

Agenda Item Report



Winnebago County
The Wave of the Future

DATE: 01/31/24
FROM: Winnebago County Executive's Office
RE: Pillars, Inc. request for \$50,000 in Spirit Funds in support of facilities and maintenance of a semi-independent program (Ascend) that provides supportive services and independent living skills paired with affordable housing for young adults living with mental health challenges.

General Description:

From homelessness to coming home, Pillars provides shelter, support, and solutions to address the housing needs in our community. Since the inception of the program in 2017, Ascend has served over 80 young adults on their journeys to successful independent adulthood. Funding from the Winnebago County Spirit Fund will be used to address overdue and underfunded maintenance for the 16 Ascend units that are home to 25 households.

Action Requested:

Pillars, Inc. request for \$50,000 in Spirit Funds to support the Ascend program.

Procedural Steps:

Committee of Jurisdiction: ARPA Strategy & Outcomes Commission Meeting date: 01/31/2024

Background:

Since the inception of the program in 2017, Ascend, a program of Pillars, has served over 80 young adults on their journeys to successful independent adulthood. Funding from the Winnebago County Spirit Fund will be used to address overdue and underfunded maintenance for the 16 Ascend units that are home to 25 households.

Pillars acts and advocates, on our own and in partnership with others, to increase access to affordable housing. As such, Ascend program participants pay monthly program fees (which cover housing and all other program costs like case management and professional counseling services) 70% below market rate. This affordable rent helps support participants in establishing financial stability and self-sufficiency.

Policy Discussion:

The commission has recognized Government Identified Community Projects that support or enhance county services:

- 1) Pillars and the Ascend program's goal is to stability of safe, affordable housing in conjunction with resources for mental health support, education, employment, and basic living skills, program participants are set up for a lifetime of success and self-sufficiency.
- 2) \$50,000 Spirit Fund Grant will make that possible for the 25 households who reside in Ascend units in Winnebago County to receive services.

Attachments: