

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1468
Appropriations

(Delegate Gaines, *et al.*)

**Maryland Consolidated Capital Bond Loan of 2010 - Prince George's County - La
Vida Sana (Healthy Living Farm)**

This bill extends the deadline – from June 1, 2012, to June 1, 2013 – for the Board of Directors of the Engaged Community Offshoots, Inc. to provide evidence that a matching fund will be provided for the Healthy Living Farm project, as required in the Maryland Consolidated Capital Bond Loan of 2010. The bill also specifies that the proceeds of the loan must be encumbered by the Board of Public Works or expended by the grantee by June 1, 2013.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2012.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill does not materially affect State operations or finances.

Local Effect: The bill does not directly affect the finances or operations of Prince George's County.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Chapter 483 of 2010 authorized up to \$75,000 in matching funds to the Board of Directors of the Engaged Community Offshoots, Inc. for the acquisition, design, and construction of the Healthy Living Farm in Edmonston. Matching funds may consist of real property, in-kind contributions, or funds expended prior to the June 1, 2010 effective date of Chapter 483. The grantee has until June 1, 2012, to present evidence

that the required matching funds will be provided. The proceeds of the loan must be encumbered by the Board of Public Works or expended by the grantee by June 1, 2012. Chapter 483 authorized two separate grants; the bill's changes affect both grants.

Background: Engaged Community Offshoots, Inc., the grantee, has established a year-round urban farm on close to an acre of land in the in the Town of Edmonston. The project – called La Vida Sana or the Healthy Life – is designed to revitalize the community by addressing the needs of food insecure and health-challenged residents. At the farm, foods are grown without any chemical fertilizers, any petro-based or nonorganic treatments, herbicides, pesticides, or fungicides of any kind. The grantee also practices no-till farming and only purchases nongenetically modified, organic seeds from small seed producers. In order to grow food year-round, the grantee built a hoophouse, a type of greenhouse, to keep the crops warm during the winter.

The grantee reports that it needs an extension because it is currently working with the Department of General Services to have the matching fund requirement certified for its project, which has already been completed. The grantee reports that two factors have complicated getting its matching fund requirement certified. First, it was unable to purchase the land for the farm from the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NPPC), as originally intended, but has instead signed a 15-year lease with M-NCPPC. The second factor is that the grantee used its staff (who have the expertise) to construct some of the hoophouse structure rather than hiring a contractor. With the extension the grantee is certain it will be able to meet the matching fund requirements by either having the matching requirement for the completed project certified or through an extension project.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of General Services; Prince George's County; Engaged Community Offshoots, Inc.; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 22, 2012
ncs/ljm

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