



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: COUNTY MANAGER

File #: 21-844

Board Meeting Date: 11/9/2021

**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors

**From:** Michael P. Callagy, County Manager

**Subject:** Use of District-Discretionary **Measure K** Funds - Supervisorial District 3

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**Measure K:** Adopt a resolution authorizing a one-time grant of district-discretionary **Measure K** funds, not to exceed \$100,000, to Philanthropic Venture Foundation, acting as the fiscal agent for Rancho San Benito, for the twenty month start-up phase of the Rancho San Benito farming project, providing an exception to the criteria for district-discretionary **Measure K** funds to allow for advance payment, and authorizing the County Manager, or designee, to execute the grant agreement.

### **BACKGROUND:**

**Measure K** is the half-cent general sales tax initially approved by San Mateo County voters in November 2012 and extended in November 2016 for a total of thirty years.

On March 9, 2021, and March 23, 2021, the Board of Supervisors (Board) held study sessions on **Measure K** expenditures and anticipated revenue for fiscal years (FY) 2021-23. The Board appointed **Measure K** sub-committee, consisting of Supervisor Pine and Supervisor Canepa, convened the study sessions to, among other things, work with staff to facilitate the Board's development of **Measure K** priorities and continuing initiatives for FYs 2021-23. The Board approved \$5 million in one-time loans or grants for the FY 2021-23 budget cycle, divided equally among the five supervisorial districts, for district-discretionary needs and projects. District 3 has submitted a request to use their district-discretionary **Measure K** funds as shown below and described in the Project Summary section of this memorandum:

| District/ Project   | Amount    |
|---|-----------|
| District 3 (Supervisor Don Horsley) - Philanthropic Venture Foundation, acting as the fiscal agent for Rancho San Benito: to support the twenty-month start-up phase of Rancho San Benito Farming Project, Inc. | \$100,000 |

This item is consistent with the criteria for district-discretionary **Measure K** funds approved by the Board in December 2018, with the following exception: Philanthropic Venture Foundation, acting as the fiscal agent for Rancho San Benito, has requested \$25,000 of the grant amount as an up-front, rather than reimbursement, payment. The upfront payment is necessary for initial expenses including the purchase of supplies and equipment, the hiring of an initial project manager, and other initial expenses. The Board may approve this exception to the criteria by adopting the resolution.

**PROJECT SUMMARY:**

This is a request to authorize a grant to Philanthropic Venture Foundation, acting as the fiscal agent for Rancho San Benito, and resulting grant agreement, in an amount not to exceed \$100,000, to support the twenty-month start-up phase of the Rancho San Benito (RSB) farming project. The County Manager's Office will administer and manage the proposed agreement.

RSB will be a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located in Half Moon Bay dedicated to improving the economic, educational, and social condition of lower-income people in San Mateo County, particularly agricultural workers on the Coastside. During the start-up phase, RSB will begin its work by setting up organic, regenerative farming operations on an eighty-acre parcel of historic agricultural land leased from the Peninsula Open Space Trust to RSB (attached as Exhibit A to this board memo). This farmland will become the core of RSB's programs and activities, which will be aimed at teaching low-income participants applicable skills and creating new opportunities for advancement within the fields of agriculture, soil conservation, and management.

To begin, RSB will focus on cultivating fifty acres of land in hay, and later RSB plans to use the remaining tillable land for small areas to be worked by participants for growing crops such as flowers, lavender, herbs, and legumes, as well as plant fruit trees along the eastern border of the land, next to Highway 1. Once feasible based on soil quality and participation, RSB intends to designate half-acre to several acre areas from the tillable land previously used for hay into plots for use by participants for different agricultural projects, depending on the length of participants' involvement with the program and their demonstrated commitment to it.

This request for \$100,000 in **Measure K** district-discretionary funds will allow for various start-up activities including but not limited to farm services (including early cultivation of the property by a site manager and soil testing), farm supplies (including drip irrigation infrastructure and water tanks on the southern end), fencing of the tillable land to prevent trespassing and ensure safety, and creation of a participant outreach and application process. Philanthropic Venture Foundation will act as the fiscal agent for Rancho San Benito in the management and administration of these **Measure K** funds.

**Total Measure K Request: Not to Exceed \$100,000**

The release of funds will be contingent on the execution of an agreement providing for the County's confirmation of the expenditure of funds for the purposes stated herein. The County will disburse the funds to the following organization for the purposes described above:

Philanthropic Ventures Foundation  
Dawn Hawk, Chief Operating Officer  
[dhawk@venturesfoundation.org](mailto:dhawk@venturesfoundation.org) <<mailto:dhawk@venturesfoundation.org>>  
1222 Preservation Park Way

Oakland CA 94612-1201

T: (510) 645 1890

F: (510) 645 1892

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:**

| <b>Measure</b>       | <b>Details</b>   | <b>Target</b> |
|----------------------|--|---------------|
| Farm services        | Early cultivation of property by site manager, soil testing  | Complete      |
| Farm supplies        | Purchase and installation of drip irrigation infrastructure throughout tillable area and water tanks on southern end | Complete      |
| Fencing              | Purchase and installation of fencing around tillable land  | Complete      |
| Participant outreach | Creation of outreach and application process   | Complete      |

County Counsel has reviewed and approved the agreement and resolution as to form.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There are sufficient **Measure K** funds for this specific FY 2021-22 **Measure K** request. These funds are budgeted in the Non-Departmental Services FY 2021-22 Adopted Budget.