

**A MEETING OF THE PROGRAMS/GRANT REVIEW COMMITTEE
OF THE LIVING WELL FOUNDATION
ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2026, AT 7:30 A.M.
AT THE FOUNDATION OFFICE,
3711 CYPRESS STREET, SUITE 1,
WEST MONROE, LA 71291**

MINUTES

Members Present:

Melanie Massey Groves, Vice Chair
Dr. Bob Huffstutter
Leah Martin
Jason Pleasant
Doug Seegers

Staff Present:

Alice M. Prophit, President/CEO
Monica Turner, Executive Assistant,
Secretary/Treasurer

Others Present:

none

Members Absent:

none

Mrs. Massey Groves called the meeting to order, and the presence of a quorum was verified. Mrs. Prophit gave the invocation.

It was reported that minutes for both meetings, April 27, 2026, and today's meeting, would be reviewed and approved at the next Programs/Grant Review Committee meeting.

A review of the recommended funding from the previous meeting was held, and updates on some applicants or projects were provided to assist considerations.

The Committee then considered the remaining requests submitted for the 2026 Grant Cycle.

Category of Other Non-Profit Agency (continued):

The Arc of Ouachita (ARCO) – “Supporting Healthy Independence for Adults with Developmental Disabilities” – requested \$50,000 of \$59,146 total project, to fund the RN services required by the state for the specialty setting. It was noted that some funding by the state had been received, while not all coverage requirements were met. Upon motion by Dr. Huffstutter, seconded by Mr. Seegers, recommendation to PARTIALLY fund the request at \$35,000 for the required RN position was unanimously approved (5-0).

Latinas Unidas – “Strong Families, Strong Future: Familias Fuertes, Futuros Fuertes”- as first-time applicant, requested \$21,226 of \$25,126 total project, for programming which will focus on education, health, and leadership advancement for the Latino population; support literacy, education, common tasks within community to ensure success among all children; address disparities affecting growth in the Latino population. After further discussion, upon motion by Mr. Seegers, seconded by Mrs. Martin, recommendation to partially fund the request at \$15,000 was unanimously approved (5-0).

Shreveport Opera – “Shreveport Opera Express (SOX)– as first-time applicant; requested \$5,000 of \$216,250 total project, to expand to NELA offering children’s programs for underserved youth/children through musical performance and appropriately moral stories. It was noted that performing arts and involvement by children and youth can be supportive to mental health and well-being, and that local connections would be needed with schools in NELA, and further, that this might qualify better as a sponsorship in the future with follow-up by Foundation staff as to status and opportunity. Upon motion by Mr. Pleasant, seconded by Mrs. Martin, recommendation to NOT fund the request at this time was unanimously approved (5-0).

The Monroe Symphony Orchestra – “MSO Symphony in the Park” – as first-time applicant; requested \$10,000 of \$13,500 total project, to develop a new community wellness initiative offering a free outdoor concert paired with a picnic to promote health, physical activity, and social connection. It was again noted that performing arts and creative outlets are supportive to mental health status and well-being, and that this request might best be considered also as a sponsorship opportunity for the Foundation based on further follow-up. Upon motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Mr. Pleasant, recommendation to NOT fund the request at this time was unanimously approved (5-0).

Turning Pages NELA – “Adventure into Reading”- as a first-time applicant, requested \$50,300 of \$87,400 total project, to provide an evidence-based program for literacy improvement in underserved areas for children; educate caregivers and families; offer a summer tutoring program with one-on-one literacy instruction to help improve literacy within our community. It was noted that this literacy work was previously administered by these education professionals through Carmel Hill Foundation, which has discontinued its presence locally, but has endowed this organization with a large funding amount over 5 years for sustainability. It was also noted that operating costs, including salaries, appeared out of normal ranges and high for start-up nonprofits. Upon motion by Mrs. Martin, seconded by Dr. Huffstutter, recommendation to PARTIALLY fund the request at \$37,800 for the programming fees for the evidence-based program was unanimously approved (5-0).

