



Rural Initiatives/Planning Advisory Committee Meeting

Tuesday, May 4, 2021

1:00 P.M.

Meeting to be held electronically.

Agenda

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of the Minutes from March 9, 2021
3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof
4. Community Grant Program Feedback Survey – Manager of Administrative Services
5. Recruitment/Committee Composition Discussion
6. Correspondence
7. Date of Next Meeting
8. Adjournment

DRAFT MINUTES

Rural Initiatives/Planning Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: March 9, 2021
Location: Elgin County Administration Building, 450 Sunset Drive, St. Thomas
 Council Chambers
Time: 1:00 P.M.

Attendees: *Members of the Rural Initiatives/Planning Advisory Committee*
 Councillor Ed Ketchabaw (in-person)
 Councillor Sally Martyn (electronic)
 Councillor Dominique Giguère (in-person)
 Warden Tom Marks (in-person)

Elgin County Staff

Chief Administrative Officer, Julie Gonyou (in-person)
 Manager of Planning, Nancy Pasato (in-person)
 Economic Development Coordinator, Colin Galloway (electronic)
 Supervisor of Legislative Services, Katherine Thompson (in-person)
 Legislative Services Coordinator, Carolyn Krahn (in-person)

1. Call to Order

The Rural Initiatives/Planning Advisory Committee met this 9th day of March, 2021 in Council Chambers, at the County Administration Building, St. Thomas at 1:00 P.M. Some Committee Members joined the meeting electronically.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: Warden Marks
 Seconded by: Councillor Martyn

Resolved that the agenda be approved as presented.

Recorded Vote

	Yes	No
Warden Tom Marks	Yes	
Councillor Dominique Giguère	Yes	
Councillor Sally Martyn	Yes	
Councillor Ed Ketchabaw	Yes	
	4	0

- Motion Carried.

3. Recruitment/Committee Composition Discussion

The Committee accepted the resignation of Heather Derks.

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by: Councillor Giguère

Seconded by: Warden Marks

Resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting be adopted as amended.

Recorded Vote

	Yes	No
Warden Tom Marks	Yes	
Councillor Dominique Giguère	Yes	
Councillor Sally Martyn	Yes	
Councillor Ed Ketchabaw	Yes	
	4	0

- Motion Carried.

5. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

None.

6. Community Grant Program Request

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Port Stanley Festival Theatre has modified their program for 2021, and they requested that the funding they received under the Elgin Community Grant Program for their monthly play reading series be deferred until September when they will run a condensed version of the planned play reading series.

Moved by: Councillor Martyn

Seconded by: Councillor Giguère

RESOLVED THAT the grant amendment request from the Port Stanley Festival Theatre as contained in the correspondence from the Port Stanley Festival Theatre be approved; and

THAT the Port Stanley Festival Theatre be notified of the Committee's decision.

Recorded Vote

	Yes	No
Warden Tom Marks	Yes	
Councillor Dominique Giguère	Yes	
Councillor Sally Martyn	Yes	

Councillor Ed Ketchabaw	Yes	
	4	0

- Motion Carried.

7. Official Plan Review – Draft Communications and Engagement Strategy

The Chief Administrative Officer and the Manager of Planning presented a Draft Official Plan Review Communications and Engagement Strategy for the Committee's review.

Moved by: Warden Marks
Seconded by: Councillor Martyn

RESOLVED THAT the Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee endorse the Official Plan Review Communications and Engagement Strategy; and

THAT staff present the Communications and Engagement Strategy to Council.

Recorded Vote

	Yes	No
Warden Tom Marks	Yes	
Councillor Dominique Giguère	Yes	
Councillor Sally Martyn	Yes	
Councillor Ed Ketchabaw	Yes	
	4	0

- Motion Carried.

8. Recruitment/Committee Composition Discussion

Members discussed the requirement to have agricultural representation on the Committee.

Moved by: Councillor Giguère
Seconded by: Councillor Martyn

RESOLVED that staff research the legislated committee composition requirements for planning committees; and

THAT the Chair present an updated Terms of Reference reflecting the current Committee composition to Council for their approval.

9. Correspondence

None.

10. New Business

None.

11. Next Meeting Date

Staff will send out a Doodle Poll to schedule a meeting for the first week of May.

