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**Sponsor:** Housing Stability

**Meeting Date:** 9/5/2023

**Title:** Grant Agreement with Minnesota Housing Finance Agency for Homework Starts with Home Project

**File Number:** 2023-389

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**Background and Rationale:**

In 2018, the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Education, the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness (MICH), and the Heading Home Minnesota Funders Collaborative initiated a project called *Homework Starts with Home* (HSWH). The effort is part of the state of Minnesota's action plan to prevent and end homelessness. It is intended to support collaborative efforts between schools, housing organizations, and local governments to identify, engage, and stabilize students and their families who are experiencing homelessness. At development of the project, it was decided that the local government agencies who were the Family Homelessness Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) grantees would have the role of being the grant recipient and administrator of resulting contracts; in partnership with Heading Home Ramsey Continuum of Care (COC), the Housing Stability department presently serves as the FHPAP grantee.

Target populations for the grant are families who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness and have children who are in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 academic programs or youth (with or without children of their own) without a parent or guardian who are eligible for an academic program through grade 12 and who are facing housing instability. MHFA led the grantee selection process and Solid Ground in partnership with Lutheran Social Services was selected. As the FHPAP grantee, Housing Stability agreed to accept the funds to pass through to Solid Ground.

The county will receive a total of \$1,146,554, of which \$22,931 (2%) will be retained by the Ramsey County Housing Stability department for administrative oversight, with the remaining \$1,123,619 (98%) being passed through to as a direct contract action to Solid Ground. Solid Ground will be the lead of the Homework Starts With Home collaborative, which includes Solid Ground, Lutheran Social Services, Washington County, Merrick Community Services, Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio (CLUES), Independent Schools Districts (ISDs) 621, 622, 623, 624, 831, 832, 833, and 834, and the Suburban Ramsey Family Collaborative.

These funds help support the broader Heading Home Ramsey Continuum of Care strategic priorities to prevent and end homelessness in the county. A memorandum of agreement between the county and the providers was jointly developed clarifying roles and responsibilities. Housing Stability will be responsible for receiving and distributing funding to Solid Ground, monitoring Solid Ground activities annually, and monitoring expenditures and performance of Solid Ground quarterly.

**Recommendation:**

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Ratify submittal of the grant application to the Minnesota Housing Finance Association in the amount of \$1,146,554.
2. Accept a grant award and approve a grant agreement with Minnesota Housing Finance Agency for Homework Starts with Home Project for the period of October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2027, in the amount of \$1,146,554.
3. Authorize the Chair and Chief Clerk to execute the grant agreement.
4. Authorize the County Manager to enter into agreements and execute amendments to agreements and contracts in accordance with the county's procurement policies and procedures provided the amounts are within the limits of the grant funding.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Moran, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt.  
Motion passed.

Aye: - 7: Frethem, Martinson, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

By:   
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Mee Cheng, Chief Clerk - County Board