

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION



Complaint Numbers 26-034 & 26-035 (Consolidated)

NOTICE CONCERNING CONFIDENTIALITY

This report of investigation concerns an alleged violation of Chapter 112, Part III, Florida Statutes, or other breach of public trust under provisions of Article II, Section 8, Florida Constitution. The Report and any exhibits may be confidential (exempt from the public records law) pursuant to Section 112.324, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 34-5, F.A.C., the rules of the Commission on Ethics. Unless the Respondent has waived the confidentiality in writing, this report will remain confidential until one of the following occurs: (1) the complaint is dismissed by the Commission; (2) the Commission finds sufficient evidence to order a public hearing; or (3) the Commission orders a public report as a final disposition of the matter. *See Section 112.3215, Florida Statutes, regarding executive branch lobbying matters and confidentiality.

STATE OF FLORIDA
COMMISSION ON ETHICS
Post Office Drawer 15709
Tallahassee, Florida 32317-5709

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

TITLE: JACKIE ESPINOSA
Mayor
City of Kissimmee
Kissimmee, Florida

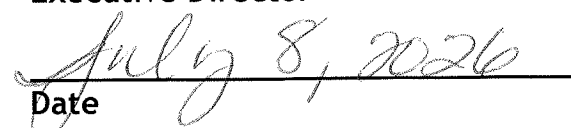
COMPLAINT NOS.: 26-034 & 26-035 (Consolidated)
Exhibits A through P

INVESTIGATED BY: 
Brian Durham

Distribution: Commission on Ethics
Respondent
Advocate
File

Releasing Authority:


Kerrie J. Stillman
Executive Director


Date

* * * *

**REPORT OF INVESTIGATION
COMPLAINT NOs. 26-034 & 26-035 (Consolidated)**

(1) Ms. Claudia B. Zuco and Ms. Lillian Evans, both of Kissimmee, Florida, allege Ms. Eva "Jackie" Espinosa, while serving as Mayor for the City of Kissimmee, violated the Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees.

(2) The complaint alleges that the Respondent engaged in an employment or contractual relationship with a business entity doing business with the City, her agency. Respondent's businesses allegedly received \$50,000.00 (\$20,000.00 to Adanse, LLC, \$15,000.00 to Kissimmee Diner, and \$15,000.00 to the Real Estate Gallery, LLC). The money was awarded through a grant program, "Business Boost 2.0," that is allegedly funded by the City of Kissimmee and administered by City staff.

(3) The Executive Director of the Commission on Ethics noted that based upon the information provided in the complaint, the above-referenced allegations were sufficient to warrant a preliminary investigation to determine whether the Respondent's actions violated Section 112.313(7)(a), Florida Statutes (Conflicting Employment or Contractual Relationship).

(4) Ms. Claudia Zuco stated by telephone that she has been an involved citizen in the City of Kissimmee and makes it her practice to know the happenings of the City Commission. She said as she was watching the evening news in 2025 she observed the "absolute look of joy on the Respondent's face" as she (Respondent) introduced the rollout of the City's new Boost 2.0 program. Ms. Zuco explained that Boost 2.0 was funded from Federal grant money for small businesses that had undergone hardships during COVID-19. She mentioned that she had applied for and was denied a grant from the City to repair her home and noticed another City Commissioner (Angela Eady), who lives around the corner from her home, begin working with a contractor to have work completed on her home. She said it was at this moment that she decided to make a public records request to determine if any City Commissioners had received grant funds. Ms. Zuco said that her initial records request was not targeted towards any specific Commissioner. After the City Clerk asked her for more specifics in an email, she said she specified, as an example for the Clerk, asking if the Respondent (Espinosa) had applied for and received the Boost 2.0 small business grant that had recently been rolled out (Exhibit A).

(5) Ms. Zuco stated that once she learned the Respondent received Boost 2.0 funding for her (Respondent's) business, Adanse, LLC, she made a Facebook post addressing the Respondent's Boost 2.0 award. She said she learned that, not only had the Respondent received grant funds from Boost 2.0, but so did the Respondent's husband for his two businesses, Kissimmee Diner (DBA Matador Tacos and Tapas), and The Real Estate Gallery, LLC. Ms. Zuco stated that the Respondent is listed on the Department of State Division of Corporations website as the Vice President of the Kissimmee Diner (Exhibit B) and, because she (Respondent) is the Mayor and a business partner with her husband, she opined his businesses should have been excluded from receiving grant funding. She noted that the Respondent owns the building in which the three above-referenced businesses are located.

Ms. Zuco stated that a report (Exhibit C) from the City of Kissimmee, indicates that Adanse, LLC, received \$20,000, Kissimmee Diner DBA Matador Taco & Tapas, received \$15,000, and The Real Estate Gallery, LLC, received \$15,000 for a total of \$50,000 in Boost 2.0 grant awards.

(6) Ms. Zuco advised that the Respondent has also stated publicly that she received grant funds from the City's initial small business initiative called Operation Business Boost (Exhibit D). Once the new Boost 2.0 was approved for businesses, she said, the Respondent (now Mayor of the City of Kissimmee) orchestrated an increase of the new Boost 2.0 funding in order to provide additional funds for the business owner grant portion and she (Respondent) later voted to approve Boost 2.0. Ms. Zuco opined that the Respondent requested that additional funds be allocated towards the small business grants so that she (Respondent) could apply for grants for her businesses. Although she only knew of three businesses directly related to the Respondent that received the Boost 2.0 grants, she said she is aware there are other businesses renting space from the Respondent that were also awarded grants. Ms. Zuco advised that the Respondent stated on record that she (Respondent) advised her tenants, who "had a hard time paying rent," to apply for the Business Boost 2.0 grant (Exhibit E, page 3).

(7) Ms. Zuco said she discovered from her public records request that the Respondent received an email (Exhibit F) from then-Kissimmee City Attorney, Ms. Olga Sanchez de Fuentes, on December 5, 2025, after she (Fuentes) learned that the Respondent had received grant funds from the City. She said that Ms. Fuentes provided the Respondent with Commission on Ethics opinions about receiving grant funding from one's own agency and stated that it could lead to a possible prohibited conflicting contractual relationship between an officer or employee and their agency. Ms. Zuco advised that she sent an email to the Florida Agency for Fiscal Oversight (FAFO) in response to her findings and they responded by making an inquiry to the City of Kissimmee regarding the Boost 2.0 program. She said that she does not know if FAFO has completed their investigation.

(8) The Florida Agency for Fiscal Oversight (FAFO) is a state initiative aimed at increasing transparency and accountability in local government spending. It is led by the Florida Chief Financial Officer (CFO), currently Blaise Ingoglia, and is codified in Florida law to monitor waste, fraud, and abuse of taxpayer dollars, provide whistleblower protections, and require local governments to submit annual financial efficiency reports.

(9) Ms. Lillian Evans stated that she learned from Ms. Zuco that the Respondent had received funding from the City's Boost 2.0 grant program. Ms. Evans advised that she obtained City records detailing the Respondent's having received Boost 2.0 grant funds. She said she began her own investigation with the documents she acquired. Ms. Evans stated that the Respondent applied for Boost 2.0 funding and was awarded \$20,000 for her business, Adanse, LLC. She added that the Respondent also applied for Boost 2.0 funding for her husband's businesses (Kissimmee Diner DBA Matador Taco & Tapas and The Real Estate Gallery, LLC) during the same time and using the same email account to login (Exhibit G) for each business. Both of the Respondent's husband's businesses, she said, received \$15,000 each. Ms. Evans advised that, according to the April 15, 2025 City Commission meeting minutes (Exhibit H), the Respondent voted to approve the Boost 2.0 program. She opined that

the Respondent should have recused herself from the vote because she was planning to apply for grant funding. Ms. Evans said that the Respondent was the primary Commissioner pushing for reinstatement of Boost 2.0 and the Respondent helped to secure more funding specifically for the Boost 2.0 business grant funding.

(10) Ms. Evans stated that, after she learned the Respondent received Boost 2.0 grant funds, she (Evans) publicly asked the Respondent, during a meeting in December 2025, why she took the funds. She said that, after she made City staff aware of the Respondent's award, Ms. Sanchez de Fuentes made inquiries into the Respondent receiving Boost 2.0 funds and she (Sanchez de Fuentes) was subsequently fired by the Respondent a month or two later. To her knowledge, Ms. Evans stated, the Respondent was not required to repay the Boost 2.0 grant funds she received for her business (Adanse, LLC) or for the funds her husband received for his businesses (Kissimmee Diner DBA Matador Taco & Tapas and The Real Estate Gallery, LLC).

(11) Mr. David Rodriguez stated that he has served as the City of Kissimmee's Director of Economic Development since October of 2024. He explained that the City received funds from the Federal Government's American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) and the former Director of Economic Development created a program called Operations Business Boost in 2021 using those funds. Mr. Rodriguez confirmed that the program provided a number of services to small businesses with one of those services being grant funding. He advised that, according to Department documents, neither the Respondent, nor the Respondent's husband, were recipients of the original Operations Business Boost funds.

(12) The Government Finance Officers Association website (GFOA.org) details the ARPA guiding principles and states that ARPA provided \$350 billion to state, local, territorial, and tribal governments to support COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. Funds were distributed in two main categories: State funding and Local funding. The local funding portion was approximately \$130 billion, equally divided between cities and counties. For cities, \$65 billion was divided between jurisdictions that are Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement jurisdictions and those that are not. \$45.5 billion of the \$65 billion was allocated to metropolitan cities utilizing a modified CDBG formula, and the remaining amount went to jurisdictions that are non-entitlement CDBG, to be allocated according to population. Eligible uses for these funds included COVID-19 expenditures or negative economic impacts of COVID-19, including assistance to small businesses, households, hard-hit industries, and economic recovery. Funding was required to be obligated by the end of calendar year 2024 and expended by the end of calendar year 2026.

(13) Mr. Rodriguez advised that after Operation Business Boost completed its program funding, there were ARPA funds remaining that had to be allocated before December 31, 2024. He said that the City Commission established another "Boost" program to help small businesses within the City. Mr. Rodriguez said that the Commission decided to create Boost 2.0 and originally planned to allocate money towards four program areas. Those four program areas for Boost 2.0 were grant funds for businesses, tuition assistance for those wanting to change careers, GrowthWheel, a training program for small businesses to gain more knowledge and improve aspects of their business, and a marketing program to promote

Downtown Kissimmee. He stated that, during a Commission meeting on September 3, 2025, the City Commission decided it was more important for Boost 2.0 to focus on grant funds for small businesses and marketing than to offer tuition assistance or business training, and the Commission removed the tuition assistance and the GrowthWheel portion of Boost 2.0 and allotted most of the remaining funds to the grants portion. Mr. Rodriguez confirmed that the framework for Operation Business Boost was used to create Boost 2.0.

(14) Mr. Rodriguez confirmed that the Commission, including the Respondent, voted to approve the initial allocation of ARPA funds to Boost 2.0 on December 17, 2024. He confirmed that the Commission approved the initial Boost 2.0 program framework on April 15, 2025. Mr. Rodriguez stated that the Commission finalized and approved the Boost 2.0 program on September 3, 2025 and that on September 17, 2025, Boost 2.0 went live and began accepting applications. He also confirmed that the Respondent's business, Adanse, LLC, was one of the businesses that applied for Boost 2.0 funds when the application window opened and was awarded \$20,000. Mr. Rodriguez said that all businesses that applied for Boost 2.0 went through the same underwriting determination of eligibility process. The criteria to award funding to businesses, he said, were the same across the board, and if the applicant met the criteria, they received the funding. Mr. Rodriguez said the criteria to receive Boost 2.0 funding was that the business: must be a for-profit, operating and having a physical location within Kissimmee City limits, must be a small business as defined by SBA (e.g., fewer than 500 employees), must have been established before March 11, 2021, only one grant per company (regardless of number of office sites), and the main office would be used to calculate square footage for the grant. Owners of multiple businesses, all independent of each other and operating from different addresses (located within the City of Kissimmee limits) could apply separately – one grant per business. Businesses with the same address operating from a multi-tenant building - including businesses under the same ownership – were required to demonstrate having a separate and distinct space within the building and support their respective square footage with a lease or other acceptable documentation. The same square footage could not be counted in multiple applications and applicants were required to demonstrate a financial hardship caused or exacerbated by COVID-19, and show proof of financial hardship between March 1, 2020 and December 20, 2024. Applicants were required to have an active Kissimmee Business Tax Receipt and be "active" with the Florida Department of State – Division of Corporations (Sunbiz.com). They were required to be current on all their taxes, assessments, and fees, could not have had any outstanding delinquent liens or code enforcement violations, and could not be engaged in illegal, restricted on non-compliant activities such as adult entertainment or gambling. Applicants were required to be a "Brick & Mortar" business legally registered and operating and having a physical location within the City of Kissimmee limits, and provide a copy of a deed or commercial lease agreement for the business' brick-and-mortar physical location. Home-based businesses were allowed to apply if they were a legally registered business enterprise operated primarily from a residential property located within the City of Kissimmee limits where the business owner resides or maintained a legal right to operate. Businesses operating solely from a virtual office were treated as a home-based business. A "virtual office" was defined as a location providing only mail handling, telephone answering, reception, or access to shared meeting space without dedicated, continuous physical occupancy by the business. For businesses operating from a virtual office – the virtual office location must be within City

limits, supported by an agreement showing the physical address or the business owner's personal address must be in the City limits. Mr. Rodriguez advised that every business that applied and met the published criteria was awarded Boost 2.0 grant funds.

(15) The Boost 2.0 grant (Exhibit I) program overview mandated that the square footage of the business determined the amount awarded with Home-Based Business receiving \$5,000, companies with up to 2,500 square feet receiving \$10,000, companies with 2,501 to 5,000 square feet receiving \$15,000, and companies with over 5,001 square feet receive \$20,000.

(16) Mr. Rodriguez said there was no post disbursement verification of how the grant funds were used, nor were there any guidelines established by the City concerning what could be done with the funds once they were awarded. Mr. Rodriguez stated that the Boost 2.0 grant awardees were not required to repay any grant funds they received.

(17) Mr. Rodriguez denied that the Respondent ever contacted him or anyone in his office asking about her Boost 2.0 applications or their approvals. He said that once the Boost 2.0 funds were disbursed to the Respondent's business and it was made public during a Commission meeting, he received an email from City Attorney Sanchez de Fuentes regarding possible ethics violations. Mr. Rodriguez said he responded to Ms. Sanchez de Fuentes, "Thank you for bringing it up, let us know if there is anything that we need to do." He stated that he never received any further guidance or communication from Ms. Sanchez de Fuentes about the Respondent receiving Boost 2.0 grant funds.

(18) Mr. Michael Steigerwald stated that he has worked for the City of Kissimmee for 32 years and has served as its City Manager for the past 16 years. He confirmed that the City received approximately \$18 million dollars in ARPA funds following COVID-19. Mr. Steigerwald said that the City set aside funding to provide assistance to businesses that struggled during the pandemic and created Operation Business Boost. Mr. Steigerwald said he does not believe the Respondent's business, or her husband's businesses, applied for or received any grant funding through the City's first Operation Business Boost program.

(19) Mr. Steigerwald confirmed that the Boost 2.0 program was essentially a "follow-up" to the initial Operation Business Boost program. He stated that, by the end of 2024, the City was required to obligate the remaining ARPA funding, which he believed was around \$4 million dollars remaining from the total \$18 million dollars the City received. Mr. Steigerwald said that he and his staff went to the City Commission in December 2024 with an agenda item seeking the Commission's authorization to obligate the remaining \$4 million dollars for a major storm water project and an affordable housing project. He stated that the new Commissioners who were recently elected (the Respondent and Commissioner Noel Ortiz) had different ideas of what to do with the remaining ARPA funds. Mr. Steigerwald said that the Respondent and Commissioner Ortiz both "wanted to see a second Boost program created, like a follow-up to the original one, because they [Respondent and Ortiz] were saying a lot of their constituents during their campaigns for election were complaining about how they [constituents] were still suffering because of the Pandemic two years later, and they [Respondent and Ortiz] thought that we [City staff] should get that money in their [constituents'] hands."

(20) City Commission meeting minutes for December 3, 2024, the Respondent's first meeting as Mayor, indicate when speaking about the Business Boost program and the allocation that was initially requested by City staff indicate, the Respondent said, "I would like to see the Business Boost program increase a little bit more. I don't know if we can move [funds] or reallocate [already assigned funds from other areas] or something if that is even a possibility. I mean, I just hate that in FY23 [Fiscal Year 2023] we had \$350k [for the small business grant portion] and now we're at \$200k and there's so many businesses that are struggling. So, to me that is definitely a priority." She continued, "It's not just for the downtown businesses, I need to be clear, it's for the City. The City is bigger than the downtown and I think if people can get grants and [they can] help themselves."

(21) Mr. Steigerwald explained that, by the end of 2024, the City was required to go into a Federal online system and designate where the ARPA funds were being spent and explain how they were using the funds and the manner in which they were disseminated to ensure that the process met Federal guidelines. As far as reporting after the funds had been disbursed from the City's hands, he said, he is unaware of any specific data required from the Federal Government concerning recipients of the Boost 2.0 grant funds.

(22) Mr. Steigerwald stated that the Respondent voted, along with the other Commissioners, to approve Boost 2.0, prior to her applying for a grant. He said that the City's Charter states that no action can be taken by the City Commission without a majority of the Commission voting in favor. Mr. Steigerwald confirmed that the Respondent applied for Boost 2.0 for her business, Adanse, LLC, when the Boost 2.0 application went live on September 17, 2025. He stated that he believed the Respondent owns the building in which Adanse, LLC is located, through a family trust. He said he believes that several businesses located within buildings the Respondent owns received Boost 2.0 funding. To his knowledge, Mr. Steigerwald said no one at the City was aware the Respondent planned to apply for grant funding when she voted on the Boost 2.0. He said he learned of the Respondent receiving Boost 2.0 funding in December 2025, after her application was already approved and the grant funds were dispersed. Mr. Steigerwald explained that Ms. Sanchez de Fuentes spoke to him and mentioned that she had spoken to the Respondent and informed her (Respondent) that taking Boost 2.0 grant funds had the appearance of a possible conflict. He stated that, though he was not aware of anything within the City's bylaws that prohibited the Respondent's business from applying for Boost 2.0 funding, he suggested to the Respondent that she consider returning the funding received by the two businesses that related directly to her (Adanse, LLC and Kissimmee Diner DBA Matador Taco & Tapas).

(23) Mr. Steigerwald said that the Boost 2.0 program required businesses to provide documentation indicating they suffered a loss related to COVID-19, and, once it was determined the business qualified, he said, the business was awarded grant funds. According to Mr. Steigerwald, there were no other requirements for the businesses following receipt of the funds. He advised that he was not intimately involved in either the formulation of policies and procedures for Boost 2.0 or its implementation. All Boost 2.0 program requirements, he stated, were approved by the City Commission prior to staff in the Department of Economic Development, specifically Mr. Rodriguez and Ms. Yolanda Claudio (Rodriguez' assistant),

moving forward with the Boost 2.0 program and implementation of the program's procedures. Mr. Steigerwald said that the Commission decided to not move forward with the education (tuition reimbursement - UPSKILL), workforce development (GrowthWheel) components of Boost 2.0, and to keep the marketing component and increase the total grant budget \$850,000 which left approximately \$150,000 for marketing.

(24) A records request made to the City of Kissimmee uncovered a conversation (Exhibit J) in September 2025, prior to Boost 2.0 going live, where Mr. Steigerwald sent an attachment of the Boost 2.0 program overview to the Respondent and said, "Before we start advertising the upcoming opening of the application process for businesses to apply for this grant [Boost 2.0], I wanted to get your feedback on the attached. This should be a lot simpler process than last time. Let us know your thoughts."

(25) Mr. Steigerwald stated that the Boost 2.0 applications were processed electronically through the City's Department of Economic Development using their online portal called, "Neighborly." He said that staff in Economic Development received the applications and processed them according to the specific requirements of the Boost 2.0 program. Mr. Steigerwald said that the Boost 2.0 program did not require quarterly or semi-annual reporting, rather it was simply a method to get funds to the businesses that claimed they had a business loss during COVID-19.

(26) Ms. Yolanda Claudio stated that she has served the past four years as a Business Development Specialist in the City's Department of Economic Development. Ms. Claudio said that businesses seeking ARPA funding were required to document and prove a financial hardship in order to be awarded Boost 2.0 funding.

(27) Ms. Claudio confirmed that the Respondent applied for Boost 2.0 funding for her business, but advised that she did not personally see the Respondent's final approval. Ms. Claudio advised that, upon coming across the business applications that were related to the Respondent, and because she (Respondent) was the Mayor, she (Claudio) sent an email on September 18, 2025, (Exhibit K) to her supervisor, Mr. Rodriguez, asking if the Respondent's applications were okay to approve because she (Respondent) had "submitted an application for each business she had and we [Economic Development] need to ensure we can one, provide a grant for the same applicant and second, ensure it's not a conflict of interest." The reason she stopped processing the applications and asked the question of Mr. Rodriguez, she said, was so they could verify with the City Attorney's office that there was no conflict of interest, especially in light of the Respondent's involvement in voting for the Boost 2.0 grant program to be made available to all business owners and she (Respondent) was now related to multiple business applications seeking funding. Ms. Claudio said that Mr. Rodriguez never provided her any verification from the City Attorney's office that there was no conflict. Ms. Claudio stated that the only response she received from Mr. Rodriguez was that "Per program rules, owners of multiple businesses, all independent of each other and operating from different addresses (all located within the City of Kissimmee limits), can apply separately, one grant per business." She said it was Mr. Rodriguez who reviewed the Respondent's applications and approved them. Ms. Claudio said that she did not feel comfortable processing the Respondent's applications until she received verification from the City Attorney's office

that there was no conflict of interest. She said she is unaware if Mr. Rodriguez ever asked the City Attorney's office if there was a conflict of interest before he processed the Respondent's applications for the Boost 2.0 funding.

(28) On November 5, 2025, in an email (Exhibit L) with then City Attorney, Ms. Sanchez de Fuentes, Mr. Rodriguez requested additional guidance in regard to a public records request asking for documentation of Commissioners who received grant funds. In the same email, Mr. Rodriguez states, "So far no business boost 2.0 grants have been paid to any commissioners, however businesses owned by city commissioners, in this case, the Mayor, have applied." Ms. Sanchez de Fuentes responded, after reviewing the Respondent's applications, by saying, "Has this request been closed out? I clicked it and it says paused awaiting payment. I'm not sure what further guidance you were looking for."

(29) Ms. Janette Martinez stated that she has served as a Kissimmee City Commissioner since August 2022. She recalled that she was unaware of the City's initial Boost program. Ms. Martinez said she also was unaware that the City had leftover ARPA funds remaining. She advised that the Respondent, during her (Respondent's) first meeting as Mayor, made a motion to create a new Boost program using the remaining ARPA funds and mentioned that she wanted to see the money going to the business owners. The Respondent, she said, told the Commission that she (Respondent) spoke with constituents and that many of the business owners she spoke with were not impressed with the educational aspect of the Boost 2.0 program and that they (constituents) would rather have funds to offset their expenses. Ms. Martinez said that the Commissioners agreed with the Respondent to remove the educational aspect of the Boost 2.0 program and allocate funding strictly to the grant portion of the Boost 2.0 program. She advised that at no time did the Respondent ever hint that she would also be applying for Boost 2.0 funding, and, if she (Martinez) had known this, she would have been hesitant vote in favor of it and would have told the Respondent that she should not have been involved in the discussions or in voting to approve the Boost 2.0 program. Ms. Martinez explained that she would never have known the Respondent received Boost 2.0 funding if she had not received an email from Ms. Zuco stating such. She said that she sent a message to City Manager Steigerwald asking if it was true and he responded that "he was not sure and that he would have to look into it."

(30) Ms. Martinez said that she made a public records request towards the end of 2025 to see what businesses belonging to the Respondent had applied for Boost 2.0 funding. What she learned, she said, was that many businesses renting from the Respondent also received Boost 2.0 funding. Ms. Martinez said that the businesses were legitimate businesses that could apply, but she found it odd when she read an article in the local newspaper confirming that the Respondent advised her tenants to apply for the Boost 2.0 program because they were having trouble paying their rent payments to the Respondent. Her concern, she said, was that, if the Respondent had any intent to apply for the Boost 2.0 funds, she should have disclosed it during the meetings. Ms. Martinez said that the Respondent spearheaded the Boost 2.0 program and made it her main focus during meetings. She said she did not think anything of it until she learned the Respondent received funding from Boost 2.0.

(31) During a Commission Meeting held on September 3, 2025, the Respondent said:

"The part of the training and education [of Boost 2.0], I think we have to revisit that Commissioners. And this is why, and I'm not gonna call out the businesses that have addressed us because this meeting is public records and I don't want to talk about the businesses that are struggling. I want to be cautious in putting them on public records. But I've had the opportunity, of being that I live 12 to 14 hours a day in downtown, I have the opportunity to speak to a lot of the business owners firsthand and, in this case, to Mr. Ray Parsons himself, who represents a lot of the tenants. I have about 17 tenants personally. and every last one of them I've asked, 'Do you feel education would help you? Do you feel you need some maybe accounting, you know, information insight?' Not one out of the twenty-eight people I spoke to said, 'Oh yeah, we're so excited about education.' They're excited about getting money to help them through the crunch."

She continued:

"I would like us to streamline the process for the application where we remove these unnecessary burdens."

She added:

"I just wanted to bring to the table the concerns, education, as much as we'd love to see that for new businesses, but I think our focus right now is to strengthen the businesses that are there now as opposed, you know, we wanna see them succeed and we talk about being open for business, but I don't wanna see businesses shutting down because that, to me, would be going in the opposite direction. So, if everyone here would be in agreement, City Manager, what would be the next step on this one specific item? I mean, we've approved the consent agenda with the exception of this. And my other question is, how quickly can we still wrap this up because it seems like it's been 10 months and I really would like to see it wrapped up."

City Manager Steigerwald responded by saying:

"So 7B, you just don't have to take action on it. And, at a later date, if you feel like the grant applications are not coming in at the rate that we expect and there's leftover funding, we can pursue this program [education for business owners – GrowthWheel]. This specific program was, we have two different programs, one is with the UCF incubator. I don't think

that contract has come through yet. That's for the education, the GrowthWheel thing. The other contract which the Upskill Kissimmee was, was to take, I think it was up to 50 individuals and give them training in higher tech type jobs. That we can put a hold on as well."

Mr. Steigerwald continued:

"So Madam Mayor, I think what would be prudent is if the Commission is in agreement to give direction to staff to proceed with the portal [Neighborly online application portal for Boost 2.0 applications] or with the small business grant application process on September 15, utilizing the funding that was allocated for both the small business grants as well as the education and job training programs. But we'll keep intact the funding for the marketing and then that way, we can move forward because the next Commission meeting isn't until the 16th and we don't wanna delay. So, if I could maybe get that direction from the Commission in the form of a vote?"

The Respondent replied:

"We'll move forward and we would like to, with the consent of fellow Commissioners, we'd like to set direction in that fashion that you just mentioned. Good? You're good Commissioner [looking at Commissioner Martinez]? Commissioner Ortiz, good? All right. Thank you very much for allowing me to bring that to the table."

(32) Ms. Olga Sanchez de Fuentes stated she is the former City Attorney for the City of Kissimmee and served from 2019 until she was terminated by vote in a Commission meeting by the Respondent, Commissioner Carlos Alvarez, and Commissioner Noel Ortiz on February 3, 2026. Ms. Sanchez de Fuentes said the ARPA funds were controlled by the City of Kissimmee who determined how the funds were allocated. She said that, to her knowledge, the Federal Government never provided oversight concerning how the funds could be spent and left that decision up to the City. Ms. Sanchez de Fuentes said that when she learned that the Respondent applied for Boost 2.0 funding, the Respondent had already been awarded funding. She confirmed that the Respondent voted to approve Boost 2.0 and did not recuse herself from the vote or the discussion. Had she known the Respondent was planning to apply for Boost 2.0 funding, she said, she (Sanchez de Fuentes) would have advised her against participating in the discussion and the vote.

(33) Ms. Sanchez de Fuentes said that the Respondent was the most vocal Commissioner during the meetings when discussing Boost 2.0. She said that the Respondent was instrumental in the creation of Boost 2.0 process and pushing it forward. Ms. Sanchez de

Fuentes opined that the Respondent lead staff and other Commissioners to the ideas she wanted approved and the other Commissioners followed her lead.

(34) Records confirm an email (Exhibit M) sent to the Respondent on September 3, 2025, from Ms. Alibeth Suarez, the Communications Director for the City of Kissimmee, indicated the Communications Department wished to send out a newsletter following the Commission's approval of the item later that evening. The newsletter was attached and, Ms. Suarez asked the Respondent to "Please review the quote and let us know if you agree with it. Once we receive your confirmation, we'll be ready to move forward." The Respondent responded that she was "discussing some concerns with Mike [City Manager Steigerwald] prior to this [News Release] being released. Please hold off till I give Mike some of my thoughts."

