



# Pinellas County

## Staff Report

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File #: 22-1202A, Version: 1

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### **Subject:**

FEAST, Inc. Walk-In Cooler/Freezer Project Fiscal Year 2022 Municipal Services Taxing Unit special projects funding request.

### **Recommended Action:**

Approval of the Municipal Services Taxing Unit special projects funding request made by FEAST, Inc. in the amount of \$18,364.00 to purchase a walk-in cooler/freezer.

- The project funding request is in the amount of \$18,364.00.
- The purchase of a walk-in cooler/freezer will allow the pantry to store more healthy perishable foods such as meat, eggs, milk, and fresh produce to distribute to families in our community.
- Data from Healthy St Pete estimates more than 14% of households in Pinellas County experience food insecurity. Since March of 2022, food prices have jumped 8.8% making it increasingly difficult for struggling families to purchase food as well as more challenging for donors to purchase and donate essential food items.
- Prior to and during the Covid 19 pandemic, FEAST, Inc. served approximately 1,000 people per month. Demand for FEAST, Inc. services have dramatically increased. Currently, they are providing food and personal care items to over 3,500 people each month.

### **Strategic Plan:**

Ensure Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

2.1 Provide planning, coordination, prevention, and protective services to create and enhance a safe, secure, and healthy community

2.2 Be a facilitator, convener, and purchaser of services for those in need

Foster Continual Economic Growth and Vitality

4.2 Invest in communities that need the most

Deliver First-Class Services to the Public and Our Customers

5.4 Strive to serve the needs of all Pinellas County residents and customers

### **Summary:**

This is a Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) Special Projects Fiscal Year 2022 Funding Request for FEAST, INC.; a non-profit organization that currently provides food to 3,500 people suffering from food insecurity each month. Families and individuals in need can visit FEAST, Inc.'s pantry twice a month to receive food. FEAST, Inc. provides these families with a 3-4-day supply of shelf-stable non-perishable food items, based on family size. In addition, families receive perishable food staples such as meat, milk, eggs, and fresh produce to help create a nutritious and balanced diet for their

families. FEAST, Inc. takes pride in providing food and personal care items to Pinellas County residents with compassion and respect.

The FEAST Walk-In Cooler/Freezer project will address the need to provide food for Pinellas County residents by obtaining adequate refrigeration. The purchase of a walk-in cooler/freezer will allow the pantry to store more healthy foods such as meat, eggs, milk, and fresh produce to distribute to families in our community. Currently, there have been occasions that they could not accept donations of refrigerated products because they simply did not have enough cold storage to adequately store these donations. For example, throughout the holiday season, many local stores contact FEAST, Inc. to offer refrigerated products that need to be picked up and stored immediately. Unfortunately, they have had to decline these donations because of a lack of refrigeration. The FEAST Walk-In Cooler/Freezer project will provide ample storage space to allow our pantry to safely store refrigerated food to distribute to our clients.

In addition, the walk-in cooler/freezer will give easy, efficient access to our over 60 volunteers who work tirelessly to provide food to individuals in our community. During high donation periods such as the holidays, the walk-in cooler/freezer will allow for much easier stock rotation to preserve the integrity of our products.

Feast, Inc. currently does not have any other funding source for this project. Any expense over the allotted MSTU funds will be absorbed by donations. Therefore, the MTSU grant would enable the pantry to help provide essential refrigerated food to many more Pinellas County families during these challenging times.

**Background Information:**

The mission of FEAST, Inc. Food Pantry is to compassionately provide food and personal care items to families in need in Pinellas County. Families and individuals in need can visit their pantry twice a month to receive food and personal items. They distribute bags of shelf-stable food, based on family size, which typically equates to a 3-4-day supply of food. In addition, they provide perishable food staples such as meat, milk, eggs, and fresh produce to help create a balanced diet for families. FEAST, Inc. takes pride in providing food and personal care items to Pinellas County residents with compassion and respect.

**Fiscal Impact:**

The request for funding in the amount of \$18,364.00 is a one-time expenditure of budgeted MSTU Special Projects funds.

**Staff Member Responsible:**

Nancy McKibben, Assistant to the County Administrator Representing Unincorporated North County

**Partners:**

FEAST, Inc.

**Attachments:**

FEAST, Inc. FY 22 MSTU Special Projects Funding Request Application Form

FEAST, Inc. Evaluation Criteria Form FY22 MSTU

OMB\_Contract\_Review\_22-1202A

MSTU-TrackingSummary-withChart\_as-of\_7-11-22

FEAST MSTU Grant 3 estimates

FEAST Quote for Cooler\_Freezer \$18,364