

AGENDA SUMMARY
GRAND COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 6, 2022

TITLE:	Approval of seven MOAB! Tourism Grant 2022 awards.
FISCAL IMPACT:	\$30,951.36
PRESENTER(S):	Ben Alter, Economic Development Specialist

Prepared By:

 Ben Alter

 Specialist,
 Grand County
 Economic
 Development

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:
Attorney Review:

SUGGESTED MOTION:

I move to approve the following grant awards as part of the Marketing Our Awesome Businesses (MOAB!) Tourism Grant 2022 program:

- \$4,120.36 to Desert Power Yoga LLC
- \$4981.00 to Clapper Adventures LLC
- \$5,000.00 to Desert Wild Corp
- \$4,500.00 to Moab Donuts LLC
- \$4,500.00 to Simply Moab LLC
- \$3,500 to Mind Pleasure LLC
- \$4,350.00 to La Duena Mexican Kitchen LLC

BACKGROUND:

Following the Grand County Commission’s approval of the Small Tourism Business Marketing Grant pilot program during its April 29, 2022 meeting, the Economic Development Department (EDD) created and implemented the MOAB! Tourism Grant application process. Applications were accepted during the month of July. The evaluation committee was comprised of a Grand County Commissioner, a local non-profit representative, a local private sector representative, and a Utah Office of Tourism representative (our Moab City representative had to drop out at the last moment). This evaluation committee convened on August 24, 2022, reviewed all applications as a body, voted on each application, and provided feedback on each application. All applicants, whether selected for funding or not, received evaluator feedback.

The evaluation committee highlighted key considerations for the EDD to consider when facilitating similar grant programs. Some of those considerations include:

- **Create stronger evaluation criteria** (“stronger” meaning easily measurable or otherwise easily identifiable) and include more quantifiable questions in the application
- **Provide applicant resources** (literature, webinars, consultations, etc.) that discuss in depth the criteria that applications will be scored across – though the EDD did provide these materials, they were focused primarily on application processes and requirements
- **Retool the application process** – evaluators felt the grant process may have been clearer to non-profit operators than businesses and that a balance should be struck if the grant is designed for organizations of both categories
- **Require more information to determine an organization’s financial health**

- **Create a process that allows evaluators to fairly rank businesses and non-profits**, established organizations and start-ups alike in financial health categories
- **Create general EDD programming that highlights and teaches others about our community and sustainability goals and what diversity, equity, and inclusion means** beyond “I serve everyone” – the evaluators pointed out that, if the EDD intends to use these criteria in the future, they should be reinforced through year-round, community-wide programming that works to ingrain these messages, rather than ask for them in a grant application that could read as “one-off requests” rather than EDD priorities
- **Continue to work with regional partners and within the community to build organizations’ financial health and literacy**
- **Improve the grant’s attraction** – evaluators suggested that the grant program received fewer applications than expected due to both the small sums offered (the EDD publicized this program as intending to disburse eleven awards of about \$5,000 each) and the parallel publicization of the STAR Business Grant (which advertises sums of up to \$100,000)

These proposed projects prioritize local collaborations, will help businesses engage new audiences, and will create new revenue streams for those businesses. Moreover, these proposed projects work to market their services to visitors in the Moab area or otherwise do not work to increase prospective traveler interest.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Desert Power Yoga LLC application, feedback form, and grant contract
2. Clapper Adventures LLC application, feedback form, and grant contract
3. Desert Wild Corp application, feedback form, and grant contract
4. Moab Donuts LLC application, feedback form, and grant contract
5. Simply Moab LLC application, feedback form, and grant contract
6. Mind Pleasure LLC application, feedback form, and grant contract
7. La Duena Mexican Kitchen LLC application, feedback form, and grant contract