(35) Ms. Sanchez de Fuentes stated that she sent an email (Exhibit F) to the Respondent letting her know that she (Sanchez de Fuentes) felt the Respondent taking Boost 2.0 funds was a conflict of interest and she provided the Respondent with prior opinions from the Commission on Ethics. She said the Respondent responded saying they should discuss it further, followed by a two and one-half hour meeting where the Respondent said that she did not agree with Ms. Sanchez de Fuentes and accused her of being lazy in her research of the legal opinions. Ms. Sanchez de Fuentes said she told the Respondent she went back to the 1970's to prove to her (Respondent) that this was not a new idea and that there was a great deal of jurisprudence on the subject of prohibited contractual relationships. She said the Respondent said, "I've created case law before and I will fight this. You don't care and you should have had my back. I feel like you don't have my back. You could have framed it better with the Commission." Ms. Sanchez de Fuentes explained that when she reached out to Mr. Rodriguez in Economic Development he did not say anything in regard to the Respondent taking Boost 2.0 funds except to thank her for the information and ask her if there was anything his office should do. She said that Mr. Rodriguez never reached out to her or the Deputy City Attorney for legal assistance after learning that an elected official had applied for Boost 2.0 funds. Had he had asked her during the application process, she (Sanchez de Fuentes) said, she would have advised him of a possible conflict.

(36) The Respondent, in the presence of her attorney, Migdalia Perez, stated that she was elected to and has served as the Mayor of Kissimmee since November 2024. She confirmed that Boost 2.0 was funded using ARPA funds that were given to the City of Kissimmee during COVID-19 for the City to use as it determined. Boost 2.0, she confirmed, was the second iteration of the City's program that was initially called Operation Business Boost. The Respondent explained that, during her first Commission meeting (December 2024) as Mayor, City staff presented information that the remaining ARPA funds would expire on December 31, 2024, unless the Commission developed a plan to allocate the funds. She said staff had already developed a plan for the funds and the Commission was to either vote on staff's plan or make adjustments to it. Initially, she said, the City designated \$200,000 towards the Business Boost program. The Respondent stated that she made a comment during the meeting that she felt \$200,000 was too small of an amount allocated to actually help small business owners, because, when she campaigned to become Mayor, she discovered there were over 200,000 businesses within the City. She said she asked for City staff to raise the allocated amount of ARPA funds going towards local businesses. The Respondent said because she was

a new mayor she asked staff if she could research and discuss this further to be able to come back to the table with a new plan. After some back and forth with staff, she said, they tabled the discussion (Exhibit N) and planned to return to the issue later in December, before the funds expired, to finalize the allocation of the remaining funds.

(37) The Respondent said that, before the next meeting, she met with Deputy City Manager Desiree Matthews and discussed the amount of ARPA funds that were available. After learning that there was \$18 million dollars of ARPA funds available for projects, the Respondent said she asked Ms. Matthews if the Boost program could receive \$1 million dollars and Ms. Matthews said, "Done." She said Ms. Matthews stated that staff would present that number for the Boost program during the next meeting (December 17, 2024) and that staff would move funds around and reappropriate them in order to facilitate this allocation.

(38) During the Commission meeting held on December 17, 2024, the Respondent stated, staff presented the ARPA funds allocations and allocated \$1 million dollars towards the new Boost program calling it Boost 2.0 (Exhibit O). She said that the Commission unanimously agreed on the new allocation and voted to approve it.

(39) The Respondent said that it was staff who created the allocations within the Boost 2.0 program and that the only delineation she requested from the original Boost program was to remove the D-U-N-S number (see next paragraph) requirement associated with the business grant portion of the program. She said that requirement made it nearly impossible for the businesses in the City to apply for the funds because no one knew what a D-U-N-S number was. The Respondent confirmed that she applied for the initial Operation Business Boost program and was awarded funding, all prior to her being elected Mayor, and, during the application process, she noticed that she had to help multiple local businesses in the City obtain a D-U-N-S number because they did not know what it was or how to obtain one. She said that her only request that she made for the staff was to change that requirement in the new Boost 2.0 grant requirements.

(40) According to the Dun & Bradstreet website, a D-U-N-S number is a unique nine-digit identifier that links to your Dun & Bradstreet business credit file, completely separate from your personal identity. Potential partners, lenders, and suppliers can use the number to help evaluate a business's credibility, financial stability, and readiness for collaboration.

(41) The Respondent explained that the Boost 2.0 program had other elements like an educational training for businesses on how to conduct their business that business owners she spoke with did not support. She said that businesses that could apply for Boost 2.0 had to already have been an established business, prior to COVID-19 happening, in order to receive the Boost 2.0 grant funds, and that telling them they needed training or help with accounting, she said, was not met with a warm response from the local community. However, the Respondent maintains, she was not involved in suggesting the removal of any portion (GrowthWheel or UPSKILL) of the Boost 2.0 program, and those decisions were made by Mr. Rodriguez and the Economic Development Department. She explained that she voted, alongside all the other Commissioners, to approve Boost 2.0, but they never approved the

specific applications or amounts awarded, nor were they in charge of approving the amount received by the applicants. That function, she said, was handled by the Department of Economic Development. The Respondent said that, at the time of the vote, she had not decided to apply for Boost 2.0 for her businesses. However, once requirements were publicized, she learned her businesses would be eligible according the guidelines, and she applied. She said it took almost a year for staff to put together the program for Boost 2.0 and it was finally released on September 17, 2025.

(42) The Respondent confirmed that Adanse, LLC applied for Boost 2.0 funding when the application window opened on September 17, 2025, and she was subsequently awarded \$20,000. The Respondent stated that the funds received had no guidelines or restrictions placed on them by the City.

(43) The Respondent stated that Adanse, LLC is a dance studio that, during the relevant time period of the complaint, her (Respondent's) name was listed as an owner with the Department of State, Division of Corporations. She explained that all of her businesses are family-owned and are now held in a family trust called the Espinosa Family Trust (the Trust). The Respondent stated that she no longer dances and has turned over the day-to-day management of Adanse, LLC to her daughter. She said she (Respondent) still has an ownership percentage of "maybe twenty percent" in Adanse, LLC, as an executor of the Trust. The Respondent advised that, if her daughter needs money for the business, she (Respondent) provides monetary assistance. She said that she changed the ownership in Sunbiz (Exhibit P) on January 30, 2026, from her and her husband as the owners of the Adanse, LLC to her daughter and the Trust as the owners. The Respondent stated that she changed it after becoming Mayor because her attorney advised her to move everything into the Trust.

(44) The Respondent confirmed that she is the Vice President of the Kissimmee Diner Inc. DBA Matador Taco & Tapas (Exhibit B) and that the business applied for Boost 2.0 funding and received \$15,000. Her husband, she said, runs the business.

Note: All votes in Commission meetings, in regard to Boost 2.0, took place prior to the Respondent's businesses applying for funding. The Respondent never voted to approve grants for her businesses. Award for each business was determined in accordance with the Boost 2.0 Program created by the City's Department of Economic Development, and was in direct correlation to the businesses' square footage and the criteria discussed in the "Grant Award Tiers" section of the Boost 2.0 Program Overview (Exhibit I, page 2).

(45) The Respondent confirmed that she also owns the buildings where her businesses are located. She denied that she only advised her tenants to apply for the Boost 2.0 funds, and stated she advised any business owners she came in contact with to apply for the Boost 2.0 funds.

(46) The Respondent said that, after she applied for Boost 2.0 funds, she never contacted anyone in the Economic Development Department about her applications. She maintains that no one from the City reached out to her during the application process to suggest it was improper to apply for Boost 2.0 funding.

Note: Of the Boost 2.0 grant funds that were disbursed by the City to its local businesses, the Respondent and the her family's businesses, during the first round of funds disbursed on November 6, 2025, received approximately 6% (\$50,000) of the total \$855,000 disbursed.

(47) The Respondent was asked about what the then-City attorney, Ms. Sanchez de Fuentes', advice was to her after it was made public that the Respondent had received Boost 2.0 grant funds. However, the Respondent' declined to answer on the advice of her attorney to not answer any questions concerning the Respondent's conversations with Ms. Sanchez de Fuentes.

END OF REPORT OF PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION

EXHIBIT A

EXHIBIT A

Durham, Brian

From: C <cbzuco@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2026 2:30 PM
To: Durham, Brian
Subject: Fwd: PRR2025-1610

I thought the email for the records request might be relevant

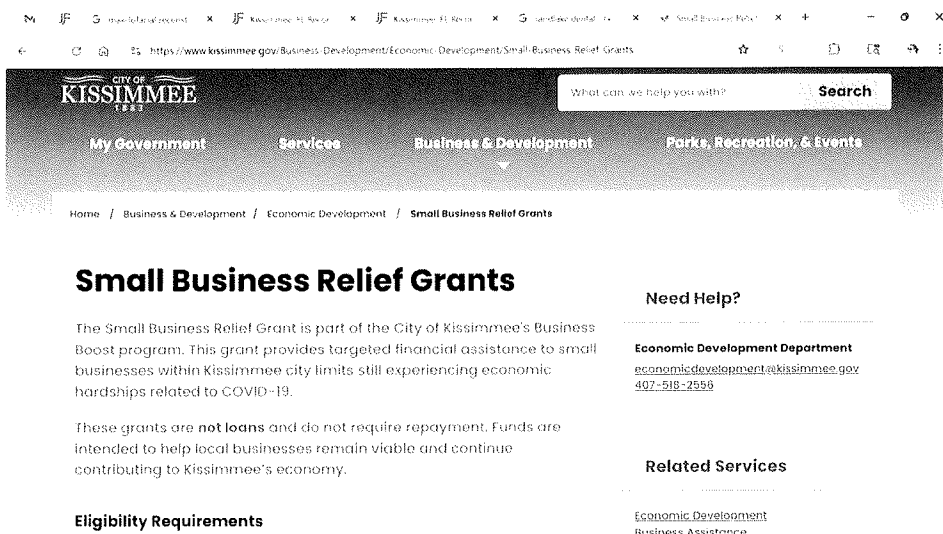
Best regards
Claudia Zuco

----- Forwarded message -----

From: C <cbzuco@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Nov 5, 2025 at 10:29 AM
Subject: Re: PRR2025-1610
To: <f72f0ab9-62fd-45c1-8604-571bd6a5bb52.KissimmeeFL@request.justfoia.com>

For example

Are there any records showing Jackie Espinosa applied for say one of these and if so how much and so and so forth



On Wed, Nov 5, 2025 at 10:07 AM C <cbzuco@gmail.com> wrote:

I want to see any records which may be in the city's possession for any grants or funds administered by the city have been issued to city commissioners and the amounts of and the purpose of any grants loans etc

I want all applications and monies paid to those applications if they were made by any of the following

Jackie Espinosa (did she get any money from the city/county/state/fed to improve sustain etc her businesses or home)

Angela Eady (did she get any money from the city/county/state/fed to improve sustain etc her businesses or home)

Noel Ortiz (did he get any money from the city/county/state/fed to improve sustain his businesses or home)

Carlos Alvarez (did he get any money from the city/county state/fed to improve sustain his businesses or home)

Janette Martinez (did she get any money from the city/county/state/fed to improve her businesses or home)

On Wed, Nov 5, 2025 at 8:22 AM Tameara Crespo (Kissimmee, FL)
<KissimmeeFL@request.justfoia.com> wrote:

Good morning,

Can you please clarify what you are looking for a bit further? Is there a specific grant you are requesting us to research on? What do you mean by 'obtained by city commissioners for personal use?'

Best,

City of Kissimmee

EXHIBIT B

EXHIBIT B

2025 FLORIDA PROFIT CORPORATION ANNUAL REPORT

DOCUMENT# P17000074426

Entity Name: KISSIMMEE DINER INC.

Current Principal Place of Business:

120 BROADWAY
103

KISSIMMEE, FL 34741

Current Mailing Address:

120 BROADWAY

201

KISSIMMEE, FL 34741 US

FEI Number: 82-2705582

Certificate of Status Desired: No

Name and Address of Current Registered Agent:

ESPINOSA, EVA J

120 BROADWAY

201

KISSIMMEE, FL 34741 US

The above named entity submits this statement for the purpose of changing its registered office or registered agent, or both, in the State of Florida.

SIGNATURE:

Electronic Signature of Registered Agent

Date

Officer/Director Detail :

Title P
Name ESPINOSA, JORGE E
Address 120 BROADWAY #201
City-State-Zip: KISSIMMEE FL 34741

Title VP
Name ESPINOSA, EVA J
Address 120 BROADWAY #201
City-State-Zip: KISSIMMEE FL 34741

I hereby certify that the information indicated on this report or supplemental report is true and accurate and that my electronic signature shall have the same legal effect as if made under oath, that I am an officer or director of the corporation or the receiver or trustee empowered to execute this report as required by Chapter 607, Florida Statutes; and that my name appears above, or on an attachment with all other like empowered.

