



**CITY OF HOUSTON - CITY COUNCIL**

Meeting Date: 12/3/2019

ALL

Item Creation Date: 11/8/2019

MYR Financial Empowerment Center\_Professional Services (2 of 2)

Agenda Item#: 33.

**Summary:**

**Approve an ordinance approving and authorizing a professional services agreement with Alliance for Multicultural Community Services d/b/a The Alliance ("The Alliance") for financial counseling services for the Mayor's Office of Complete Communities.**

**Background:**

The Mayor's Office of Complete Communities (MOCC) requests City Council approval of an ordinance to approve and authorize a professional services agreement with The Alliance for Multicultural Community Services (Alliance) financial counseling services for two years with funding provided through the Greater Houston Community Foundation (GHCF).

The Alliance will manage the day-to-day operations of the program. The nonprofit is responsible for case management and provision of financial counseling services, building client-counselor relationships, conducting financial health assessments, and making referrals as needed. The implementation grant application from the Cities of Financial Empowerment Fund (CFE Fund) required the identification of a financial counseling provider at the time of submittal. The Planning and Development Department received a CFE Fund planning grant in 2017. With technical assistance from CFE Fund, the Planning and Development Department submitted the implementation grant application in 2019 and followed the CFE Fund's standard approach to research, review, and interview nonprofit financial counseling providers in Houston. The CFE Fund guided the evaluation process and recommended looking at the provider's reliability, communications, reputation in the nonprofit field and track record of financial counseling services. Based on this guidance, the Planning Department chose The Alliance as the non-profit provider for the CFE Fund's Financial Empowerment Centers Program.

The CFE Fund's Financial Empowerment Centers program delivers professional, one-on-one financial counseling as a free city service and offers municipalities a tangible strategy to build community financial stability by helping help those most in need of critical one-on-one assistance. People in financial trouble need individualized help, not just financial literacy education, to address their most complex financial challenges. Through the FEC program, trained financial counselors work with clients on asset building, banking access, consumer protection, financial responsibility, debt management, home ownership, affordable housing qualification, and financial literacy. Counselors start with a financial triage assessment of the nature of and urgencies within clients' financial situation. Then, counselors set goals and establish a specific plan of action with each client that focuses on one or more of four areas of improvement: banking, increasing savings, reducing debt, and building credit. Clients may also be referred to other supportive services that can enhance the quality of life of that individual.

The City is accepting the award of a grant from the CFE Fund to implement a Financial Empowerment Centers program in Houston through the auspices of the Greater Houston Community Foundation. The City is entering into a fiscal conduit agreement with Greater Houston Community Foundation for the purpose of the GHCF acting as a fiscal conduit to receive and disburse the grant funds. Under the fiscal conduit agreement, GHCF on behalf of the City will pay The Alliance for the financial counseling services provided under this agreement.

DocuSigned by:

*Shannon Buggs*

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Shannon Buggs, Director, Mayor's Office of Complete Communities

**M/WBE Participation**

M/WBE Zero Percentage Goal approved by Office of Business Opportunity

**Pay or Play Program:**

The proposed contract requires compliance with the City's 'Pay or Play' ordinance regarding health benefits for employees of City contractors. In this case, The Alliance for Multicultural Community Services has elected to play and will provide health benefits to eligible employees in compliance with City policy.

**Hire Houston First:**

The proposed procurement may be funded by a federal grant; therefore, exempt from "Hire Houston First" (HHF) ordinance that promotes economic opportunity for Houston Business and support job creation.

**Fiscal Note:**

No fiscal note is required on grant items.

**Contact Information:**

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**ATTACHMENTS:**

**Description**

Financial Empowerment Center Quality of Life PowerPoint  
POP Forms  
CFE Award Letter  
Letter of Intent  
Certificate of Liability Insurance  
Goal Modification Form  
Affidavit of Control

**Type**

Backup Material  
Backup Material  
Backup Material  
Backup Material  
Backup Material  
Backup Material  
Backup Material