12. Adjournment

Moved by: Warden Marks

Seconded by: Councillor Giguère

Resolved that the meeting adjourn at 2:20 p.m.

Recorded Vote

	Yes	No
Warden Tom Marks	Yes	
Councillor Dominique Giguère	Yes	
Councillor Martyn	Yes	
Councillor Ed Ketchabaw	Yes	
	4	0

- Motion Carried.



REPORT TO RURAL INITIATIVES AND PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FROM: Katherine Thompson, Manager of
Administrative Services/Deputy Clerk

DATE: April 27, 2021

SUBJECT: Community Grant Program Feedback
Survey

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the April 27, 2021, report titled, Community Grant Program Feedback Survey, submitted by the Manager of Administrative Services/Deputy Clerk, be received and filed for information; and,

THAT the Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee review the Community Grant Program Feedback Survey.

INTRODUCTION:

In 2020, the Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee developed a new Community Grant Program (CGP) to guide the allocation of Council's grant budget in 2021. The grant program was divided into two streams – Community Services and Festivals and Events. These two streams were further divided into Cultivate (existing programs and events) and Seed (new programs and events) grants. The Committee developed new application packages to correspond with these programs, clearly defining criteria and eligibility. At its meeting held on February 9, 2021, the Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee approved a funding agreement, feedback survey questions, and a final report template to be sent to applicants of the Community Grant Program.

DISCUSSION:

Eighteen (18) applications for funding were received for the 2021 funding period. One (1) of these applications was for the Community Signage Program. Of the seventeen

(17) remaining applications, fifteen (15) were approved and two (2) were deemed ineligible based on program criteria by the Committee.


After Council approved grants as part of the 2021 Budget, staff sent successful applicants a letter, a funding agreement, a link to the feedback survey, and a template for the final report. The Community Signage Program grant recipient was not included as part of the survey as the criteria for this portion of the program remained unchanged.

CGP Feedback Survey

Over the course of March and early April, staff reminded grant recipients about the survey on three (3) occasions – first as part of the initial outreach and then two (2) subsequent times as reminders. The survey was sent to both successful and unsuccessful applicants. Only seven (7) grant applicants decided to fill out the survey. This amounts to approximately 41% of applicants.

Overall, as can be seen in the attached survey, applicants were pleased with their experience with the new CGP.

- Most respondents indicated that the funding amounts were reasonable, although a few would like to be able to request more.
- All applicants took over an hour to complete the application and many took more than two (2) hours.
- Most respondents agreed the program guidance documents were helpful, clear and informative.
- Most agreed that the financial and program/event information required by the Committee to evaluate applications was reasonable. A comment was received that it is difficult for new events or programs to provide accurate budget data.
- The majority of respondents believed that the intake period of September 1 – November 1 was reasonable.
- Most respondents understood how the proposals were evaluated by the Committee; however, there was a comment that indicated more information could be provided regarding how points are awarded. If the Committee so chooses, a copy of the evaluation matrix could be attached to the application package to clarify how each element of the application is evaluated.
- Most respondents believed that the process was fair and 5/7 applicants responded that the CGP was great and they did not have any suggestions for improvement – two (2) applicants did not respond.
- Disappointment was expressed by organizations who were deemed ineligible for funding by the Committee. They indicated that it was not clear that their organization was ineligible for funding.



Previous to the 2020 intake period, two grant programs existed at the County of Elgin. One was administered by County Council and the Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee. The other was called the Festival and Event Partnership Program (FEPP) and was administered by Economic Development and Tourism. In 2020 these two grant programs were rolled into the Community Grant Program (CGP) and a new set of eligibility criteria was developed by the RIPA Committee. Previous to this new criteria, municipal organizations and fundraising activities were not specifically prohibited in the eligibility criteria. These new eligibility criteria were indicated in the new application packages; however, past experience of eligibility may have caused confusion. The Committee may choose to review eligibility criteria.

Funding Agreement

Over the course of April and May, 2021, staff received a considerable number of calls from applicants requesting assistance in completing the funding agreement; however, all questions were easily answered and applicants were satisfied with the assistance that they received. Grant recipients have not been required to fill out a funding agreement in the past so it is natural that in the first year of a new program there would be questions. Staff plan to make a few minor adjustments to the funding agreement in order to make it easier to complete. This will not change the terms that recipients are required to agree to, simply the format of some areas of the form.

