

Wilmington, Delaware
September ____, 2022

#xxxx

Sponsor:
Council
Member
Darby

WHEREAS, the WSC (Wilmington Senior Center) and FAME, Inc. (Forum to Advance Minorities in Engineering, Incorporated) have provided distinguished service to the City of Wilmington for several decades. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, they have proven essential to supporting our City’s recovery and building stronger, more resilient communities; and

WHEREAS, depression and anxiety caused by social isolation, along with other issues like economic insecurity, difficulties accessing services, and racial inequities, were exacerbated for elderly residents by the pandemic. In a 2020 report issued by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 43% of adults aged 60 or over reported feeling lonely. It was also found that isolation and loneliness are associated with higher rates of clinically significant depression, increased risks of developing dementia, having a stroke, and the increased likelihood of fatal complications among heart failure patients; and

WHEREAS, the WSC has continuously addressed these challenges for local seniors by providing a safe space for resources, social engagement, and information for its members. The WSC offers community dining, financial coaching, support with technology, and affordable housing opportunities for those 50 years old or over. Through the Grandparent and Caregiver Resource Center, the WSC also provides information, care management advice, and peer support groups that recognize the needs of the entire family unit; and

WHEREAS, the toll of the pandemic on the education of our nation’s youth is also an ongoing concern. A McKinsey & Company analysis of the impacts of the pandemic on students found that, on average, students are from five to seven months behind grade level in

mathematics. Students in majority-Black and low-income schools have experienced some of the worse academic outcomes since the start of the pandemic. The analysis projects that youth in today's K-12 learning environment could earn \$49,000 to \$61,000 less over their lifetimes due to the educational disruptions they have experienced; and

WHEREAS, since 1976, FAME, Inc. has addressed the achievement gap in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) by not only offering youth training in technical skills like robotics but also preparing students for higher education and the job market. Their programming partners with a vast array of stakeholders to provide underrepresented youth with a direct link to internships, scholarships, and opportunities to interact with industry leaders and specialists in STEM technology; and

WHEREAS, FAME, Inc. is currently pursuing major capital improvements that are aimed at increasing access to specialized job skills and career opportunities for underserved communities, combatting intergenerational poverty, and bolstering a diverse, innovative STEM workforce in the State of Delaware. The new facility, known as "The Learning Lab," will serve as a "one-stop hub for learners to access internet service, seek academic credit recovery, participate in regionally approved job training/ certification initiatives, and engage innovative technologies, to secure life-altering employment opportunities." The cutting-edge technology and new opportunities for applied learning in STEM fields have vast potential to help our City reinforce the educational quality of our schools and recuperate the educational losses resulting from the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was introduced to provide state and local governments with much-needed investment to counteract the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on households, small businesses, nonprofits, and impacted industries.

The City of Wilmington received an allotment of \$55,345,780, of which, \$5 million has been targeted for community investment, \$4 million has been set aside for workforce development, and \$22 million has been devoted to capital investment in the City's historically underserved neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, both the WSC and FAME, Inc. have, thus far, failed to receive financial assistance from the City of Wilmington to build their capacities to help residents survive and thrive in the hardships they are experiencing. While WSC is appreciative of the funding that has been allocated by the General Assembly as part of the Bond Bill, the pandemic has been a major test of its operational capacity. The organization is still in dire need of funding to safely meet the demand of its serving population. These institutions have made significant contributions to our community and merit support to sustain their mission. We urge the Administration to give their current and future requests for funding the fullest consideration to ensure that Wilmingtonians can benefit from the resources that they so need and deserve.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that this legislative body recognizes both the WSC and FAME, Inc. as integral to Wilmington's continued success. These organizations have been steadfast in their service to the needs of the City's residents.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Council urges the Administration of the City of Wilmington to contribute to sustaining the capacity of WSC and FAME, Inc. and assure that their endeavors continue to flourish by giving them full consideration in ARPA funding deliberations.

Passed by City Council,

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

SYNOPSIS: This Resolution recognizes both the WSC and FAME, Inc. as integral to Wilmington’s continued success. It urges the Administration of the City of Wilmington to contribute to sustaining the capacity of both organizations and assuring that their endeavors continue to flourish by giving them full consideration in ARPA funding deliberations.

DRAFT