SIGNATURE: JORGE E ESPINOSA

OWNER

04/30/2025

Electronic Signature of Signing Officer/Director Detail

Date

18
B1

EXHIBIT C

EXHIBIT C

31059	Adanse, llc	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	20,000.00	6628	PAID
31162	AJ's Refurbishing, LL	Approved	10/14/2025	\$	10,000.00	1500	PAID
31028	Alcoholadito Eco LLC	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	5,000.00	200	PAID
31033	Alpha Legal LLC	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	5,000.00	225	PAID
31098	ANGEL'S TOUCH DENTAL OFFICE, P.A.	Approved	09/21/2025	\$	15,000.00	4300	PAID
31048	BEAUTY PLUS SALON, LLC	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	15,000.00	5380	PAID
31039	Blooming Nails Studio And More Llc	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	10,000.00	1200	PAID
31027	Boga cafe & Bread	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	10,000.00	2500	PAID
31049	Buchito Restaurant Llc	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	10,000.00	980	PAID
31185	Cicis Pizza - 1400 East Vine	Approved	10/19/2025	\$	15,000.00	4000	PAID
31095	Claudia's Alteration and Tailoring Inc	Approved	09/19/2025	\$	10,000.00	1110	PAID
31206	Cunningham's, Inc.	Approved	10/30/2025	\$	20,000.00	5125	PAID
31075	D&E PRECAST AND CONSTRUCTION SERV	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	10,000.00	1282	PAID
31106	DataPsy Inc	Approved	09/23/2025	\$	10,000.00	2000	PAID
31044	El Amigo Wireless Inc	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	10,000.00	1250	PAID
31050	EL REY DE LOS POLLOS INC	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	15,000.00	4380	PAID
31168	EMPIRE BUSINESS & TAX ADVISORS LLC	Approved	10/15/2025	\$	10,000.00	700	PAID
31074	IPC SERVICES LLC	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	10,000.00	1889	PAID
31186	Ivonne Accounting Services & More LLC	Approved	10/20/2025	\$	10,000.00	1183	PAID
31202	j23 barbers by cobe	Approved	10/27/2025	\$	10,000.00	1,200	PAID
31026	Jecalex Supercell	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	10,000.00	1000	PAID
31213	John A Fields DBA Jack Fields Agency	Approved	11/07/2025	\$	10,000.00	2,350	PAID
31041	Kapp and Kappy B&B LLC	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	15,000.00	3033	PAID
31054	Kissimmee Diner dba Matador Taco & Ta	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	15,000.00	3909	PAID
31122	Legal and Business Office for Dominican I	Approved	09/24/2025	\$	10,000.00	400 sq ft	PAID
31068	Lewis Music Store	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	15,000.00	3855	PAID
31133	Magdalene Insurance Group, Inc Dba Atl	Approved	09/26/2025	\$	10,000.00	2000	PAID
31109	Mai Solutions LLC	Approved	09/23/2025	\$	10,000.00	500	PAID
31025	Maxflight Helicopter Services inc	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	20,000.00	11,500	PAID
31043	MCO EXCLUSIVE BARBERS LLC	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	10,000.00	1875	PAID
31024	Miguelos Ultra Lounge	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	20,000.00	7620	PAID
31121	Mikey's Pizza-ria	Approved	09/24/2025	\$	10,000.00	896	PAID
31029	NEW STYLES BEAUTY SALON CORPORAT	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	10,000.00	1000	PAID
31064	Osceola Star Newspaper Inc	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	10,000.00	1700	PAID
31030	Osceola Therapeutic Wellness Center	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	10,000.00	1501	PAID
31057	Pleasant Hill Family Chiropractic LLC	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	10,000.00	2183	PAID
31155	Qwalifize LLC	Approved	10/08/2025	\$	10,000.00	500	PAID
31120	Salon 405	Approved	09/24/2025	\$	10,000.00	2400	PAID
31052	Simply Title, LLC	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	10,000.00	1400	PAID
31219	Smartx Technology Inc	Approved	11/14/2025	\$	10,000.00	10.5	PAID
31142	THE HVAC-R TRAINING SCHOOL INC DBA	Approved	10/02/2025	\$	15,000.00	5500	PAID
31081	The Real Estate Gallery LLC	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	15,000.00	2750	PAID
31173	Utopia Health Career Center, LLC	Approved	10/15/2025	\$	10,000.00	1,500	PAID
31082	WR THE EMBROIDERY AND PRINTSHOP C	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	10,000.00	575	PAID
31100	Abracadabra Ice Cream Factory LLC	Approved	09/21/2025	\$	10,000.00	1200	PAID
31023	AeroStar Training Services	Approved	09/17/2025	\$	20,000.00	9000	Pending

EXHIBIT D

EXHIBIT D



OPERATION BUSINESS BOOST

Operation Business Boost stackable business assistance program which includes funding GrowthWheel business coaching services and Kissimmee Business Grants.

On December 21, 2021, the Kissimmee City Commission approved the allocation of \$350,000 from their American Rescue Plan funding for Operation Business Boost. Below is a breakdown of the program expenditures.

Operation Business Boost Program Expenditures:

\$315,500	Kissimmee Business Grants directly to eligible businesses
\$18,000	Kissimmee Osceola Chamber of Commerce to review business grant applications for eligibility and award amounts
\$16,500	UCF Business Incubation program for the delivery GrowthWheel Business coaching program

Kissimmee Business Grant Eligibility:

- Grant administered on a first come, first served basis for correctly completed applications
- Company must have a physical location within Kissimmee City proper - which will be used to calculate company size for grant level eligibility
- One grant per company (regardless of number of company office sites). Main office will be used to calculate SF for this grant.
- Company must have been established before March 1, 2020 **this is a American Rescue Fund requirement**
- Company must have an active Kissimmee Business Tax Receipt, an active Osceola County Business Tax Receipt, and "Active" listed with State of FL (Sunbiz.com)
- Company must be current on all their taxes assessments and fees
- Company must not have any outstanding delinquent liens or code enforcement violations

Grant Award Levels:

Home Business	\$ 2,000
Companies with up to 2,500 SF	\$ 5,000
Companies 2,501 to 5,000 SF	\$ 7,500
Companies with over 5,001 SF	\$10,000

ITEM 7.A

AUTHORIZATION TO TRANSFER AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN - CORONAVIRUS LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDS

Request

Authorization to transfer funds from the American Rescue Plan - Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds.

Explanation

During the June 21, 2021, Commission Workshop, the Commission approved moving forward with allocating the American Rescue Plan - Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds for projects that meet the following federally-authorized uses. In response, staff is requesting authorization to transfer funds from the American Rescue Plan Fund to the appropriate funds and accounts as listed below, amending the budget accordingly.

1) Address negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency

Use of these funds are to aid in addressing negative impacts and economic harms to workers, households, small businesses, impacted industries, and the public sector.

Small Business Assistance Program "Operation Business Boost" - \$350,000

2) Replace lost public sector revenue

Use of these funds are to provide support for government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue experienced due to the pandemic.

General Fund - \$1,689,000.00

Sales Tax Fund - \$2,304,000.00

Gas Tax Fund - \$571,000.00

Building Fund - \$750,000.00

3) Invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure

Use of these funds will assist with necessary investments to improve access to clean drinking water, support vital wastewater and stormwater infrastructure, and to expand access to broadband internet.

Chamber Park Fiber project to provide access to broadband internet in the community center hub - \$80,000

Financial Information

Account #	Project #	Increase / Decrease	Budget	Actual
00110603 - 503434		Increase	350,000	
00100381 - 381000		Increase	350,000	
00100369 - 369900		Increase	1,689,000	
00190700 - 509276		Increase	1,689,000	
10400369 - 369900		Increase	2,304,000	
10490700 - 509276		Increase	2,304,000	
10300369 - 369900		Increase	571,000	

10345650 - 509276		Increase	571,000	
10100369 - 369900		Increase	750,000	
10140106 - 506292		Increase	750,000	
56000369 - 369900		Increase	80,000	
56060106 - 506393		Increase	80,000	

Financial Summary:

Increase revenue to transfer funds from the American Rescue Act Fund to the General, Sales Tax, Gas Tax, and Building Funds, amending the budget accordingly.

Recommendation

Authorization to transfer and expend funds from the American Rescue Plan - Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds as requested.

REQUESTED CITY COMMISSION ACTION:

Approve

Department: City Manager
Presenter:

Attachment(s):

None

D3

EXHIBIT E

EXHIBIT E

March 27, 2026



OSCEOLA NEWS-GAZETTE

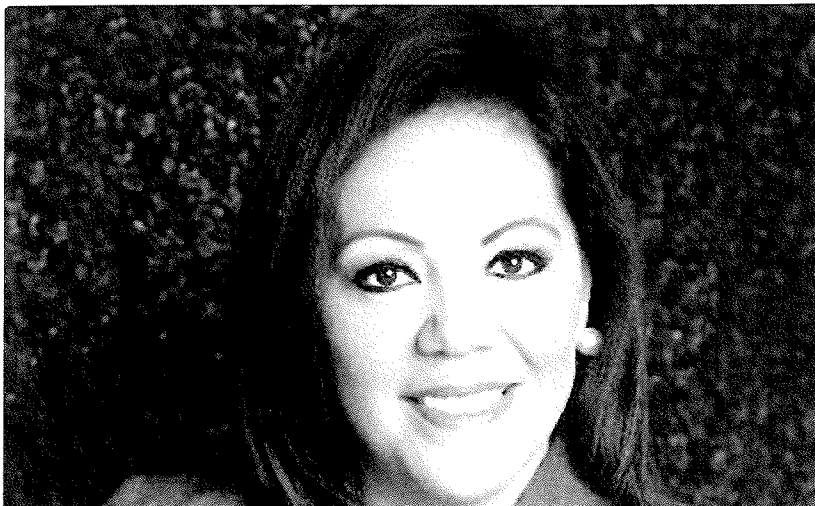
*Informing readers.
Helping build a stronger community.*



Did Kissimmee mayor get a Boost from the city?

By Ken Jackson on Thursday, March 5, 2026

Espinosa addresses grants for her businesses,
role in City Attorney's removal



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243 Bayshore Blvd
Tampa, FL 33606-
2328

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Weather

A city of Kissimmee small-business stabilizing program that utilized federal funds released in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic has come under scrutiny by some members of the public—and the state of Florida's CFO.

Three downtown companies owned or operated by Mayor Jackie Espinosa's family received \$50,000 in city grant funds through the "Business Boost 2.0" program, approved late in 2024 and launched in September 2025 to, "assist local businesses still facing lingering economic challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic."

It was a sort of sequel to the first Business Boost in 2022, approved to address the pandemic's immediate negative impacts and economic harm to workers and small businesses. It provided emergency stabilization relief immediately following local, state and country-wide shutdowns.

The program solely utilized American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds the Biden administration released to the city. Kissimmee set qualifying guidelines—businesses with fewer than 500 employees that were physically located within city limits had to demonstrate financial hardships like decreased sales, increased operational costs, or debt incurred to remain open during and after the pandemic.

Business Boost 2.0 payments were based on the type of business and the square footage occupied—from one-time payments of \$5,000 for a home-based business to \$20,000 for companies with over 5,000 square feet of operating space.

Espinosa, addressing concerns about how the payments gave the impression she was channeling city funds to her family, said the federal funds had been in the city's hands since 2022.

"The last administration did absolutely nothing with it," she said. "They're not businesspeople. They didn't understand that everyone in downtown was struggling."

Documents furnished by the city show three businesses operated by her family members—The Real Estate Gallery, Kissimmee Diner/ Matador Taco & Tapas (received \$15,000 each) and Adanse, LLC (\$20,000)—provided proof their sales

82.3 °F
Increasing Clouds
54 °F 80 °F
Air Temp: 82.3 °F
Wind: 3.1 mph

85 - 92	84 - 75	73 - 75	64 - 69
SAT	SUN	MON	TUE

1:30 PM Fri Mar 27

WillyWeather

or income all suffered in 2020-22 in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, just like other program applicants.

Adanse, a downtown dance studio, is owned by one of Espinosa's daughters, but the mayor signed the hardship letter. She addressed that by noting one of the studio's clients is the Department of Children and Families, which offers dance lessons as therapy for victims of abuse.

"My daughter is the one certified to do this. We've been working with them for 20 years and we have DCF implications because of this," Espinosa said. "People don't have any idea. They think it's just a competitive ballroom dance studio."

Espinosa said she advocated for hundreds to thousands of Kissimmee's businesses, not just the 13 she owns.

"At no point was I thinking, well, let me see how many businesses I can stick in there," she said. "I would go to my tenants and I'd say, 'You guys should apply for this.' My tenants had a hard time paying rent."

"Some people might just need the money to survive until they can sell their business, just need a few months of oxygen because they'd rather sell it as a business rather than sell as a foreclosure."

Espinosa said she understands the optics of the situation to the public, as this is the first time in the city's history the mayor has also been the owner and operator of numerous local businesses.

"And it's the only one pandemic we've had like this," she said. "It's hard to make ends meet, so now I can pay staff, and that's one thing I'm very proud of, because I've essentially got 13 different managers."

Of course it's going to look bad, until you explain the particulars."

Kissimmee resident Lillian Evans has been one of a small handful of residents who have challenged Espinosa on the ethics of her accepting grant funding for her own businesses. She said it doesn't matter that these are federal funds and not city taxpayer dollars.

"That money needs to go to other people. She's a government official, she shouldn't be accepting it," said Evans, who said she has filed a complaint with the state's Florida Commission on Ethics regarding the matter. "The state said they shouldn't

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Kissimmee Klassic

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be accepting it. I want the city to be run right, and I don't think (Espinosa) is the right mayor for that."

Records show the city paid out \$775,000 to about 70 companies in 2025, with four more pending payments awaiting missing documents. In 2022 during the first Business Boost program, 53 companies received \$315,000.

According to city spokesperson Alibeth Suarez, all small businesses within city limits meeting the eligibility criteria were invited to apply, and applications were reviewed to confirm eligibility, size parameters, and documentation of financial hardship connected to COVID-19 impacts. Grants were paid out starting in September as applications were reviewed and awards approved.

On Dec. 5, 2025, as some of the last grants were paid out, then-County Attorney Olga Sanchez de Fuentes sent an email to Espinosa and City Manager Mike Steigerwald, sharing links from the Commission on Ethics Opinions regarding receiving those grants from the same city a official serves which, the attorney explained, "Can create a prohibited, conflicting contractual relationship between the officer or employee," with an offer to meet to discuss further.

At the Feb. 3 City Commission meeting, Espinosa, citing a list of "serious and ongoing concerns regarding the City Attorney's capability, judgment, responsiveness, and overall quality of work" she shared with city officials in January, made a motion to terminate Snachez that passed with a 3-1 vote.

Espinosa addressed the perception that her action was related to the attorney's questioning the grant.

"No, there's a whole history of things that happened, which I finally put in writing and submitted (to Steigerwald). I didn't fire her. I asked for her resignation, because I found that we were at a place where it just wasn't going to get (better)," the mayor said. "One, two, three months after the money had been issued, do you think maybe you should have had that opinion when we first discussed this? Do you think you should have questioned this back then? The attorney decided to get an opinion after the money had been dispersed, after I had stressed my concerns about other things.

"Why didn't you question it in September? Why wait? Why are we questioning this in December?"

Calls to Sanchez de Fuentes, who left the Feb. 3 meeting immediately after her ouster, have not been returned.

But, prior to that, on Jan. 15 the Florida Agency for Fiscal Oversight and the state's Department of Financial Services, headed up by state Chief Financial Officer Blaise Ingoglia, sent city officials a request for documentation of approval and disbursement of federal, state and local post-COVID assistance funds—such as Business Boost—going back to 2020. The request included copies of the application forms and “documents regarding the evaluation and approval of applicants or applications, to include but not limited to, memoranda, scoring rubrics, communications about applicants or applications.”

Last week through a public records request, the city made available over 1,000 pages of documents it transmitted to FAFO per its request. Many were applications for Business Boost funds and the accompanying tax and business documents, as well as correspondence between the city's Economic Development Department and the applying businesses. Hundreds of city businesses, from professional services to wellness and medical offices to restaurants and other retail entities, applied for funds.

Those documents showed that part of an affidavit applicants to Business Boost 2.0 filled out affirms their company was not owned or controlled by government entities in China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, Cuba, the Venezuelan regime of (now ousted president) Nicolas Maduro or Syria.

And, since the request went back to 2020, some of the documents refer to businesses being accepted into the GrowthWheel assistance program run by the UCF Business Incubator.

When asked why she thought of the state's oversight agency asking a city how and why it was using federal funds, Espinosa said she would completely understand the state's oversight of how it's spending the city's money.

“I get they have to investigate things like this. And we overdocumented our case,” the mayor said. “It showed we seem to be doing things pretty darn well.”

