



Richland County Council
Coronavirus Ad Hoc Committee Meeting
MINUTES
July 2, 2024 – 4:00 PM
Council Chambers
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29204

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Gretchen Barron, Chair, Jason Branham, and Chakisse Newton

OTHERS PRESENT: Yvonne McBride, Allison Terracio, Michelle Onley, Anette Kirylo, Patrick Wright, Stacey Hamm, Angela Weathersby, Kyle Holsclaw, Chelsea Bennett, Lori Thomas, Aric Jensen, Tamar Black, Dale Welch, Jennifer Wladischkin, Sarah Harris, Dante Roberts, and Ashiya Myers

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chairwoman Gretchen Barron called the meeting to order at approximately 4:00 PM.
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a. **October 17, 2023** – Ms. Newton moved to approve the minutes as distributed, seconded by Mr. Branham.
In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton
The vote in favor was unanimous.
3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA** – Ms. Newton moved to adopt the agenda as published, seconded by Mr. Branham.
In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton
The vote in favor was unanimous.
4. **ELECTION OF CHAIR** – Ms. Newton moved to open nominations for the Chair, seconded by Mr. Branham.
In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton
The vote in favor was unanimous.
Ms. Newton nominated Ms. Barron for the position of Chair.
In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton
The vote in favor was unanimous.

POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE – Ms. Barron thanked her colleagues for allowing her to chair the committee for another year.

5. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/ACTION**

- a. **Grants Update** – Ms. Lori Thomas, Assistant County Administrator, noted the County issued 37 grants, 25 of which were sub-recipient grants and 12 were beneficiary grants. Beneficiary grants are those that are using the funds directly for their purposes. The total amount granted was \$7.596M, with \$5.9M awarded to sub-recipients and \$1.6M awarded to beneficiaries. She indicated that about 22% of the sub-recipient funds had been expended. However, approximately 70% of the beneficiary grant funds have been expended.

Mr. Branham inquired why the percentage is not any higher for the sub-recipients.

Ms. Thomas replied that the sub-recipient grants require quite a bit of documentation. Specific procurement requirements also have to be utilized. Many of the projects were not ready to be funded, and it took a while to get the grant award letters and contracts in place with the sub-recipients. She

noted that we are seeing this move more quickly and believes a great deal of the funds will be expended in the next three months. She pointed out the funding period will be closed at the end of October, and the County would re-obligate any funds not expended so they are not lost.

Ms. Barron inquired how the sub-recipients would be notified about the deadline to expend the funds.

Ms. Thomas responded that emails will be sent to the sub-recipients this month reminding them of the deadline. Additionally, Guidehouse is monitoring them, so they are also reminding them.

Ms. Barron inquired what would happen if we did not receive their report.

Ms. Thomas indicated that if they do not send us a report, we will email them to inform them that they are not compliant and remind them of the upcoming deadline.

Ms. Barron emphasized that sending out a monthly notice would be helpful to remind them of the impending deadline.

Ms. Newton inquired if the funds must be obligated or spent by October.

Ms. Thomas stated the original agreement with the sub-recipients was that the funds had to be obligated and spent by October. She noted they will work with them on an individual basis in the event there is a disruption in their schedules.

Ms. McBride inquired if a programmatic report would be provided about them achieving their objectives.

Ms. Thomas responded that there will be once their project is complete. Guidehouse is collecting that information and working with the sub-recipients to ensure their projects are in place.

Ms. McBride asked if the quarterly reports include the programmatic status of the project(s).

Ms. Thomas indicated that these particular federal grants are required to report their expenditures and general information quarterly, but not necessarily project updates. She noted we could request the programmatic data.

It was noted that two of the sub-recipients have completed their projects and expended all of their funds. Two more are above 90%, and an additional four are at 70% or above. One sub-recipient decided not to pursue their project; therefore, the funding will be de-obligated.

Ms. Thomas indicated most of the sub-recipients' costs are for materials/supplies and personnel.