Final Report Template

Final reports are not required to be returned to the County of Elgin until November 10, 2021; however, staff have received comments from applicants indicating that they are pleased to have a standardized template to guide them in completing these final reports. Staff will follow up with the Committee after November 10th, 2021 to evaluate this portion of the program.



ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Serving Elgin	Growing Elgin	Investing in Elgin
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ensuring alignment of current programs and services with community need. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exploring different ways of addressing community need. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engaging with our community and other stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning for and facilitating commercial, industrial, residential, and agricultural growth. <input type="checkbox"/> Fostering a healthy environment. <input type="checkbox"/> Enhancing quality of place.	<input type="checkbox"/> Ensuring we have the necessary tools, resources, and infrastructure to deliver programs and services now and in the future. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Delivering mandated programs and services efficiently and effectively.

LOCAL MUNICIPAL PARTNER IMPACT:

None.

COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS:

Survey results will be shared with Community Grant Program applicants.

CONCLUSION:

On February 9, 2021, the RIPA Committee approved a funding agreement, survey questions and a final report template to be issued to applicants of the Community Grant Program. The results of the Community Grant Program Feedback Survey are attached for the Committee's review.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

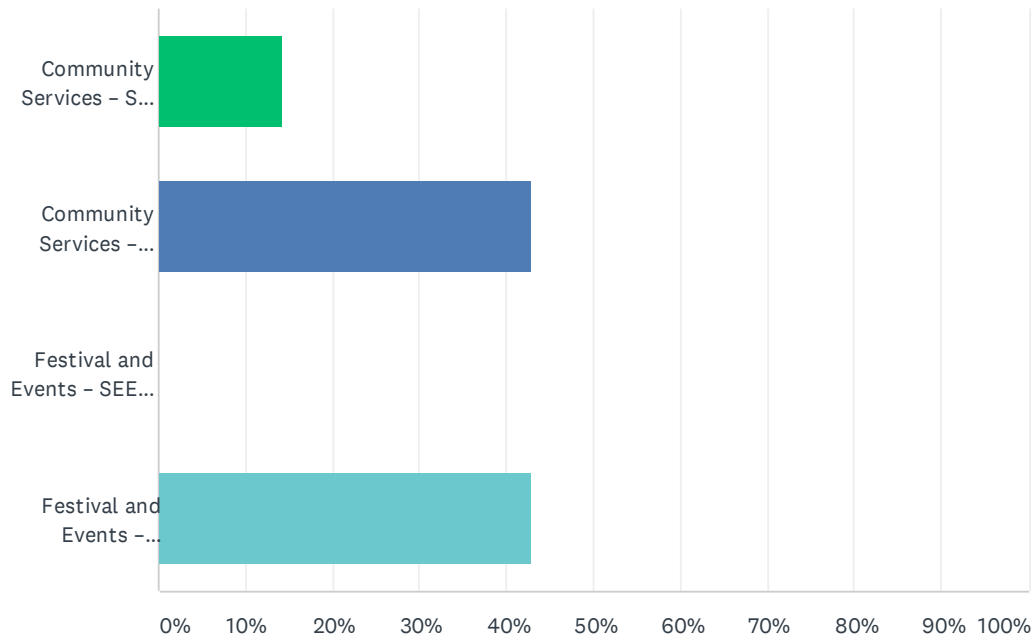
Katherine Thompson
Supervisor of Legislative Services

Approved for Submission

Julie Gonyou
Chief Administrative Officer

Q1 Please tell us which Community Grant Program funding stream you applied for:

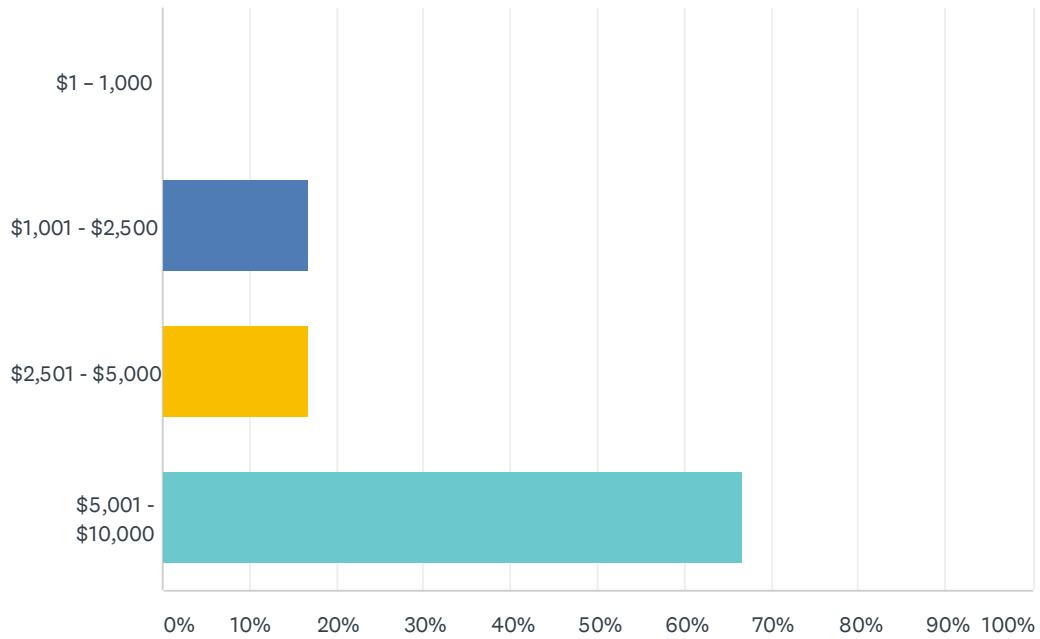
Answered: 7 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Community Services – SEED (new program or service)	14.29%	1
Community Services – CULTIVATE (established program or service with some changes)	42.86%	3
Festival and Events – SEED (new festival or event)	0.00%	0
Festival and Events – CULTIVATE (established program or service with some changes)	42.86%	3
TOTAL		7

Q2 Approximately much CGP funding did you request?

Answered: 6 Skipped: 1

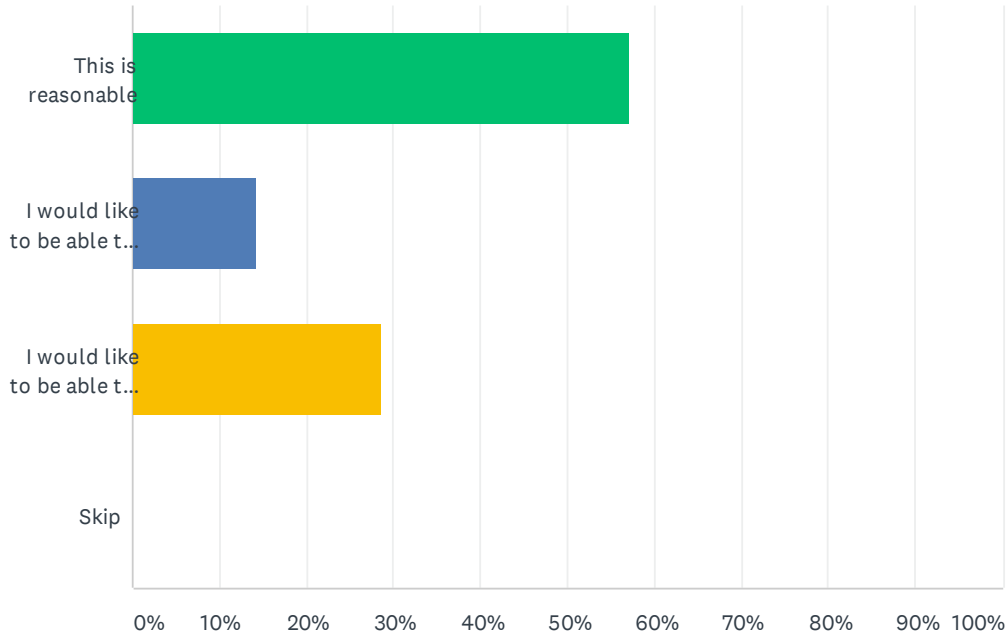


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
\$1 - 1,000	0.00% 0
\$1,001 - \$2,500	16.67% 1
\$2,501 - \$5,000	16.67% 1
\$5,001 - \$10,000	66.67% 4
TOTAL	6

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	\$35,000	2/16/2021 2:04 PM

Q3 Eligible organizations may be eligible to apply for up to 50% of program, service or event expenses up to a maximum of \$10,000. (please pick all that apply):