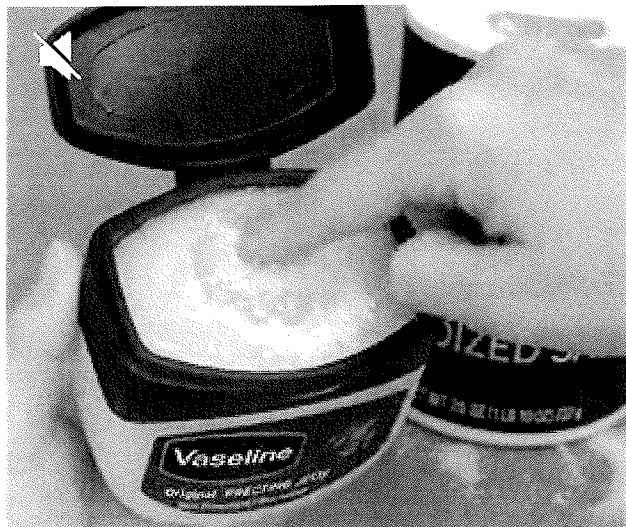
DOGE published a “Report on Local Government Spending” in January 2026—just before its documentation request to the city. While DOGE did delve into other local governments like the city of Orlando and Orange County, no Osceola County boards were mentioned.

It's been the only FAFO discussion of local government matters.

Ad : (0:03)



Around the Web



Mix Some Salt and Vaseline, Here's Why

WG Life Hacks 102

E6

Notice for Cars Used Less Than 45 Miles/day

Savvy Savings Online

The Osceola News Gazette

222 Church Street, Suite A

KPM Franklin Building, 2nd Floor

Kissimmee, FL 34741

Phone: (407) 846-7600

Email: editor@osceolanewsgazette.com



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News Gazette

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EXHIBIT F

EXHIBIT F

Durham, Brian

From: Olga Sanchez <osanchezde@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2026 2:13 PM
To: Bellagusi@outlook.com
Subject: Fwd: FW: CEO grant is a prohibited contractual relationship

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Olga Sanchez** <osanchezde@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Mar 10, 2026 at 12:51 PM
Subject: Fwd: FW: CEO grant is a prohibited contractual relationship
To: Olga Sanchez <osanchezde@gmail.com>

-----Original Message-----

From: Jackie Espinosa <Jackie.Espinosa@kissimmee.gov>
Sent: Friday, December 5, 2025 12:50 PM
To: Olga Sanchez de Fuentes <OLGA.SANCHEZDEFUENTES@kissimmee.gov>
Subject: Re: CEO grant is a prohibited contractual relationship

Ok, let's set up a meeting to break this down.

Jackie
Sent from my iPad

> On Dec 5, 2025, at 12:38 PM, Olga Sanchez de Fuentes
<OLGA.SANCHEZDEFUENTES@kissimmee.gov> wrote:

>

> Hello-

>

> Here are a few ethics opinions regarding receipt of grant funding from one's own agency, which can create a prohibited, conflicting contractual relationship between the officer or employee.

>

> Opinions::Commission on Ethics Opinions::2012::CEO 12-14

[https://sb.flleg.gov/nxt/gateway.dll/Opinions/ceo/2012/ceo%2012-](https://sb.flleg.gov/nxt/gateway.dll/Opinions/ceo/2012/ceo%2012-014.htm?f=templates&fn=document-frameset.htm&q=%5Brank%3A%5Bsum%3A%5Bstem%3AGrants%5D%5D%5D&x=server&vid=html%3Acoe)

[014.htm?f=templates&fn=document-](https://sb.flleg.gov/nxt/gateway.dll/Opinions/ceo/2012/ceo%2012-014.htm?f=templates&fn=document-frameset.htm&q=%5Brank%3A%5Bsum%3A%5Bstem%3AGrants%5D%5D%5D&x=server&vid=html%3Acoe)

[frameset.htm&q=%5Brank%3A%5Bsum%3A%5Bstem%3AGrants%5D%5D%5D&x=server&vid=html%3Acoe](https://sb.flleg.gov/nxt/gateway.dll/Opinions/ceo/2012/ceo%2012-014.htm?f=templates&fn=document-frameset.htm&q=%5Brank%3A%5Bsum%3A%5Bstem%3AGrants%5D%5D%5D&x=server&vid=html%3Acoe)

>

> Opinions::Commission on Ethics Opinions::1990::CEO 90-76
<https://sb.flleg.gov/nxt/gateway.dll/Opinions/ceo/1990/ceo%2090-076.htm?f=templates&fn=document-frameset.htm&q=%5Brank%3A%5Bsum%3A%5Bstem%3AGrants%5D%5D%5D&x=server&vid=html%3Acoe>

>

>

> Opinions::Commission on Ethics Opinions::1977::CEO 77-65
<https://sb.flleg.gov/nxt/gateway.dll/Opinions/ceo/1977/ceo%2077-065.htm?f=templates&fn=document-frameset.htm&q=%5Brank%3A%5Bsum%3A%5Bstem%3A77-65%5D%5D%5D&x=server&vid=html%3Acoe>

>

> Please let me know if you would like to set up a meeting to discuss.

>

> Thank you,

>

> Olga

>

PUBLIC RECORDS NOTICE: All e-mail sent to and received from the City of Kissimmee, Florida, including e-mail addresses and content, are subject to the provisions of the Florida Public Records Law, Florida Statute Chapter 119, and may be subject to disclosure.

EXHIBIT G

EXHIBIT G

Submit

Case Id: 31059

Name: Adanse, llc - 2025

Address: 17-19 Broadway Avenue, Kissimmee, FL 34741

Submit

Please provide the following information.

- ☒ I (we) certify that I (we) have the authority to apply for this grant on behalf of the business described herein.
- ☒ I (we) do not have any legal actions against or from the City, including code enforcement liens or outstanding property code enforcement violations.
- ☒ I (we) certify that the business has been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 emergency as described herein, for being deemed non-essential by Florida Governor's Executive Order, or I have provided a statement in Question C2 regarding how Covid-19 negatively impacted the businesses revenue/operations.
- ☒ I (we) certify that the information contained in this application is true, complete, and correct to the best of my (our) knowledge.
- ☒ I (we) shall cooperate with City of Kissimmee, and any duly authorized representatives of the City for grant auditing purposes, as further set forth and described above.
- ☒ I (we) understand that any willful misrepresentation on this Application could result in a fine and/or imprisonment under provision of the United States Criminal Code U.S.C. Title 18, Section 1001, and shall entitle the City of Kissimmee to receive a return of any funding provided hereunder, in addition to any other remedies it may have against Applicant at law or in equity.
- ☒ I (we) further understand that, pursuant to Section 92.525, Florida Statutes, a person who knowingly makes a false declaration thereunder is guilty of the crime of perjury by false written declaration, a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in Sections 775.082, 775.083 or 775.084, Florida Statutes.
- ☒ I (we) understand that in the event this Application is printed, signed, and delivered to City of Kissimmee, or its designated agent, in hard copy format (by mail, courier service, hand delivery, or otherwise) and not submitted electronically, then the Applicant, by virtue of its physical signature, specifically authorizes and directs City of Kissimmee, or its designated agent, to electronically sign the Application on the Applicant's behalf, for purposes of the City's file tracking and retention system.
- ☒ UNDER PENALTIES OF PERJURY, I DECLARE THAT I HAVE READ THE FOREGOING DOCUMENT AND THAT THE FACTS STATED IN IT ARE TRUE.

Printed By: David Rodriguez on 12/15/2025

1 of 2



Neighborhood Software

61

Applicant Name

Eva Espinosa

Applicant Title

mgr/owner

Applicant Date

09/17/2025

Applicant Signature

Eva Espinosa



Electronically signed by info@kissimmeediner.com on 9/17/2025 9:21 PM

Is there a co-applicant?

No



G2

Submit



Completed by info@kissimneediner.com on 9/17/2025 12:17 PM

Case Id: 31054



Name: Kissimmee Diner dba Matador Taco & Tapas -

Address: 120 Broadway Ave, Suite 103, Kissimmee, FL

Submit

Please provide the following information.

- ☒ I (we) certify that I (we) have the authority to apply for this grant on behalf of the business described herein.
- ☒ I (we) do not have any legal actions against or from the City, including code enforcement liens or outstanding property code enforcement violations.
- ☒ I (we) certify that the business has been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 emergency as described herein, for being deemed non-essential by Florida Governor's Executive Order, or I have provided a statement in Question C2 regarding how Covid-19 negatively impacted the businesses revenue/operations.
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- ☒ I (we) shall cooperate with City of Kissimmee, and any duly authorized representatives of the City for grant auditing purposes, as further set forth and described above.
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- ☒ UNDER PENALTIES OF PERJURY, I DECLARE THAT I HAVE READ THE FOREGOING DOCUMENT AND THAT THE FACTS STATED IN IT ARE TRUE.

Printed By: David Rodriguez on 12/15/2025

1 of 2



Neighborly Software

G3

Applicant Name

Jorge E Espinosa

Applicant Title

President

Applicant Date

09/17/2025

Applicant Signature

Jorge E Espinosa

Electronically signed by info@kissimneediner.com on 9/17/2025 12:17 PM

Is there a co-applicant?

No



Submit

Case Id: 31081

Name: The Real Estate Gallery LLC - 2025

Address: 120 Broadway , Suite 201 , Kissimmee , FL 34741

→ Completed by info@kissimneediner.com on 9/17/2025 11:58 PM

Submit

Please provide the following information.

- ☒ I (we) certify that I (we) have the authority to apply for this grant on behalf of the business described herein.
- ☒ I (we) do not have any legal actions against or from the City, including code enforcement liens or outstanding property code enforcement violations.
- ☒ I (we) certify that the business has been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 emergency as described herein, for being deemed non-essential by Florida Governor's Executive Order, or I have provided a statement in Question C2 regarding how Covid-19 negatively impacted the businesses revenue/operations.
- ☒ I (we) certify that the information contained in this application is true, complete, and correct to the best of my (our) knowledge.
- ☒ I (we) shall cooperate with City of Kissimmee, and any duly authorized representatives of the City for grant auditing purposes, as further set forth and described above.
- ☒ I (we) understand that any willful misrepresentation on this Application could result in a fine and/or imprisonment under provision of the United States Criminal Code U.S.C. Title 18, Section 1001, and shall entitle the City of Kissimmee to receive a return of any funding provided hereunder, in addition to any other remedies it may have against Applicant at law or in equity.
- ☒ I (we) further understand that, pursuant to Section 92.525, Florida Statutes, a person who knowingly makes a false declaration thereunder is guilty of the crime of perjury by false written declaration, a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in Sections 775.082, 775.083 or 775.084, Florida Statutes.
- ☒ I (we) understand that in the event this Application is printed, signed, and delivered to City of Kissimmee, or its designated agent, in hard copy format (by mail, courier service, hand delivery, or otherwise) and not submitted electronically, then the Applicant, by virtue of its physical signature, specifically authorizes and directs City of Kissimmee, or its designated agent, to electronically sign the Application on the Applicant's behalf, for purposes of the City's file tracking and retention system.
- ☒ UNDER PENALTIES OF PERJURY, I DECLARE THAT I HAVE READ THE FOREGOING DOCUMENT AND THAT THE FACTS STATED IN IT ARE TRUE.

Printed By: David Rodriguez on 12/15/2025

1 of 2

Applicant Name

Jorge E Espinosa

Applicant Title

owner president

Applicant Date

09/17/2025

Applicant Signature

Jorge E Espinosa



Electronically signed by info@kissimmeediner.com on 9/17/2025 11:58 PM

Is there a co-applicant?

No



66

EXHIBIT H

EXHIBIT H

ITEM 8.A

Operation Business Boost 2.0

Request

Update on Operation Business Boost 2.0

Explanation

Staff will update the Commission on the expansion of Operation Business Boost. The initial program was approved on October 5, 2021 and funded by the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Funds. On December 17, 2024, the Commission approved \$1,000,000 to further this initiative. As a result, Business Boost program was amended and will continue to include the following program areas under the Department of Treasury Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) category in responding to the far-reaching public health and negative economic impacts of the pandemic.

Osceola County faced an unemployment rate of 31% as a result of the pandemic. As a result, Kissimmee businesses have been slower to recover and have faced financial hardships that are affecting the health and sustainability of their businesses to this day. Business Boost 2.0 aims to retain the existing partners to assist with stabilizing businesses and targeted industries still affected today.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury's ("Treasury") Final Rule on the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 ("ARP") Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds ("CSLFRF") provides guidance for municipal governments intending to use CSLFRF to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency and mitigate the negative economic impacts of the pandemic. Municipalities may use CSLFRF to support small businesses and affected industries, such as tourism. The Final Rule clarifies that the ARP provides for CSLFRF to be used to "respond to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits, or aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality."

Municipalities may consider a number of factors to determine whether a small business has been impacted by the pandemic, including, but not limited to, decreased revenue or gross receipts; financial insecurity; increased costs; capacity to weather financial hardship; and challenges covering payroll, rent or mortgage, and other operating costs. Assistance to small businesses that experienced such negative economic impacts may include loans or grants to mitigate financial hardship, such as by supporting payroll and benefits and costs to retain employees, and mortgage, rent, utility, and other operating costs, as well as technical assistance, counseling, or other services to support business planning. Other allowable funding supports include targeted workforce development. Program specifics are attached.

Recommendation

Approval of Business Boost 2.0 areas and partners

REQUESTED CITY COMMISSION ACTION:



Approve

Department: Economic Development

Presenter: David Rodriguez

City of Kissimmee

Page 28 of 32

Attachment(s):

1. Program Specifics for Operation Business Boost 2.0

A1

Program	Description	Provider	Program Allocation	Provider's Fee
Business Recovery and Assistance Grants	Grants for small businesses, hardship based	City of Kissimmee ED Department/ Neighborly Software	\$500,000	\$13,000
Business Technical Assistance - <i>GrowthWheel</i>	Technical assistance and mentorship for existing businesses to optimize operations, expand, and improve financial performance.	UCF Business Incubator – Initial Agreement in 2022	\$75,000	\$18,750
Business Technical Assistance - <i>Bootcamp</i>	Help early-stage entrepreneurs (start-ups) refine their business models and validate market opportunities.	UCF Business Incubator	\$25,000	\$6,250
UPSKILL Kissimmee	Tuition grants to residents seeking to pivot from low-wage jobs and seeking to upskill or retrain for new careers in growing industries	Careersource	\$300,000	\$39,000
Rediscover Kissimmee	Marketing campaign to attract people to enjoy all Historic Kissimmee's unique and exciting amenities.	TBD	\$100,000	TBD
Total			\$1,000,000	

A2

EXHIBIT I

EXHIBIT I

Program Overview

Completed by suzanne.negron@kissimmee.gov on 8/4/2025 12:51 PM

Case Id: 31019

Name: 123 LLC - 2025

Address: 789 Tree Way, Kissimmee, FL 34741

Program Overview

Please provide the following information.