Ms. Barron requested a list of the sub-recipients that have completed their projects. She suggested the Communications Department highlight these sub-recipients and their projects.

Ms. Thomas stated that five of the twelve beneficiary projects are 100% complete, one is 15% complete, and the remaining six have yet to begin requesting their reimbursements. The breakdown of the 12 beneficiary projects is as follows:

- Assistance to NFPs for Negative Economic impacts – 6
- Assistance to NFPs for COVID-19 Mitigation – 3
- Grants to Small Businesses to Mitigate Negative Economic Impact – 2
- Aid to Tourism, Travel, or Hospitality – 1

Ms. Newton inquired, looking at this report, if it falls in line with the expectations.

Ms. Thomas responded that she could not answer that but would gladly present the question to Guidehouse and provide an answer.

- b. Youth and Recreation Final Allocation—Ms. Barron stated that a million dollars was set aside for Youth and Recreation Services. Several applicants were considered; however, once we went through the application process, it was determined that they did not necessarily meet the committee's vision. Therefore, the funding was held in committee. At this point, with October being the deadline, we need to decide on what we will do with the funds. Council has voted that any funding not spent will go toward the Family Service Center. She indicated that with all we have going on with the youth in the County, she has a challenge with us lumping them back into the fund for the Family Service Center without attempting to put it in the hands of organizations that are doing the work and meet the guidelines of ARPA. There have been some conversations about perhaps looking at the Recreation Commission.

Ms. Thomas maintained the requirements for the program would still have to show that they would fund programs to benefit those negatively impacted by COVID. Whether the programming would be eligible would be based on who would receive benefit from the funds and how they would be used. Unfortunately, the funds cannot be used on asset building. Additionally, we are running into time constraints because any asset that might be used would have to be procured in such a way and contracted to meet the requirements of the December 31, 2024, obligation period. The determining

factor(s) of whether a program meets the funding requirements would be in the details of the program itself and who the program is benefitting.

Ms. Barron indicated certain communities were hit hard because of COVID. If we consider the Recreation Commission's programming in those particular areas, we may be okay. She pointed out that we allowed organizations to be reimbursed. Therefore, if the Recreation Commission has already done programming in these communities, they would have to substantiate that it benefitted specific zip codes.

Ms. Thomas asserted that would likely be the only way programmatically they could spend a million dollars by December 31, 2024.

Ms. Newton acknowledged it was her deepest wish that we could invest this money in the community for youth services. She made the motion to increase the funding from \$500,000 to \$1M because she sees there is a lot of need for youth and providing for those services. She noted that as time has passed, she has not seen a viable option for this category. She has resigned herself that utilizing the funding for the Family Services Center would serve many of the youth. She noted that if the goal is to have a recommendation for Council today, she does not see how that is possible unless the recommendation is to utilize the funding for the Family Services Center. As it relates to the Recreation Commission, since we do not have a specific program, have not heard from them formally, and do not know what or how they could do it, the only recommendation we could forward to Council is that we would like to explore what we could do with the Recreation Commission. She pointed out that she had previous discussions with Ms. Thomas about utilizing the funding for summer programs and camps. At that time, there were ARPA obstacles identified. In addition, it was pointed out that she was not a proponent of reimbursing them.

Ms. Barron stated reimbursing funds is not ideal, but doing so allows them to free up funds to do other things in the community. If the committee does not see there is a viable option to fund another organization(s), she respects that the funds will go to the Family Services Center, but it will be a hard pill for her to swallow.

Ms. Newton expressed that every option she explored, including treating the funds like we did Affordable Housing, did not work with the ARPA guidelines.

Ms. McBride indicated that if there was any way we could use some of the funds to address the needs of the youth, she would support it 100%. We cannot continue to do nothing. We need to look at preventing violence involving the youth.

Ms. Barron asked if it is the committee's will to direct Administration to have a conversation with the Recreation Commission. She noted the Sheriff's Department also has a fee-based summer program. If we look internally at what we have going on and how we could use those funds, we may be able to do so.

Mr. Branham pointed out that we have tried to get the funds to the places that could best serve the intended recipients. The Family Services Center is, without question, a facility through which the county's youth will be served. He expressed that he would support, without reservation, sending the funding to the Family Services Center.

Ms. Newton asked if Ms. Thomas believes it is realistic to identify an organization, define a program, and have Council vote to commit funding within the three months before the deadline.

Ms. Thomas inquired if we are looking at prospective or past programs.

Ms. Newton responded that she only wanted to look at prospective programs.

Ms. Thomas replied she was not saying that it would be impossible, but it would be difficult to make the timeline work. Even with a reimbursement situation, you must evaluate the expenditure to determine if it was procured and used appropriately and benefitted the harmed party.

Ms. Barron suggested not expending the million dollars but a portion of the funding.

Ms. Newton stated that, based on the information she has, she does not see a viable path. She noted this does not preclude us from looking for other funding and methods to address this need.

Ms. Barron closed the discussion on the matter and noted that if she called another meeting, then she has been able to find other options.

Ms. Newton stated for clarification, there is no action required to send the funds to the Family Services Center.

The County Attorney Patrick Wright responded in the affirmative.

6. **ADJOURNMENT** – Mr. Branham moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Newton.

In Favor: Branham, Barron, and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:50 PM.



