



The Next Picture Show • *Community Fine Arts Center*

Dear Lee County Board Members,

I am writing on behalf of the The Next Picture Show, Inc. (TNPS) Board of Directors to appeal the decision by the Lee County Board to decline funding TNPS's ARPA Small Business application submitted prior to June 30, 2022 despite it being eligible and timely with funds available.

TNPS previously submitted a request for funding on August 9, 2021 for \$10,000 to help alleviate the economic hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. That request was funded at \$9,537.50 and was used to help fix the HVAC which will prevent the further spread of COVID. We greatly appreciate the grant. However, the critical improvement ended up costing TNPS an additional \$3,500 to become fully operational.

On June 9, 2022 TNPS submitted a second funding request that included \$3,500 to finish the HVAC improvement. On July 7, 2022 the Lee County Board and/or staff stated that TNPS request was disqualified because it already received funding last year. We find no policy statement by Lee County that the award made in 2021 was one time funding. TNPS submitted its application on time, the Lee County staff deemed it eligible, and the Program Overview states that funding is available to a maximum of \$20,000 per business.

Therefore, TNPS requests that Lee County Board reconsider and overrule its decision to disqualify TNPS from legitimately receiving these needed funds. We appreciate your serious consideration.

Sincerely,

Debbie Thompson, President TNPS

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