



Albemarle County

Legislation Text

File #: 21-388, **Version:** 1

AGENDA DATE: 8/4/2021

TITLE:

Recommended Updates to the Agency Budget Review Team (ABRT) Fiscal Year 2023 (FY 23) Application Process

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Approve recommended updates to the ABRT FY 23 application process

ITEM TYPE: Regular Action Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Richardson, Walker, Birch, Stebbins, Pethia, Bowman, Gardner, Freeman, Allshouse, L.

PRESENTER (S): Lori Allshouse

LEGAL REVIEW: Not Required

REVIEWED BY: Jeffrey B. Richardson

BACKGROUND: The Agency Budget Review Team (ABRT) was created in 1991 as a joint City/County process utilized to review funding requests received by the City and County from community non-profit agencies. Over the years, the City and County refined the ABRT process to include the use of an objective rating tool and outcome measures, updated criteria, and alignment with funding priorities and human service-related goals. The City and County began to implement separate approaches to the human services non-profit Human Services application review process beginning in FY 2020.

The County's FY 2022 ABRT process continued to include volunteer citizens and County staff members on teams that reviewed and scored funding requests from human services non-profit agencies based on updated County's Human Services goals that included a focus on equity and inclusion and support of the County's COVID-19 goals. The process also included a new grant application software system. The County's ABRT process continues to be supported by a temporary employee and is facilitated by the Department of Finance and Budget in coordination with the Department of Social Services, the Office of Housing, and the Office of Equity and Inclusion. The County's adopted FY22 Budget includes \$1.67 Million in funding for ABRT community non-profit agencies.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Mission - To enhance the well-being and quality of life for all community members through the provision of the highest level of public service consistent with the prudent use of public funds

DISCUSSION: After the adoption of the FY 22 Budget, staff provided a comprehensive summary of the ABRT process, including a review of FY 22 ABRT survey results, the application questions and scoring instrument. In addition, interns from the University of Virginia's Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy reviewed the County's FY 22 process and provided recommendations for improvements for the upcoming year.

Based on this review, staff plans to improve the application questionnaire to improve clarity, consistency, and data collection, provide a guideline for reviewers' analysis of agencies' budget requests, discontinue use of a separate ABRT document, incorporate the pertinent information into the FY 23 Recommended Budget document, and provide updates to the ABRT information available on the County's website.

In addition, staff recommends the following FY 23 policy-related changes for the Board's review and approval:

- Reduce the length of time a non-profit has been in operation eligibility requirement from 2 years to 1 year.
- Incorporate a portion of the County's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) into the FY 23 ABRT application process and FY 23 Budget development timeline. This will provide a systematic way for non-profit agencies to request ARPA funding to support the fulfillment of the County's economic vitality and human services goals under this program and will provide an avenue for community partners into the funding development process.

On August 4, staff will bring forth these recommendations for the Board's consideration. If these recommendations are approved by the Board, staff will incorporate these updates into the ABRT FY 23 funding application process slated to begin in late summer.

BUDGET IMPACT: If approved, a portion of the County's Federal ARPA economic vitality/human services funding would be utilized to provide additional funding for non-profit agencies in FY 23. The amount of funding will be determined through the upcoming budget process.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board support the recommended changes for the FY 23 ABRT process.