Richland County ARPA Grant Update

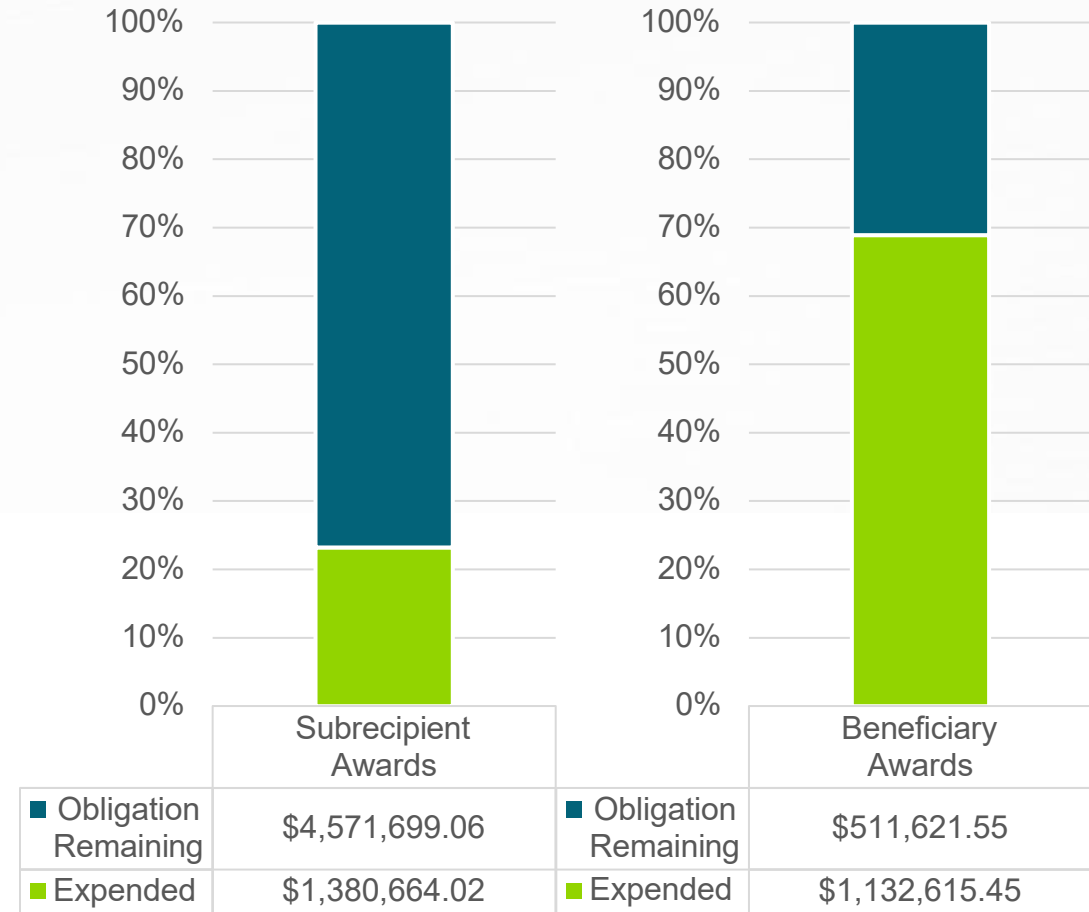
May 17, 2024



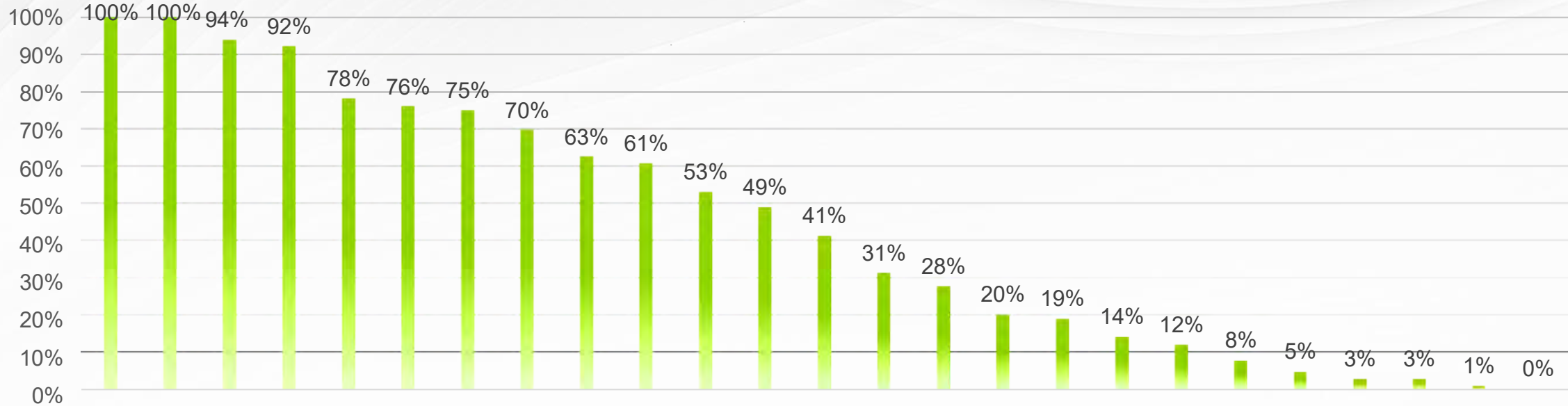
American Rescue Plan Grant Program

Overview

- **Total Obligations Incurred: 37**
 - **Number of Executed Subrecipient Awards: 25**
 - **Number of Executed Beneficiary Awards: 12**
- **Total Amount Awarded: \$7,596,600.08**
 - **Obligations to Subrecipients: \$5,952,363.08**
 - **Obligations to Beneficiaries: \$1,644,237.00**
- **Scope of Work:** Richland County established the American Rescue Plan Grant Program to solicit and fund eligible projects of significant and worthy community impact under the following broad categories: small business and nonprofit assistance, workforce training, education assistance, senior assistance, addressing food insecurity, broadband services, affordable housing, services for unhoused persons, and youth and recreational services.