The City of Kissimmee
Operation Business
Boost 2.0 Program

The City of Kissimmee
101 Church Street
Suite 500
Kissimmee, FL 34741
407-518-2544
economicdevelopment@kissimmee.gov

Program Description

The Business Boost 2.0 (BB2) grant program is a targeted small business assistance program created by the City of Kissimmee, designed to address lingering economic challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic. Its objective is to provide financial relief to small businesses in the city who continue to face financial hardship stemming from the Covid-19 pandemic, including but not limited to, decreased sales, increased operational costs, additional debt incurred to stay afloat, etc. BB2 will provide direct grants to eligible small businesses to help mitigate these financial burdens, ensuring they can remain viable and continue contributing to our local economy.

Eligible Applicants

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be a for-profit entity, operating and having a physical location within Kissimmee city limits. Applicants must provide copy of the deed or commercial lease agreement for the business' brick-and-mortar physical location.
- Be a small business as defined by the SBA (e.g., fewer than 500 employees).
- Company must have been established before March 11, 2021
- One grant per company (regardless of number of company office sites). Main office will be used to calculate SF for this grant.
 - Owners of multiple businesses, all independent of each other and operating from different addresses (all located within the City of Kissimmee limits), can apply separately, one grant per business.
- Businesses with the same address operating from a multi-tenant building, including businesses under the same ownership, must demonstrate having a separate and distinct space within the building and support their respective square footage with a lease or other acceptable documentation. The same square footage cannot be counted in multiple applications.
- Must demonstrate financial hardship caused or exacerbated by COVID-19.
- Applicants must show proof of Financial Hardship between March 1, 2020 and December 30, 2024.
- Financial Hardship refers to economic challenges faced by individuals, households, businesses, or communities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds distributed through ARPA are intended to provide relief and address those hardships.
- Examples of Financial Hardship could include, but not limited to, the following:

I 1

- Material decrease in gross revenue in any calendar year between 2020 and 2023 compared to 2019 (pre-pandemic).
- Demonstrated material increase in operating expenses due to rent increases, insurance costs, cost of inventory, etc.
- Accumulated debt incurred to stay afloat after the COVID pandemic, with debt service still putting pressure on business cash flow.
- Company must have an active Kissimmee Business Tax Receipt, and “Active” with the Florida Department of State, Division of Corporations (Sunbiz.com)
- Company must be current on all their taxes, assessments and fees
- Company must not have any outstanding delinquent liens or code enforcement violations
- Company must not be engaged in illegal, restricted or non-compliant activities, such as adult entertainment or gambling businesses.
- **“Brick & Mortar” business:** a legally registered business enterprise operating and having a physical location within the City of Kissimmee limits. Applicants must provide copy of the deed or commercial lease agreement for the business’ brick-and-mortar physical location.
- **Home-based business:** a legally registered business enterprise operated primarily from a residential property located within the City of Kissimmee limits, where the business owner resides or maintains a legal right to operate. The residential address must be the business’s principal place of business as documented in the Business Tax Receipt (BTR), and must comply with local zoning, permitting and home occupation regulations.
- For the purposes of this program, businesses operating solely from a virtual office will be treated as a home-based business. A “virtual office” is defined as a location providing only mail handling, telephone answering, reception, or access to shared meeting space without dedicated, continuous physical occupancy by the business.
- For businesses operating from a virtual office, the virtual office location must be within city limits, supported by an agreement showing the physical address. Otherwise, the business owner’s personal address must be within the city limits.

Required Documentation

- Completed Application Form (Applications that are incomplete, or missing required documentation, will not be processed)
- Current City of Kissimmee Business Tax Receipt
- State of Florida business registration from the Florida Division of Corporation (sunbiz.org) noting an “ACTIVE” status;
- Current W-9; signed.
- Business tax returns from 2019 to 2023
 - C-Corps, S-Corps, and Limited Liability Corporations (LLCs) shall submit Corporation Income Tax Return (Form 1120/Form 1120-S).
 - Sole proprietors and individual/single-owner LLCs must submit their Schedule C (Form 1040).
- Supporting documentation to prove financial hardship: Lease agreement, Bank notes, etc.

The City of Kissimmee reserves the right to accept substitute or alternative documentation that sufficiently demonstrate financial hardship, or request any other documentation deemed necessary to support the application for assistance through the Operation Business Boost 2.0.

Grant Award Tiers:

For the purposes of this grant, *business square footage* refers to the interior area under roof that is used exclusively

Printed By: Suzanne Negron on 4/3/2026

2 of 3

and regularly for business operation, excluding surface parking area, patios, carports, garages, driveways, storage sheds, or any non-climate-controlled areas.

Home-Based Business	\$5,000
Companies with up to 2,500 SF	\$10,000
Companies 2,501 to 5,000 SF	\$15,000
Companies with over 5,001 SF	\$20,000

Disclaimers

Submitting an application does not guarantee an award. All applications will be reviewed based on program eligibility, completeness, availability of funds, and alignment with program goals. The City of Kissimmee reserves the right to approve or deny any applications at its sole discretion.

Grants awarded through the BB2 program are not loans and do not require repayment. However, recipients should be aware that grant funds may be considered taxable income under federal, state, or local laws. The City of Kissimmee does not provide tax advice, and it is the responsibility of each grant recipient to consult with a qualified tax professional or accountant to understand any tax implications associated with receiving this grant.

This grant program is administered on a first come, first served basis for correctly completed applications.

Grant funds are expected to be disbursed within approximately 4 to 6 weeks following approval, subject to processing requirements and verification.

EXHIBIT J

EXHIBIT J

Durham, Brian

From: Jackie.Espinosa@kissimmee.gov <Jackie.Espinosa@kissimmee.gov>
<Jackie.Espinosa@kissimmee.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, September 9, 2025 10:01 PM
To: Mike Steigerwald <MIKE.STEIGERWALD@kissimmee.gov>
Cc: David Rodriguez <David.Rodriguez@kissimmee.gov>
Subject: Re: Program Overview and Application - Operation BB2 Small Business Grants

Mike,

Thanks for this.

Definitely seems to be basic and to the point. I love that even home based businesses, provided they can provide proper documentation also have the opportunity to apply.

Not having the need for a DUNS is definitely going to make this a lot easier, last time that was a challenge. Also, Non profits, not eligible CORRECT? I had a church pastor and Alianza folks asking about this, I responded, I don't believe NP are eligible but I will call them and correct this if I am not accurate on this info. Thanks again, Let's get this started!!! (Good stuff)Jackie

Sent from my iPad

On Sep 8, 2025, at 3:10 PM, Mike Steigerwald <MIKE.STEIGERWALD@kissimmee.gov> wrote:

Before we start advertising the upcoming opening of the application process for businesses to apply for this grant, I wanted to get your feedback on the attached. This should be a lot simpler process than last time. Let us know your thoughts.

From: David Rodriguez <David.Rodriguez@kissimmee.gov>

Sent: Monday, September 8, 2025 3:00 PM

To: Mike Steigerwald <MIKE.STEIGERWALD@kissimmee.gov>; Desiree Matthews

<DESIREE.MATTHEWS@kissimmee.gov>; Alibeth Suarez <Alibeth.Suarez@kissimmee.gov>

Cc: Olga Sanchez de Fuentes <OLGA.SANCHEZDEFUENTES@kissimmee.gov>

Subject: Program Overview and Application - Operation BB2 Small Business Grants

Good morning,

As mentioned this morning, attached is the Program Overview for the Operation BB2, describing the program and the eligibility criteria. The application form is also attached.

Please review for conformity with ARPA requirements, and for language – should you think anything should be worded differently, removed, added, etc., before the program goes live next week.

I appreciate your feedback.

David M. Rodriguez, BREC

Economic Development Director

Phone: (407) 518-2307

David.rodriguez@kissimmee.gov

<image001.png>

Program Overview

Completed by suzanne.negron@kissimmee.gov on 8/4/2025 12:51 PM

Case Id: 31019

Name: 123 LLC - 2025

Address: 789 Tree Way, kissimmee, FL 34741

Program Overview

Please provide the following information.



The City of Kissimmee
Operation Business
Boost 2.0 Program

The City of Kissimmee
101 Church Street
Suite 500
Kissimmee, FL 34741
407-518-2544
economicdevelopment@kissimmee.gov

Program Description

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- Financial Hardship refers to economic challenges faced by individuals, households, businesses, or communities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds distributed through ARPA are intended to provide relief and address those hardships.
- Examples of Financial Hardship could include, but not limited to, the following:

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- Demonstrated material increase in operating expenses due to rent increases, insurance costs, cost of inventory, etc.
- Accumulated debt incurred to stay afloat after the COVID pandemic, with debt service still putting pressure on business cash flow.
- Company must have an active Kissimmee Business Tax Receipt, and “Active” with the Florida Department of State, Division of Corporations (Sunbiz.com)
- Company must be current on all their taxes, assessments and fees
- Company must not have any outstanding delinquent liens or code enforcement violations
- Company must not be engaged in illegal, restricted or non-compliant activities, such as adult entertainment or gambling businesses.
- **“Brick & Mortar” business:** a legally registered business enterprise operating and having a physical location within the City of Kissimmee limits. Applicants must provide copy of the deed or commercial lease agreement for the business’ brick-and-mortar physical location.
- **Home-based business:** a legally registered business enterprise operated primarily from a residential property located within the City of Kissimmee limits, where the business owner resides or maintains a legal right to operate. The residential address must be the business’s principal place of business as documented in the Business Tax Receipt (BTR), and must comply with local zoning, permitting and home occupation regulations.
- For the purposes of this program, businesses operating solely from a virtual office will be treated as a home-based business. A “virtual office” is defined as a location providing only mail handling, telephone answering, reception, or access to shared meeting space without dedicated, continuous physical occupancy by the business.
- For businesses operating from a virtual office, the virtual office location must be within city limits, supported by an agreement showing the physical address. Otherwise, the business owner’s personal address must be within the city limits.

Required Documentation

- Completed Application Form (Applications that are incomplete, or missing required documentation, will not be processed)
- Current City of Kissimmee Business Tax Receipt
- State of Florida business registration from the Florida Division of Corporation (sunbiz.org) noting an “ACTIVE” status;
- Current W-9; signed.
- Business tax returns from 2019 to 2023
 - C-Corps, S-Corps, and Limited Liability Corporations (LLCs) shall submit Corporation Income Tax Return (Form 1120/Form 1120-S).
 - Sole proprietors and individual/single-owner LLCs must submit their Schedule C (Form 1040).
- Supporting documentation to prove financial hardship: Lease agreement, Bank notes, etc.

The City of Kissimmee reserves the right to accept substitute or alternative documentation that sufficiently demonstrate financial hardship, or request any other documentation deemed necessary to support the application for assistance through the Operation Business Boost 2.0.

Grant Award Tiers:

For the purposes of this grant, *business square footage* refers to the interior area under roof that is used exclusively

Printed By: Suzanne Negron on 4/3/2026

2 of 3

and regularly for business operation, excluding surface parking area, patios, carports, garages, driveways, storage sheds, or any non-climate-controlled areas.

Home-Based Business	\$5,000
Companies with up to 2,500 SF	\$10,000
Companies 2,501 to 5,000 SF	\$15,000
Companies with over 5,001 SF	\$20,000

Disclaimers

Submitting an application does not guarantee an award. All applications will be reviewed based on program eligibility, completeness, availability of funds, and alignment with program goals. The City of Kissimmee reserves the right to approve or deny any applications at its sole discretion.

Grants awarded through the BB2 program are not loans and do not require repayment. However, recipients should be aware that grant funds may be considered taxable income under federal, state, or local laws. The City of Kissimmee does not provide tax advice, and it is the responsibility of each grant recipient to consult with a qualified tax professional or accountant to understand any tax implications associated with receiving this grant.

This grant program is administered on a first come, first served basis for correctly completed applications.

Grant funds are expected to be disbursed within approximately 4 to 6 weeks following approval, subject to processing requirements and verification.

EXHIBIT K

Yolanda Claudio

From: David Rodriguez
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 3:26 PM
To: Yolanda Claudio
Subject: RE: Business Boost 2.0 grant question and verification

Per program rules, owners of multiple businesses, all independent of each other and operating from different addresses (all located within the City of Kissimmee limits), can apply separately, one grant per business.

From: Yolanda Claudio <Yolanda.Claudio@kissimmee.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 3:22 PM
To: David Rodriguez <David.Rodriguez@kissimmee.gov>
Subject: RE: Business Boost 2.0 grant question and verification

My question is the mayor has submitted 3 applications so far for her business.

1. Can we provide grant funding assistance for the same owner more than once even if it's a different business or being she's the mayor of the city?
2. It is a conflict of interest?

From: David Rodriguez <David.Rodriguez@kissimmee.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 3:20 PM
To: Yolanda Claudio <Yolanda.Claudio@kissimmee.gov>
Subject: RE: Business Boost 2.0 grant question and verification

What is your question about owners of multiple businesses? This instance is described in the Program Overview. It doesn't hurt to ask CA, but all businesses in the city that meet the eligibility criteria can apply.

From: Yolanda Claudio <Yolanda.Claudio@kissimmee.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 18, 2025 2:54 PM
To: David Rodriguez <David.Rodriguez@kissimmee.gov>
Subject: Business Boost 2.0 grant question and verification

Hi David,

Can you get verification from our city Attorney's office that we can process and approve the grant applications for each business the mayor has submitted. I noticed she submitted an application for each business she has and need to ensure we can one provide a grant for the same applicant and second to ensure it's not a conflict of interest.

Can you verify this before I proceed.

Thank you.

Kind Regards,

Yolanda Claudio

Business Development Specialist

Economic Development

Phone: (407) 518-2353



EXHIBIT L

EXHIBIT L

Durham, Brian

From: Olga Sanchez de Fuentes <OLGA.SANCHEZDEFUENTES@kissimmee.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, November 12, 2025 2:17 PM
To: David Rodriguez <David.Rodriguez@kissimmee.gov>
Cc: Tameara Crespo <TAMEARA.CRESPO@kissimmee.gov>
Subject: RE: Workflow Start Notification for Request PRR2025-1610

Hello David,

Has this request been closed out? I clicked it and it says paused awaiting payment. I'm not sure what further guidance you were looking for.

