

Brenwynne Grigg

From: Sydney Mitchell [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, June 4, 2020 3:18 PM
To: Borough Assembly
Cc: Sydney Mitchell; Alan Wilson; Economic Stabilization
Subject: Re: Comments & Suggestions on Business Sustainability Grant Program

EXTERNAL E-MAIL: BE CAUTIOUS WHEN OPENING FILES OR FOLLOWING LINKS

Honorable Assembly Members and Mayor Weldon,

I am writing again to make it clear that I am in complete support of the COVID-19 Business Sustainability Grant Program. Furthermore, I am grateful to each volunteer member of the Economic Stabilization Task Force for the hours of thought and work they have invested.

As mentioned in my previous email, I do have some concerns and suggestions from the perspective of a year-round local retailer, but these in no way reduce my support of this program.

Please, vote in favor of this program on June 8th, 2020 as it is critical to keeping our interwoven local economy stable. Every business owner I know is cutting back and battening the hatches down to try and make it through a rough ride until we get a vaccine for CV-19.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Sydney Mitchell
CEO & Shameless Shoe Hussy
Shoefly Inc.
109 Seward Street
Juneau, AK 99801
[REDACTED]

Insta & Fbook: @ShoeflyAlaska
<http://www.Shoefly.com>

Brenwynne Grigg

From: Jeff Rogers
Sent: Thursday, June 4, 2020 2:28 PM
To: Economic Stabilization
Cc: Max Mertz; Linda Thomas
Subject: FW: Comments & Suggestions on Business Sustainability Grant Program

From: Sydney Mitchell [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, June 4, 2020 2:12 PM
To: Borough Assembly <BoroughAssembly@juneau.org>
Cc: Sydney Mitchell [REDACTED] Alan Wilson [REDACTED]
Subject: Comments & Suggestions on Business Sustainability Grant Program

EXTERNAL E-MAIL: BE CAUTIOUS WHEN OPENING FILES OR FOLLOWING LINKS

Honorable Assembly Members and Mayor Weldon,

First, thank you for all of the late night meetings and pivoting into new technology, like zoom, to facilitate public participation. You are doing a great job.

I have reviewed the proposed ordinance, Serial No. 2019-06 (AC). I have several concerns to share with you.

Maybe I missed it, but I don't see anywhere that it is stipulated that grants funds are only for operations physically located in Juneau. Many of our seasonal businesses run other shops and services in other communities, and even other countries. If you were to specify that the grant is for lease/rent, utility, and long term debt costs for operations physically located in the City & Borough of Juneau boundaries, that would seem to solve this problem.

My current situation is pretty serious. I have had to lay off one FT employee and cut part time help. All of my savings has gone into payroll, rent, utilities, insurance, costs to pivot into a new web store with high monthly subscription costs, costs to re-organize and buy CV-19 supplies for Shoefly, and spring/summer inventory which was ordered for a robust cruise ship season. My ability to withstand additional closures, reduced sales, and new costs to do business in this "new normal" is seriously compromised.

The way this ordinance is crafted, the grants provide a 1/3 reduction of rent/utilities and long term debt costs. This is helpful, but payroll and inventory are my biggest costs followed by freight and online subscriptions for business services and web store functionality along with rent.

If I go out of business, it will be because I can't afford to buy fall inventory at a sufficient level to maintain client interest and purchases. My sales were at 0-8% for March 17 through May 8, 2020. And my "re-opening" in May garnered about 35-45% of normal sales.

I would strongly urge you to consider expanding this first phase to include the costs of insurance and payroll in addition to rent/utilities. Furthermore, I would ask that you consider including costs of supplies and staff time to comply with CV-19 business requirements. This would allow me to repurpose those funds into inventory purchase and that will help keep me in business for 2020 and into 2021.

I would also point out that running a web store that serves primarily a local Juneau market, has costs similar to a brick & mortar store's rent/utilities in the form of subscription based services like Shopify, Quickbooks Online, Customer Data Hosting, Email Services and more. I am not sure that you need to address this in Phase 1, but it is worth attention for future phases for sure. With the likelihood that CV-19 may be with us for at least a year, all brick & mortar stores will need to offer online shopping to survive, and it is not inexpensive to do this.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

--

Sydney Mitchell
CEO & Shameless Shoe Hussy
Shoefly Inc.
109 Seward Street
Juneau, AK 99801

Insta & Fbook: @ShoeflyAlaska
<http://www.Shoefly.com>