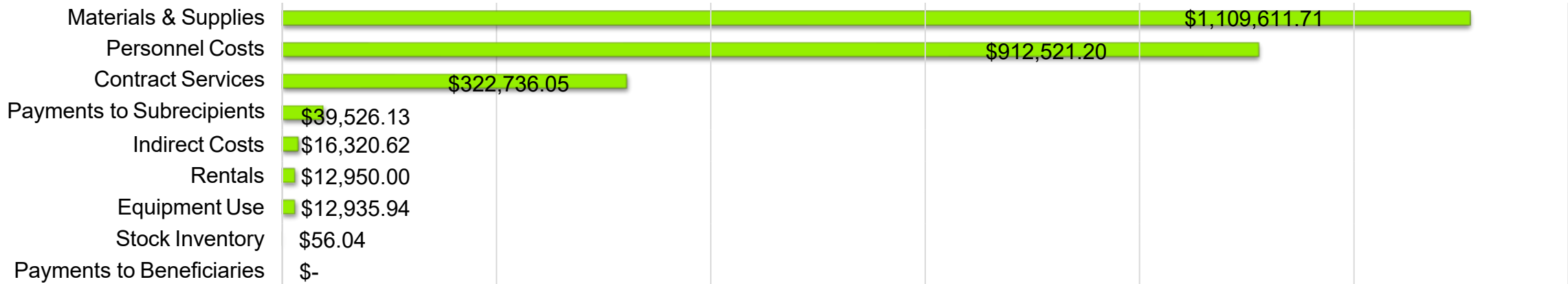


25 Subrecipient Project Expenditures Status

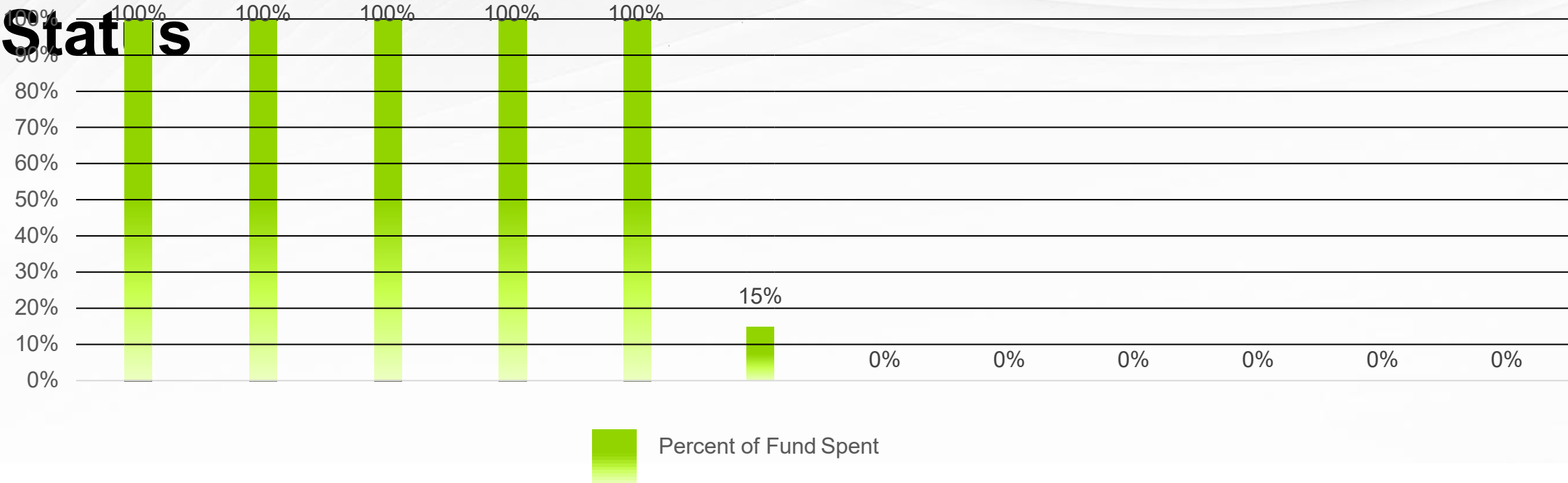


Costs Incurred

■ Percent of Fund Spent



12 Beneficiary Project Expenditures Status



Project Expenditure Categories

