



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 21-2013A, Version: 1

Subject:

Third Amendment to the Agreement with Tetra Tech, Inc. for emergency rental assistance program administration.

Recommended Action:

Approval of the Third Amendment to the Agreement with Tetra Tech, Inc. for emergency rental assistance program administration. It is additionally requested that the Board of County Commissioners make a finding that, in accordance with County Code Section 2-180(5), due to the public exigency in getting needed rental relief payments to affected households, a delay resulting from publicizing a competitive solicitation for these additional services would be detrimental to the purpose of the program and cannot be permitted due to the timely securing of these services. Additionally, the efficiencies in combining these services with the ERA1 program further buttress amending the agreement with the current provider of these administrative services which was selected through a competitive process.

- This agreement provides the County with a primary program administrator for emergency rental assistance, including rent, rental arrears, utilities, and other expenses related to housing. Tetra Tech, Inc. provides applicant service and support, applicant portal management, record keeping, initial screening, eligibility verification, and approvals and denials.
- The Emergency Rental Assistance Program was created to respond to the pandemic by helping low-income renters cover rent and utility costs; preventing evictions during this pandemic is critical to tenants and landlords and is an essential part of protecting public health and the economy.
- The Third Amendment will extend the duration of the agreement through September 30, 2022 and revise the total not to exceed expenditure to \$3,483,774.20 (nine percent (9%) of funds budgeted for Emergency Rental Assistance through Fiscal Year 2022).
- A total of \$45,824,054.20 is allocated to the County under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act *and* under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to provide emergency direct financial assistance (as defined by the Treasury Secretary). The County has budgeted \$38,483,774.20 of these funds for the provision of Emergency Rental Assistance through Fiscal Year 2022. The remainder of the funds are being reserved for other housing stability services based on future needs through 2025.
- The County Administrator approved the original agreement under the local state of emergency on March 12, 2021 in the amount of \$1,928,539.69; Division Director of Purchasing and Risk

approved the first and second amendments on June 15, 2021 and September 9, 2021 to clarify language in the agreement with no fiscal impact.

Contract Number 21-0271-LI increase in the amount of \$1,555,234.51 for a revised total contract value of \$3,483,774.20, effective through September 30, 2022.

Authorize the Chairman to sign and the Clerk of the Circuit Court to attest.

Strategic Plan:

Ensure Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

2.1 Provide planning, coordination, prevention, and protective services to ensure safe and secure community.

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

2.4 Support programs that seek to prevent and remedy the causes of homelessness and move individuals and families from homelessness to permanent housing

Deliver First-Class Services to the Public and Our Customers

5.2 Be responsible stewards of the public's resources

Summary:

This contract is to provide emergency direct financial assistance, including rent, rental arrears, utilities and home energy costs, utilities and home energy costs arrears, and other expenses related to housing (as defined by the Treasury Secretary).

The Third Amendment will modify the agreement to extend applicant support and application review and processing for ERA funds allocated to the County.

Background Information:

As part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 and the American Rescue Plan Act, funding was distributed among states and local governments to provide rental assistance to individuals financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Pinellas County received \$21,428,218.80 from the Consolidated Appropriations Act to be disbursed to eligible recipients no later than September 30, 2022.

The County has also received initial funding of \$9,758,334.16 from the American Rescue Plan Act for an additional phase of rental assistance that extends to September 30, 2025. The balance of the total award of \$24,395,835.40 from the American Rescue Plan Act will be available at a later date based on achievement of defined milestones.

Following a competitive procurement process, this contract was initially awarded by the County Administrator on March 12, 2021 under the local state of emergency in the amount of \$1,928,539.69 designating Tetra Tech, Inc. as the emergency rental assistance program administrator to provide applicant service and support, applicant portal management, record keeping, initial screening, eligibility verification, and approvals and denials.

The First Amendment was approved by the Division Director of Purchasing and Risk Management

Division on June 15, 2021 to revise the agreement's statement of work and payment schedule for meeting additional requirements issued by the U.S. Department of Treasury. There was no fiscal impact associated with the First Amendment.

The Second Amendment was approved by the Division Director of Purchasing and Risk Management Division on September 9, 2021 modifying the agreement to distribute ERA2 funds, extend the duration of benefits, and to expand the definition of "eligible households" in accordance with U.S. Department of Treasury Guidance. There was no fiscal impact associated with the Second Amendment.

As of October 10, 2021, \$11.3M has been distributed for rental and utilities assistance for 1,511 unique households. Program information continues to be distributed through community partners' websites, social media, and email outreach.

Fiscal Impact:

Approved expenditure to date:	\$1,928,539.69
Increased expenditure not-to-exceed:	\$1,555,234.51
Revised expenditure not-to-exceed:	\$3,483,774.20

Funding is derived from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act *and* the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

Staff Member Responsible:

Carol Stricklin, Director, Housing and Community Development
Aubrey Phillips, Strategic Performance Manager, Office of Management and Budget
Merry Celeste, Division Director, Purchasing and Risk Management
Joe Lauro, Director, Administrative Services

Partners:

N/A

Attachments:

Third Amendment