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0

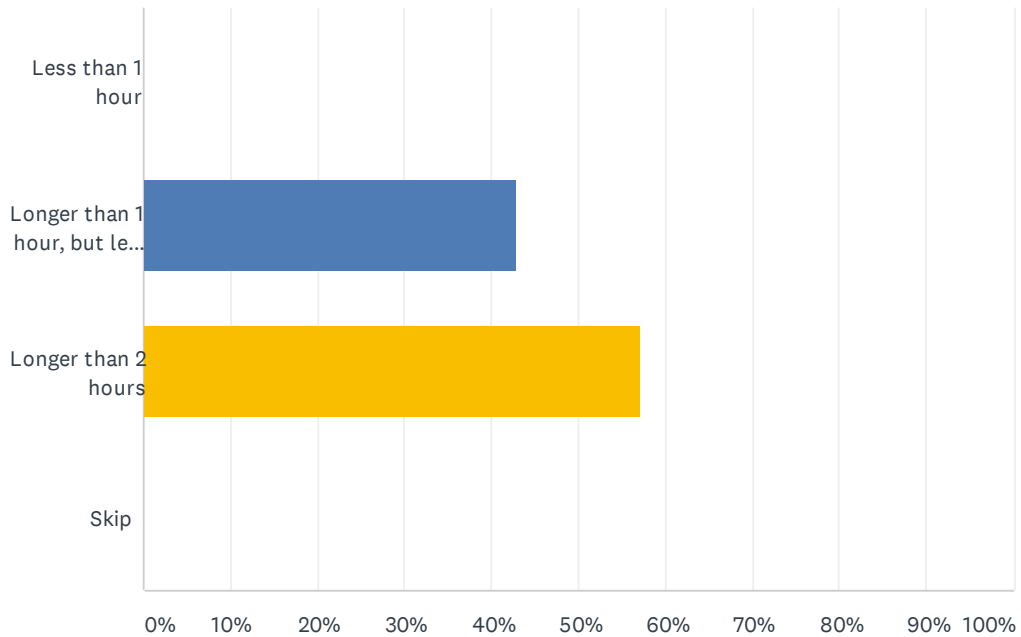


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
This is reasonable	57.14%	4
I would like to be able to apply for more than 50% of funding	14.29%	1
I would like to be able to apply for more than \$10,000 of funding	28.57%	2
Skip	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 7		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q4 How long did it take you to complete the application?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0

