

November 9, 2021

To: Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

From: Jed Davis

Re: The Equity Grant Program

To All Concerned;

I would like to convey to you my experience with applying and obtaining money for the equity grant program which, like the current regulatory cannabis requirements, has been nothing more than constant moving goal posts. I feel that you should be informed that the process is extremely cumbersome, unorganized, has created a ton of extra work with requests of repetitive information.

The grant money I requested is for projects that are necessary to remain compliant and are under very tight time constraints before this coming season, yet I am still awaiting funding from a process that began in February of this year.

After being approved to be able to apply for the Equity Grant in February, I spent approximately 60 hours answering the application questions in extensive detail, building a project budget, a project timeline, a scope of work document, and getting bids all while running my farm. The submission packet in and of itself would be considered sufficient to obtain a construction loan and should have been enough to fund the grant request.

Since my initial submission, I have been conditioned 3 separate time with requests for new and different documentation that was never indicated as being needed in the initial application, much of which was simply the same information in a different form. For example, the initial application required a project budget as well as a narrative on the project and how the grant money would be spent. Two months after submitting this information, I was required to submit the same budget, but on a template provided by Elevate Impact Mendocino and a 13 page executive summary using a provided template in which much of the requested information was repetitive or not relevant to the project at hand.

Also included in my request were fee waivers for building permits, which pertain to the project in which I have requested grant money. These waivers are not retroactive, so the waivers must be approved in order to pay for the building permits so that I can build the structures with the money provided by the grant. I have been told since June that I am approved for these waivers, yet I am still waiting for the Equity Grant to pay for the building permits. In order to keep my project

moving forward in a timely manner, I have already spent more than \$4000 in permit fees that were supposed to be covered by the waivers. I will be able to recoup these fees through the grant.

I have had to use my county tax reserve money to pay for permits that were supposed to be covered by the grant. Now, in order to get funding for the grant, I have must be current on my taxes. I have paid all my taxes for 3 ½ years but have fallen behind because of regulatory and market conditions and the fact that the equity grant money has not come through in a timely manner. Now it seems that because I owe a few thousand dollars in taxes, my grant money is in jeopardy.

In summary, I am still waiting for funding from a grant in which I started the application process in February. The project timeline requested in the grant application process has been completely blown out due to new and repetitive document requirements being requested. I have begun to question whether or not I will even receive the “approved” funds in time to remain compliant for next season.

Please simplify the process and get the money into the hands of those whom it is meant to help.

Sincerely,

Jed Davis