Thanks! Olga

From: David Rodriguez <David.Rodriguez@kissimmee.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, November 5, 2025 4:16 PM
To: Olga Sanchez de Fuentes <OLGA.SANCHEZDEFUENTES@kissimmee.gov>
Cc: Mike Steigerwald <MIKE.STEIGERWALD@kissimmee.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Workflow Start Notification for Request PRR2025-1610

Hi Olga,
Please see below. We received a FOIA request regarding grants applications involving City Commissioners. Sharing with you for any additional guidance.
Thanks.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: David Rodriguez <david.rodriguez@kissimmee.gov>
Date: November 5, 2025 at 11:43:43 AM CST
To: Samia Singleton <SAMIA.SINGLETON@kissimmee.gov>
Cc: Suzanne Negron <SUZANNE.NEGRON@kissimmee.gov>, Benjamin Burnett <BENJAMIN.BURNETT@kissimmee.gov>, Yolanda Claudio <Yolanda.Claudio@kissimmee.gov>
Subject: Re: Workflow Start Notification for Request PRR2025-1610

Hi Samia

Just seeing this request. From the description, it looks like the requestor wants to know about any loans or grants applied for and obtained by city commissioners. As it relates to economic development, so far no business boost 2.0 grants have been paid to any commissioners, however businesses owned by city commissioners, in this case, the Mayor, have applied. Please ask Suzanne to identify in the grants portal the businesses owned by the Mayor and her husband that have applied and download the applications.

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 5, 2025, at 10:51 AM, Samia Singleton
<SAMIA.SINGLETON@kissimmee.gov> wrote:

I believe so. The request is for all funding.

Best,
Samia Singleton, FRA-RA

From: Suzanne Negrón <SUZANNE.NEGRON@kissimmee.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, November 5, 2025 11:47 AM
To: Samia Singleton <samia.singleton@kissimmee.gov>; Benjamin Burnett
<BENJAMIN.BURNETT@kissimmee.gov>
Cc: David Rodriguez <David.Rodriguez@kissimmee.gov>; Yolanda Claudio
<Yolanda.Claudio@kissimmee.gov>
Subject: Re: Workflow Start Notification for Request PRR2025-1610

David
Does this apply to BB 2.0?

Thank you

Suzanne Negrón, CDAP

City of Kissimmee

Economic Development

101 Church St. 5th floor,

Suite # 550

Kissimmee, FL 34741

407-518-2586

www.kissimmee.gov

CITY OF
KISSIMMEE
1883



From: Samia Singleton <samia.singleton@kissimmee.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, November 5, 2025 11:28 AM
To: Suzanne Negron <SUZANNE.NEGRON@kissimmee.gov>; Benjamin Burnett <BENJAMIN.BURNETT@kissimmee.gov>
Cc: David Rodriguez <David.Rodriguez@kissimmee.gov>; Yolanda Claudio <Yolanda.Claudio@kissimmee.gov>
Subject: RE: Workflow Start Notification for Request PRR2025-1610

Hi everyone,

This request isn't applicable to the CRA.

If ED did provide funding to any of the commissioners/ the mayor, I happy to complete the request.

If so, please provide documentation or point me in the direction of where I may find the documentation. Thank you.

Best,
Samia Singleton, FRA-RA

From: JustFOIA Notification <KissimmeeFL@request.justfoia.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 5, 2025 11:21 AM
To: Suzanne Negron <Suzanne.Negron@kissimmee.gov>; Samia Singleton <samia.singleton@kissimmee.gov>; Benjamin Burnett <benjamin.burnett@kissimmee.gov>
Subject: Workflow Start Notification for Request PRR2025-1610

EXTERNAL EMAIL: This email originated from outside of the organization. DO NOT REPLY, CLICK LINKS OR OPEN ATTACHMENTS unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe

Dear Economic Development / CRA Department,

A workflow process for Request Number: PRR2025-1610 has started and is assigned to you.

Thank you,
JustFOIA

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EXHIBIT M

EXHIBIT M

Durham, Brian

From: Jackie.Espinosa@kissimmee.gov <Jackie.Espinosa@kissimmee.gov>
<Jackie.Espinosa@kissimmee.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, September 3, 2025 2:55 PM
To: Alibeth Suarez <Alibeth.Suarez@kissimmee.gov>
Cc: Mike Steigerwald <MIKE.STEIGERWALD@kissimmee.gov>
Subject: Re: For Review: City to Launch UPSKILL Kissimmee to Strengthen Local Workforce: TEST

I am discussing some concerns with Mike prior to this being released. Please hold off till I give Mike some of my thoughts. Jackie Sent from my iPad On Sep 3, 2025, at 1:52 PM, Alibeth Suarez <alibeth.suarez@kissimmee.gov> wrote:

Hi Mayor,
We'd like to send out this news release tonight once the Commission approves the item. Please review the quote and let us know if you agree with it. Once we receive your confirmation, we'll be ready to move forward.
Thank you!
Alibeth Suarez
Communications Director

City of Kissimmee
101 Church Street, Ste 500
Kissimmee, Florida,
34741
Cell 321.402.4114
alibeth.suarez@kissimmee.gov

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release Date: September 3, 2025

Release Number: CNR-25-040

Media Contact: Alibeth Suarez (news@kissimmee.gov) 321.402.4114
City to Launch UPSKILL Kissimmee to Strengthen Local Workforce KISSIMMEE, Fla. – The Kissimmee City Commission has approved a strategic partnership with CareerSource Central Florida to launch UPSKILL Kissimmee, a targeted workforce development initiative under the City's broader Operation Business Boost 2.0 program. This forward-looking program is designed to provide unemployed and underemployed Kissimmee residents with in-demand skills training and direct job placement assistance, supporting individual career growth and long-term economic resilience for the community.

The UPSKILL Kissimmee initiative will be funded through a \$325,000 investment of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and will be implemented in coordination with trusted regional education and training partners.

CareerSource Central Florida will deliver a full suite of career advancement services, including: One-on-one career consultations and individualized training plans
Financial support for enrollment in short-term certification and technical training programs (up to \$5,000 per participant)
Job placement assistance upon program completion
This program aims

to support Kissimmee residents seeking to transition into careers that offer upward mobility, higher wages, and long-term growth opportunities across diversified industries.

"UPSKILL Kissimmee is about opening doors to opportunity and building a stronger future for our residents," said Mayor Jackie Espinosa. "This initiative reflects our City's commitment to empowering our workforce, supporting families, and creating a more resilient and diversified local economy."

Addressing the Long-Term Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic At the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic in May 2020, Osceola County faced a staggering 30% unemployment rate, driven largely by job losses in the tourism, hospitality, and service sectors. As a city heavily dependent on these industries, Kissimmee experienced disproportionate job losses across hotels, restaurants, and entertainment venues.

While many residents have since returned to work, the pandemic exposed vulnerabilities in the local labor market and accelerated the need for retraining and digital upskilling. The UPSKILL Kissimmee program directly addresses these challenges by equipping residents with the tools to thrive in today's rapidly evolving economy.

A Core Pillar of Operation Business Boost 2.0 UPSKILL Kissimmee is a key component of Business Boost 2.0, a multifaceted initiative launched by the City of Kissimmee to revitalize the local economy in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. With a total allocation of \$1 million, Business Boost 2.0 supports: Small Business Relief Grants Workforce Upskilling & Retraining through UPSKILL Kissimmee Business Development and Technical Assistance Marketing of Historic Downtown Kissimmee Economic Development Director David Rodriguez emphasized the broader vision behind this City's initiative:

"Together, these efforts reflect a comprehensive and inclusive approach to economic development, focusing not just on recovery, but on long-term sustainability and inclusive growth," said David Rodriguez, Economic Development Director. Residents and business owners interested in learning more about the Business Boost Program, including how to apply for Small Business Relief Grants, Workforce Upskilling through UPSKILL Kissimmee, or Business Development support, are encouraged to visit kissimmee.gov/businessboost. Additional updates will be shared soon as the program launches.

###

PARA PUBLICACIÓN INMEDIATA

Fecha de Publicación: 3 de Septiembre de 2025 Número de Publicación: CNR-25-040 Contacto para los Medios de Comunicación:

Alibeth Suarez (news@kissimmee.gov) 321.402.4114 La Ciudad Presenta UPSKILL Kissimmee para Fortalecer la Fuerza Laboral Local KISSIMMEE, Fla. – La Comisión de la Ciudad de Kissimmee ha aprobado una asociación estratégica con CareerSource Central Florida para presentar UPSKILL Kissimmee, una iniciativa enfocada en el desarrollo de la fuerza laboral, como parte del programa más amplio de la Ciudad, Operation Business Boost 2.0. Este programa visionario está diseñado para ofrecer capacitación y asistencia directa para la inserción laboral a residentes desempleados y subempleados de Kissimmee, apoyando así el crecimiento profesional individual y la resiliencia económica a largo plazo de la comunidad.

La iniciativa UPSKILL Kissimmee será financiada con una inversión de \$325,000 en fondos del Plan de Rescate Estadounidense (ARPA) y se implementará en coordinación con aliados regionales confiables en educación y capacitación.

CareerSource Central Florida ofrecerá una gama completa de servicios de desarrollo profesional, incluyendo: Consultas personalizadas y planes de capacitación individualizados Apoyo financiero para inscribirse en programas de certificación y formación técnica a corto plazo (hasta \$5,000 por participante) Asistencia para la inserción laboral al finalizar el programa Este programa tiene como objetivo apoyar a los residentes de Kissimmee que desean hacer la transición hacia carreras con mayor movilidad, mejores salarios y oportunidades de crecimiento a largo plazo en industrias diversificadas.

"UPSKILL Kissimmee trata de abrir puertas a nuevas oportunidades y construir un futuro más sólido para nuestros residentes", dijo la Alcaldesa Jackie Espinosa. "Esta iniciativa refleja el compromiso de nuestra Ciudad con el fortalecimiento de la fuerza laboral, el apoyo a las familias y la creación de una economía local más resiliente y diversificada."

Abordando los impactos a largo plazo de la pandemia de COVID-19 En el punto más crítico de la pandemia de COVID-19, en mayo de 2020, el Condado de Osceola enfrentó una tasa de desempleo del 30 %, impulsada en gran parte por la pérdida de empleos en los sectores de turismo, hospitalidad y servicios. Como una ciudad altamente dependiente de estas industrias, Kissimmee experimentó pérdidas laborales desproporcionadas en hoteles, restaurantes y lugares de entretenimiento.

Aunque muchos residentes ya han regresado al trabajo, la pandemia expuso vulnerabilidades en el mercado laboral local y aceleró la necesidad de capacitación y desarrollo de habilidades digitales.

El programa UPSKILL Kissimmee aborda directamente estos desafíos al proporcionar a los residentes las herramientas necesarias para prosperar en una economía en rápida evolución.

Un pilar Central de Operation Business Boost 2.0 UPSKILL Kissimmee es un componente clave de Business Boost 2.0, una iniciativa multifacética presentada por la Ciudad de Kissimmee para revitalizar la economía local tras la pandemia de COVID-19. Con una asignación total de

\$1 millón, Business Boost 2.0 apoya: Subvenciones de alivio para pequeñas empresas Capacitación y capacitación laboral a través de UPSKILL Kissimmee Desarrollo empresarial y asistencia técnica Promoción del centro histórico de Kissimmee El Director de Desarrollo Económico, David Rodríguez, destacó la visión más amplia detrás de esta iniciativa de la Ciudad:

"En conjunto, estos esfuerzos reflejan un enfoque integral e inclusivo para el desarrollo económico, centrado no solo en la recuperación, sino en la sostenibilidad a largo plazo y el crecimiento equitativo", dijo David Rodríguez, Director de Desarrollo Económico.

Los residentes y dueños de negocios interesados en obtener más información sobre el Programa Business Boost, incluidos los detalles sobre cómo solicitar subvenciones, participar en UPSKILL Kissimmee o acceder a apoyo para el desarrollo empresarial, pueden visitar kissimmee.gov/businessboost.

Se compartirán más actualizaciones próximamente a medida que avance la implementación del programa.

###

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EXHIBIT N

EXHIBIT N



**MEETING MINUTES
SESSION OF THE CITY COMMISSION
CITY OF KISSIMMEE
CITY HALL, COMMISSION CHAMBERS
101 CHURCH STREET, KISSIMMEE, FLORIDA 34741-5054
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2024 AT 6:00 PM**

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Members Present: Mayor Jackie Espinosa, Commissioners Noel Ortiz, Angela Eady, Carlos Alvarez, III, Janette Martinez

Staff Present: City Manager Mike Steigerwald, City Attorney Olga Sanchez de Fuentes, Deputy City Manager Desiree Matthews, Deputy City Manager Austin Blake, City Clerk Tameara Crespo

Mayor Espinosa called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

2. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

After a Moment of Silence, Commissioner Alvarez led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PROCLAMATIONS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

3.A City Commission selection of Vice Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem

Request the Commission select a member to serve as Vice-Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem for the next two (2) years.

Mayor Espinosa made a motion to select Commissioner Eady as the Vice Mayor and Commissioner Alvarez as the Mayor Pro Tem. Commissioner Alvarez seconded the motion.

AYE: Commissioner Alvarez, Commissioner Eady, Commissioner Martinez, Mayor-Commissioner Espinosa, Commissioner Ortiz

NAY: None

Motion carried 5 - 0.

3.B Employee of the Month for December

Staff requests that the Commission join the City Manager in recognizing Marlene Neitzel of the Kissimmee Police Department as the Employee of the Month for December.

City Manager Steigerwald introduced Marlene Neitzel of the Police Department and reviewed the qualities and attributes which led to their nomination and selection as employee of the month.

City Manager Steigerwald reminded everyone that the Employee of the Month is not selected by the Commission, City Manager, or department heads but by nominations that are reviewed and selected by a committee of their peers from all departments in the City and there is no greater honor.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS - FIRST AND SECOND READINGS

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

6. HEAR AUDIENCE *Anything requiring a vote will be heard at a later time.*

Claudia Zuco, 1342 Stallone Court, Kissimmee, FL opposed the citizens police oversight

board and advocated for increased transparency measures from the City.

Alex Alemi, 424 Lakeshore Blvd, Kissimmee, FL, he proposed the City consider a temporary, low-cost experiment to close or reduce traffic in the downtown area. He supports a vibrant and welcoming downtown district, free from traffic and disruption.

Tom Kapp, 21 N Clyde Avenue, Kissimmee, FL highlighted the drawbacks of heavy traffic and loud music. He hopes to see a long-term plan implemented to increase police presence downtown for better noise and traffic enforcement.

Kristy Kapp, 21 N Cycle Avenue, Kissimmee, FL shared a recent experience in which she was a victim of theft on her property. She encouraged increased police presence and raised concerns about safety and the community's expectations for security.

- 7. CONSENT AGENDA** *The consent agenda is a technique designed to expedite the handling of routine miscellaneous business of the City Commission. The City Commission in one motion may adopt the entire Consent Agenda. The motion for adoption is non-debatable and must receive unanimous approval. By request of any individual member, an item may be removed from the Consent Agenda for discussion.*

Mayor Espinosa made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda minus items 7.C., 7.D, 7.F., and 7.H which were moved to discussion. Commissioner Martinez seconded the motion.

Motion carried 5 - 0.