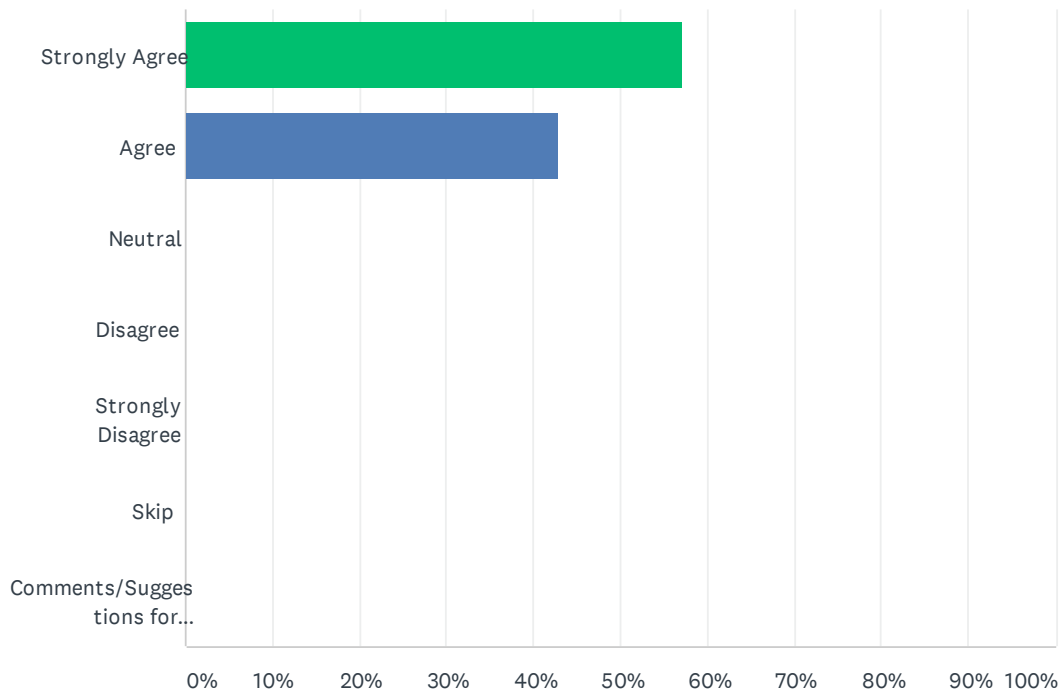


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 1 hour	0.00%	0
Longer than 1 hour, but less than 2 hours	42.86%	3
Longer than 2 hours	57.14%	4
Skip	0.00%	0
TOTAL		7

#	COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS:	DATE
1	We worked on this for two weeks. Wanted to be sure it was accurate and that we could get letter of support.	2/16/2021 12:13 PM

Q5 The new CGP includes Seed Grants and Cultivate Grants. Seed Grants provide funding for new programs or services and Cultivate Grants provide funding for established programs that are building on their success. I understood the difference between Seed Grants and Cultivate Grants.

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0

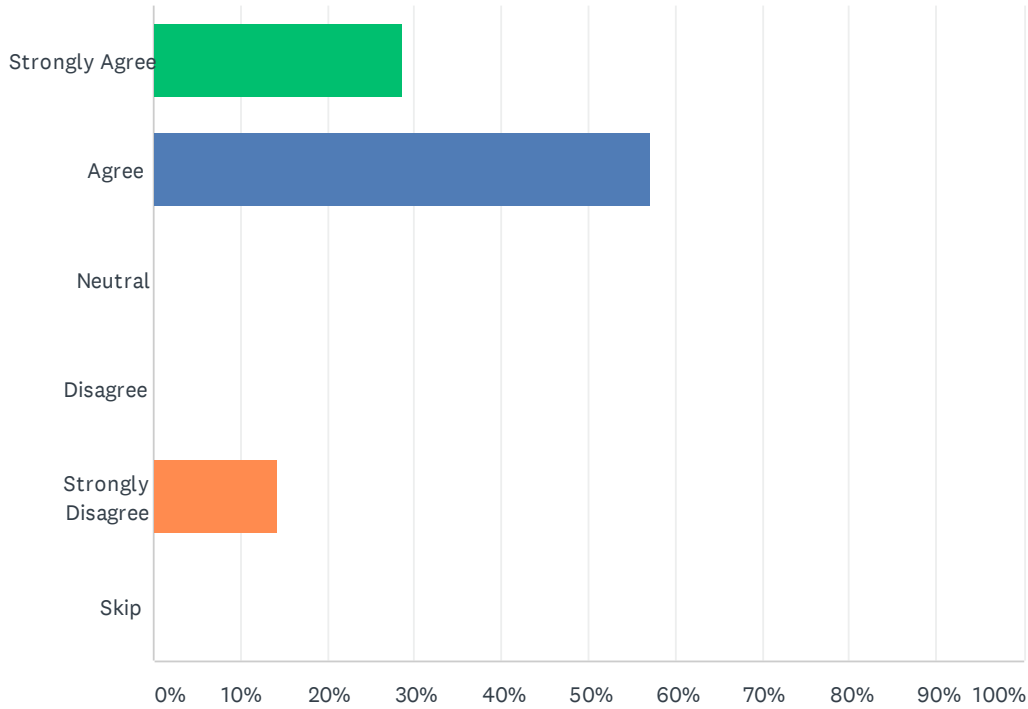


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly Agree	57.14%	4
Agree	42.86%	3
Neutral	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
Skip	0.00%	0
Comments/Suggestions for Improvements:	0.00%	0
TOTAL		7

#	COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS:	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q6 When I filled out the application, it was clear to me that my organization was eligible to apply based on the information provided.

