round. The total amount committed to grantees in the first round is $44,400 with a minimum of $500 and a maximum of $2,000. We have mapped the geographical locations of the grantees for round 1 to demonstrate the breadth of our proposed impact.
We are gathering documentation on completed activities and will catalogue them for the public on our website. Some funded grants include:

1. Panel discussion planned in May with speakers to discuss the suffrage movement within the Latinx community with a focus on the contributions of Jovita Ida, a Latina journalist who organized a Latina Club to participate in the suffrage movement and wrote articles on the electorate process during the 1920s.

2. Local filmmaker and photographer will produce a film about the struggle of women and will focus on the story of Electa Housley of Gilroy, California, the first woman in Santa Clara county who had her own home in her own name and who fought the right for women to own homes at the turn of the century.

3. Grantee will support students in creating learning about Media Literacy through CreaTV workshops and trainings and will train students on how to create a documentary on the suffrage movement with a focus on African American women.

4. Grantee will purchase a collection of books about the women’s suffrage and make the lessons come to life to elementary school students with an assembly presented by the American Historical Theater. Grantee will also present a living wax museum created by young students where students dress up as historical characters and tell the character’s life story in the first person and host a school march featuring inspiring women leaders who have helped make great changes in the world. Grantee will also purchase a collection of children’s books about the women’s suffrage in the United States, the history of the movement, the women who led the movement, and the challenges they faced to secure women’s right to vote.

Due to the availability of additional funds, OWP opened a second round of applications using the same criteria. The second round of mini grants was available for applicants to apply from December 16, 2019 to February 28, 2020. These grant applications are being reviewed at this time, with a total of 12
applicants. The total amount requested through the second round by grantees is $19,350 with a minimum of $500 and a maximum of $2,000.

The only development with round 1 and anticipated also for round 2 is that we are receiving notifications of postponement of events and projects that require public gatherings due to the current health advisory around COVID19. OWP is working with grantees to ensure they can complete their activities at a time that is safe to do so, meets fiscal deadlines, and working to be flexible if round 2 applicants approach us with the same concerns. Additionally, OWP intends to make available the remaining $11,250 to the Centennial planning workgroup of the Women’s Equality Leadership Council to utilize for the two large community commemorations, the Centennial Celebration in August and the Lantern Walk in October.

Given that the County’s own health advisory around COVID19 discourages large public gatherings and events, OWP doubts that organizations will be applying for additional funding provided for this effort. Accordingly, at this time, OWP is not requesting any additional funds for civic activities and community engagement for the 19th Amendment Centennial. Because of all the work we did prior to the spread of COVID19, we are proud that we have been able to fund a fairly large spectrum of projects spanning Morgan Hill to Palo Alto, ranging from funding for individuals to organizations, and ranging in activities from voter registration to historical memorialization.

If you have any follow up questions or comments, please feel free to reach out to Protima.pandey@ceo.sccgov.org or at 408-678-1473

c: Miguel Márquez, Chief Operating Officer
James Williams, County Counsel
Megan Doyle, Clerk of the Board
Chief Board Aides
David Campos, Deputy County Executive