- 7.A Approval of City Commission Minutes from the November 19, 2024 Special and Regular Commission meeting
Request Commission approval of the November 19, 2024 Commission Minutes.
- 7.B Purchase of Six New Lucas CPR Devices for Engines and Tower
Approval to purchase six (6) new Lucas CPR Devices from Stryker Medical, to be placed on Squad 11, Engines 12, 13, 14, and 15, and Tower 11.
- 7.C 2025 Tourism Enhancement Grants for Events
Approval to accept the 2025 Tourism Enhancement Grants for five Parks and Recreation Events in 2025 for a total of \$70,000 to use toward marketing, contracts #'s 20250100, 20250101, 20250102, 20250103, 20250104.

Item was removed from consent and placed on discussion for consideration.
- 7.D Community Development Block Grant FY2024 Funding Agreement
Acceptance of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) FY2024 allocated from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the amount of \$896,862, authorize the Mayor to execute the CDBG Funding Agreement (CDBGGEN24) and the City Manager or designee to execute the necessary Subrecipient agreements for the recommended Public Services projects which will be prepared by staff and approved by the City Attorney's Office.

Item was removed from consent and placed on discussion for consideration.
- 7.E Resolution authorizing the subordination of utility interest in Parcel 163.03
Approval of the resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute and deliver subordination of utility interest of Parcel 163.03 to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

Resolution #33-2024
- 7.F Holiday Incentive Payment

This request is for Commission approval to utilize approximately \$205,864 from reserves for a one-time holiday incentive payment to all full-time and part-time employees.

Item was removed from consent and placed on discussion for consideration.

7.G Acceptance of the Fiscal Year 2023 Homeland Security Grant through Urban Areas Security Initiative Program (UASI)

The Police Department requests authorization to accept the amount of \$76,190 for the FY 2023 Homeland Security Grant #UASI23 through the Urban Areas Security Initiative Program (UASI).

7.H American Rescue Funds Obligation

Approval to obligate the remaining balance of the American Rescue Funds

Item was removed from consent and placed on discussion for consideration.

7.I Lease Agreement with State Representative Jose Alvarez for Office Space at City Hall

Approval of a two-year lease between the City of Kissimmee and Representative Jose Alvarez for office space at City Hall.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.C. - 2025 Tourism Enhancement Grants for Events

Parks and Recreation Director Steve Lackey reviewed the grant approval process and outlined how the funds could be utilized. A discussion took place regarding the use of Tourist Development Tax ("TDT") Dollars, highlighting the need for the City to hold intergovernmental meetings with the County. This would ensure the City receives sufficient support and funding from this revenue stream to meet the community's growth and needs. Mayor Espinosa asked the City Manager to facilitate these discussions to help realign our vision and avoid being shortchanged.

Commissioner Eady made a motion to approve the 2025 Tourism Enhancement Grants for Events as presented. Commissioner Alvarez seconded the motion.

AYE: Commissioner Alvarez, Commissioner Eady, Commissioner Martinez, Mayor-Commissioner Espinosa, Commissioner Ortiz

NAY: None

Motion carried 5 - 0.

7.D. - CDBG FY 2024 Funding Agreement

Housing Manager Frances DeJesus provided a comprehensive overview of the funding process for CDBG. A discussion was held amongst staff and the commission to ensure that the City enacts accountability in our social services and quality of life funding application and allocation processes, similar to how the federal government is operating for CDBG funding. Deputy City Manager Matthews reviewed the internal measures put in place in recent years to ensure this continues to happen at the City level.

Commissioner Eady made a motion to approve the CDBG FY2024 Funding Agreement. Commissioner Alvarez seconded the motion.

AYE: Commissioner Alvarez, Commissioner Eady, Commissioner Martinez, Mayor-Commissioner Espinosa, Commissioner Ortiz

NAY: None

Motion carried 5 - 0.

Item 7.F. - Holiday Incentive Payments

City Manager Steigerwald provided a history of the employee holiday incentive payment. Commissioner Eady suggested an increase, and the City Manager confirmed that the Finance Director permitted the possibility within the current budget. If approved, the increase would be funded with \$284k from general funds and \$77k from other funds.

Commissioner Eady made a motion to increase the holiday incentive payment for employees in the amount of \$500 for full-time and \$250 for part-time employees, with those one year of service. Commissioner Martinez seconded the motion.

AYE: Commissioner Alvarez, Commissioner Eady, Commissioner Martinez, Mayor-Commissioner Espinosa, Commissioner Ortiz

NAY: None

Motion carried 5 - 0.

7.H. - American Rescue Funds Obligation

Deputy City Manager Matthews reviewed in detail the American Rescue Funds State and Local Coronavirus Recovery Funds Proposed Projects (Exhibit "A"). A discussion took place regarding the limitations of the Rescue Act, the allocation of funds, and the projects that will be affected, with a particular focus on how the stormwater project would be funded. Additionally, there was discussion about developing a program to assist with down payment assistance for homeowners. Management reviewed the language of the Act and concluded that funds from this source cannot be used for homeownership; however, they will explore other options and grants.

Commissioner Martinez made a motion to approve as presented, pending additional information on increasing funding for the Business Boost Program. The motion died for a lack of a second.

City Manager Steigerwald stated that we will look at other long term objectives including increasing the business boost program and discussed moving money around to make that happen. Commission consensus was to continue the item to the December 17th meeting.

8.A Appointment of Commission Representatives to External Boards and Councils

To make appointments for commissioners to serve on external boards and councils.

Mayor Espinosa made a motion to appoint herself to serve on the MetroPlan Orlando Board of Directors, East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, and the Osceola County Tourist Development Council

Commissioner Ortiz to serve on the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, Foundation for Osceola Education – Board of Directors, and the Osceola Council on Aging,

Commissioner Eady to serve on the Toho Water Authority – Board of Supervisors,

Commissioner Alvarez to serve on the Central Florida Commission on Homelessness and Tri-County League of Cities; and

Commissioner Martinez to serve on HelpNow of Osceola and the Osceola Chamber of Commerce Board of Trustees. Commissioner Martinez Seconded the Motion.

AYE: Commissioner Alvarez, Commissioner Eady, Commissioner Martinez, Mayor-

N4

Commissioner Espinosa, Commissioner Ortiz
NAY: None

Motion carried 5 - 0.

8.B 2025 City Commission Meeting Calendar

Approval to establish the Commission annual meeting calendar for 2025.

Commissioner Alvarez made a motion to approve the 2025 City Commission Meeting Calendar. Commissioner Martinez seconded the motion.

AYE: Commissioner Alvarez, Commissioner Eady, Commissioner Martinez, Mayor-Commissioner Espinosa, Commissioner Ortiz

NAY: None

Motion carried 5 - 0.

8.C Advisory Board Vacancy: Board of Adjustment

The Commission is requested to make appointments to fill a vacancy on the Board of Adjustment.

Commissioner Alvarez made a motion to approve a thirty-day extension for the Seat #4 vacancy. Mayor Espinosa seconded the motion.

AYE: Commissioner Alvarez, Commissioner Eady, Commissioner Martinez, Mayor-Commissioner Espinosa, Commissioner Ortiz

NAY: None

Motion carried 5 - 0.

9. HEAR CITY OFFICIALS

9.A CITY MANAGER

12/11 Oak Steet Park, Senior Christmas Brunch and 12/17, Holiday of Lights Festival and Annual Parade

9.B CITY ATTORNEY

9.C CITY COMMISSION

Commissioner Ortiz requested that the City revisit the Airport Landing Fee item now that a new commission has been sworn in. A discussion took place regarding whether to hold a workshop, as previously planned, or to present the item at a regular meeting. The commission reached a consensus to notify the aviation authorities of the intent to bring the item up for discussion at the December 17th commission meeting.

Commission Eady welcomed the new interim Police Chief and delivered a short speech emphasizing the value of collaboration among elected officials and the importance of working together to achieve significant accomplishments for the community. Mayor Espinosa and Commissioner Alvarez invited the community to the upcoming parade.

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mayor Espinosa adjourned the meeting at 7:19 PM.



A handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to the Mayor-Commissioner, is positioned above the title line.

12/3/2024

MAYOR-COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:

Tameara Crespo

CITY CLERK

American Rescue Funds State and Local Coronavirus Recovery Funds Proposed Projects

Lakeside Community Center (\$450/sq. ft)

Design	\$	400,000
Base FY24 Cost (17,000 sq. ft @ \$450 sq. foot)	\$	7,650,000
FFE @ 8%	\$	612,000

Total: \$ 8,662,000

Mark Durbin Recreation Center (ST2312) \$ (200,000)

Recreation Impact Fees TBD

ARPA Funds \$ (1,000,000)

Bond Request: \$ 7,462,000

Berlinsky House

Base FY24 Const. Cost	\$	4,500,000
FFE @ 5%	\$	225,000

Total: \$ 4,725,000

Existing Capital Project (ST2117) \$ (2,736,359)

Congressman Soto Grant Reimbursement \$ (1,000,000)

ARPA Funds \$ (1,000,000)

Budget Request: Fully funded

Affordable Housing (Council on Aging)

Buen Vecino - 60 units of new senior based affordable units \$ 31,620,405

City Commitment Issued CC Mtg 5/18/2021

Council On Aging Financing HUD 202 \$ 31,120,405

City Contribution ARPA \$ (275,000)

HOME \$ (225,000)

Fully funded

Woodside /West Oak Street Stormwater Improvements

Flood Mitigation and Stormwater System Improvements- Construction \$ 7,280,000

Design \$ 700,000

Total: \$ 7,980,000

FDEP Gran + Stormwater Utility Fundst: \$ (700,000)

State Grants: \$ (3,400,000)

ARPA \$ (1,891,730)

Budget Request: \$ 1,988,270

Business Boost Program
Amended Budget

\$ 550,000

Expended FY 23 \$ (350,000)

FY 25 \$ (200,000)

Unobligated Funds

\$ 4,366,730.46

Totals:

\$ 4,366,730.46

N7

EXHIBIT O

EXHIBIT O

ITEM 8.F

American Rescue Funds Obligation

Request

Approval to obligate the remaining balance of the American Rescue Funds

Explanation

The Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) program was authorized by the American Rescue Plan Act in March of 2021. It delivered \$350 billion to state, territorial, local, and Tribal governments across the country to support their response to and recovery from the COVID-19 public health emergency. In response, the city received an allocation of \$18,069,843. The remaining balance is \$4,366,730.46 which must be expended by December 31, 2026.

During the December 5, 2024 Commission Meeting, staff was directed to adjust allocations and increase funds for the Business Boost 2.0 Program. Project allocations were modified to reflect the changes requested.

Responding to Public Health and Economic Impacts of the Pandemic:

Lakeside Community Center

Amount: \$0 (Reduced by \$1,000,000. Funds from the recent Bond Issuance will be used to make up the shortfall.

Berlinsky House

Amount: \$1,000,000

Business Boost 2.0 Program

Amount: \$1,000,000 (Increased by \$800,000)

Affordable Housing Project in partnership with the Council on Aging (Buen Vecino)

Amount: \$275,000 (Committed match)

Investing in Water, Sewer, and Broadband Infrastructure:

Woodside and West Oak Street Stormwater Drainage Improvement Project

Purpose: To improve stormwater infrastructure in historically disadvantaged area of West Oak Street and Woodside. This is critical for flood mitigation in areas that have been severely impacted by flooding, protecting vulnerable households, including more than 200 rental units in these areas.

Amount: \$2,091,730.46 (Increased by \$200,00)

Approval of these allocations meet the program's objectives for pandemic recovery, focusing on public health, economic recovery, and critical infrastructure improvements. The expenditure aligns with the SLFRF categories, ensuring compliance with the program's requirements and addressing key community needs.

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval to obligate the remaining funds as requested and amend the budget accordingly.

REQUESTED CITY COMMISSION ACTION:

Approve

City of Kissimmee

EXHIBIT P

EXHIBIT P

2025 FLORIDA LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY ANNUAL REPORT

DOCUMENT# L20000074454

Entity Name: ADANSE LLC

Current Principal Place of Business:

17-19 BROADWAY
KISSIMMEE, FL 34741

Current Mailing Address:

120 BROADWAY
201
KISSIMMEE, FL 34741 US

FEI Number: 81-5422336

Certificate of Status Desired: No

Name and Address of Current Registered Agent:

THE LEGAL CONNECTION CENTER
120 BROADWAY
SUITE 201
KISSIMMEE, FL 34741 US

The above named entity submits this statement for the purpose of changing its registered office or registered agent, or both, in the State of Florida.

SIGNATURE: EDISON DENIZARD

04/30/2025

Electronic Signature of Registered Agent

Date

Authorized Person(s) Detail :

Title	MGR	Title	MGR
Name	ESPINOSA, EVA J	Name	ESPINOSA, JORGE E
Address	17-19 BROADWAY	Address	120 BROADWAY 201
City-State-Zip:	KISSIMMEE FL 34741	City-State-Zip:	KISSIMMEE FL 34741

I hereby certify that the information indicated on this report or supplemental report is true and accurate and that my electronic signature shall have the same legal effect as if made under oath; that I am a managing member or manager of the limited liability company or the receiver or trustee empowered to execute this report as required by Chapter 605, Florida Statutes; and that my name appears above, or on an attachment with all other like empowered.

SIGNATURE: EVA J ESPINOSA

MANAGER

04/30/2025

Electronic Signature of Signing Authorized Person(s) Detail

Date

2026 FLORIDA LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY ANNUAL REPORT

DOCUMENT# L20000074454

Entity Name: ADANSE LLC

Current Principal Place of Business:

17-19 BROADWAY
KISSIMMEE, FL 34741

Current Mailing Address:

120 BROADWAY
201
KISSIMMEE, FL 34741 US

FEI Number: 81-5422336

Certificate of Status Desired: No

Name and Address of Current Registered Agent:

MARIONDA, ESQ., ALAN JOHN
120 BROADWAY
SUITE 201
KISSIMMEE, FL 34741 US

The above named entity submits this statement for the purpose of changing its registered office or registered agent, or both, in the State of Florida.

SIGNATURE: ALAN J. MARIONDA, ESQ.

01/30/2026

Electronic Signature of Registered Agent

Date

Authorized Person(s) Detail :

Title MGR
Name ESPINOSA, SPT , JAILENE N
Address 17-19 BROADWAY
City-State-Zip: KISSIMMEE FL 34741

Title MGR
Name ESPINOSA FAMILY TRUST
Address 120 BROADWAY
201
City-State-Zip: KISSIMMEE FL 34741

I hereby certify that the information indicated on this report or supplemental report is true and accurate and that my electronic signature shall have the same legal effect as if made under oath; that I am a managing member or manager of the limited liability company or the receiver or trustee empowered to execute this report as required by Chapter 605, Florida Statutes; and that my name appears above, or on an attachment with all other like empowered.

SIGNATURE: JAILENE N ESPINOSA, SPT

MGR

01/30/2026

Electronic Signature of Signing Authorized Person(s) Detail

Date

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