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly Agree	28.57% 2
Agree	57.14% 4
Neutral	0.00% 0
Disagree	0.00% 0
Strongly Disagree	14.29% 1
Skip	0.00% 0
TOTAL	7

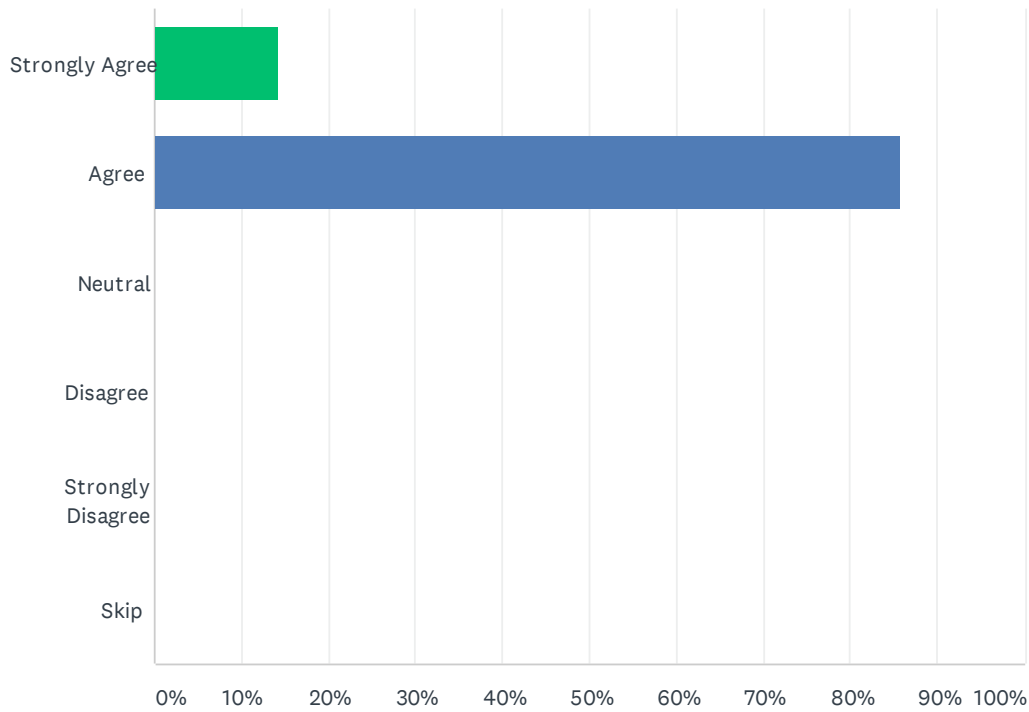
#	COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:	DATE
1	I phoned also to verify that our service club was eligible to apply. We were very surprised to find our application denied after we were told we could apply. We were above board and told you the money that was in our bank account was from egaming donations. I now see that you will not allow that money as it was fundraised. 98% of service club account holdings are fundraised. I do feel that you should have said that Service Clubs were unable to apply.	2/16/2021 12:13 PM
2	Especially when the head of Economic Development at the applicable time, [REDACTED], encouraged me to apply on behalf of the [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED]. You would think in those circumstances, someone would have come back and asked us to revise the application and hand this matter completely over to the [REDACTED] that is at arm's length from the municipality. This left a really bad taste in my mouth, as I spent hours upon hours upon hours drafting the application for an	2/12/2021 2:29 PM

Community Grant Program Applicant Feedback Survey

EXTREMELY important event being launched within our community. A lot of people were very disappointed and were dependent on some grant fund coming in.

Q7 I understood what program or service expenses were eligible for funding through the CGP.