Category of Education Setting:

Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM) – “Resilient Power, Security Upgrades, & Initial Maintenance for MMU’s & Disaster Response Facility” – requested \$154,750 of \$154,750 total project, for equipment and outfitting the new mobile medical unit (MMU) storage facility to be built, including a generator, security system, and maintenance expenses for the units. Upon motion by Mrs. Massey Groves, seconded by Mrs. Martin, recommendation to PARTIALLY fund the request at \$47,000 for half of the cost of the 3-phase generator was unanimously approved (5-0).

LA Tech University – Department of Curriculum, Instruction, & Leadership – “Trust Based Relational Intervention (TBRI) for Families & Educators: Building Community Capacity” – requested \$55,170 of \$67,307 total project, to provide training for educators regarding children & youth trauma and to offer a camp for supporting caregivers and children, as well as a conference for clinical professionals and teachers. Upon motion by Dr. Huffstutter seconded by Mrs. Martin, recommendation to PARTIALLY fund the request at \$17,500 for equipment and workshops/camps was unanimously approved (5-0).

LA Tech University Department of Kinesiology – “Health Coaching Internship” – requested \$42,511 of \$49,711 total project, to provide training for health coaches in community settings for public health monitoring and improved health outcomes. Information was also reviewed regarding this certification and employment and programming opportunities. Upon motion by Mr. Seegers, seconded by Dr. Huffstutter, recommendation to PARTIALLY fund the request at \$20,000 for the equipment, as a pilot project, was unanimously approved (5-0).

West Monroe High School– “Emergency Medical Aid Vehicle for Events” – requested \$16,500 of \$16,500 total project, to purchase a mobile cart equipped with medical and rescue equipment for use in various situations on a large school campus. It was noted that many challenges exist to create high risks and exposures at school campuses in current environments for safety and security. Upon motion by Mrs. Massey Groves, seconded by Mrs. Martin, recommendation to FULLY fund the request at \$16,500 was unanimously approved (5-0).

Category of Government Agency – Not Education Setting:

City of WM Fire Department – “Extraction Equipment & Electric Powered PPV Fan” – requested \$44,932 of \$49,925 total project, to upgrade extraction equipment and tools for public fire safety and rescue. Upon motion by Mr. Pleasant, seconded by Mrs. Martin, recommendation to PARTIALLY fund the request at \$22,500 was unanimously approved (5-0).

Chief Pleasant left the meeting at this time due to a schedule conflict.

Ouachita Outreach - “Senior Connection, Conversation, & Wellness” – requested \$20,220 of \$37,587 total project, to provide support services and food distribution for seniors in a disadvantaged area in south West Monroe. A discussion of local senior services, access to senior centers and transportation, and challenges reaching senior households at risk, was held. Upon motion by Mr. Seegers, seconded by Mrs. Martin, recommendation to PARTIALLY fund the request at \$7,200 for the professional instructors for the proposed health and fitness classes was unanimously approved by all members then present (4-0).

The consideration of all grant requests was hereby determined to be completed. It was noted that the recommended funding for these remaining 11 requests considered at this meeting is \$218,500. Including the previous recommendations for funding of \$716,217 by the Committee at its April 27, 2026, meeting, the total amount now recommended for funding the 2026 Grant Cycle applications is \$934,717. And further, with the two previously funded special projects for the Food Bank of NELA at \$10,000 and Salvation Army at \$10,000, the current total funding for 2026 grants, if so approved by the Board of Directors, will be \$954,717.

All recommended funding for all projects considered at the April 27, 2026, meeting and at this meeting, April 29, 2026, will be presented to the Board of Directors at its next meeting May 6, 2026, and, dependent upon those with a determined conflict of interest, thereafter to the HSD #1 Board of Commissioners, prior to notification to all applicants as to grant funding determination.

There being no other activities, and no Committee members or members of the public wished to make any further comments, upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned.

Vice-Chair

Secretary