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0

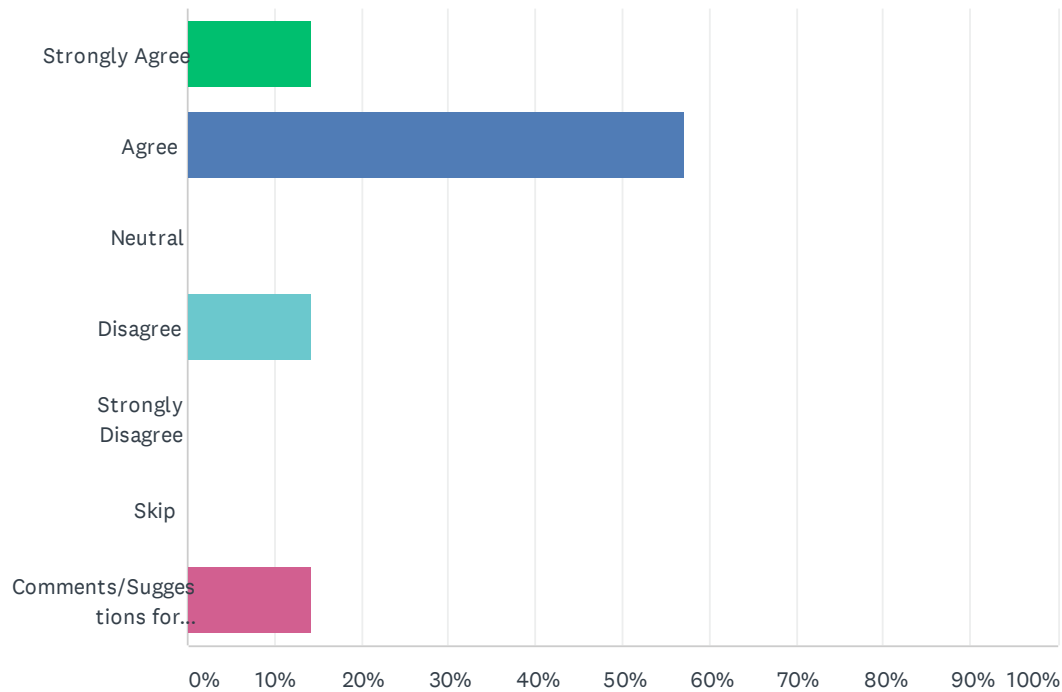


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly Agree	14.29%	1
Agree	85.71%	6
Neutral	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
Skip	0.00%	0
TOTAL		7

#	COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q8 The Community Grant Program guidance documents were helpful, clear and informative.

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0

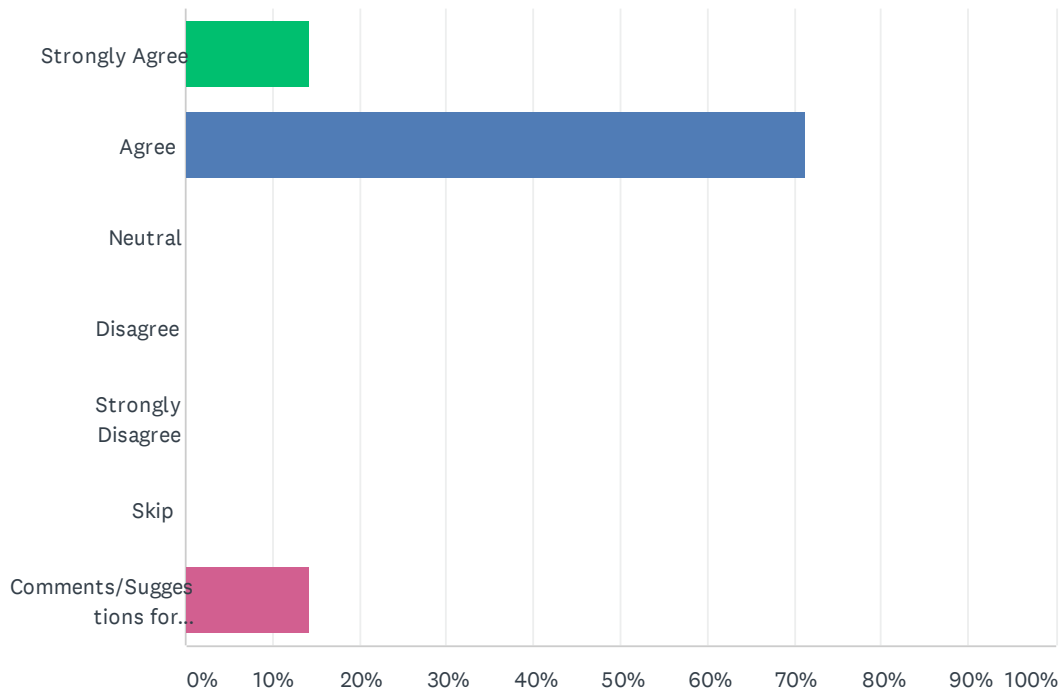


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly Agree	14.29%	1
Agree	57.14%	4
Neutral	0.00%	0
Disagree	14.29%	1
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
Skip	0.00%	0
Comments/Suggestions for Improvement:	14.29%	1
TOTAL		7

#	COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:	DATE
1	They appeared straight forward. We followed all the terms and conditions. We were denied for reasons outside of these terms.	2/16/2021 12:13 PM

Q9 The financial information I was required to submit as part of my application was reasonable.

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0

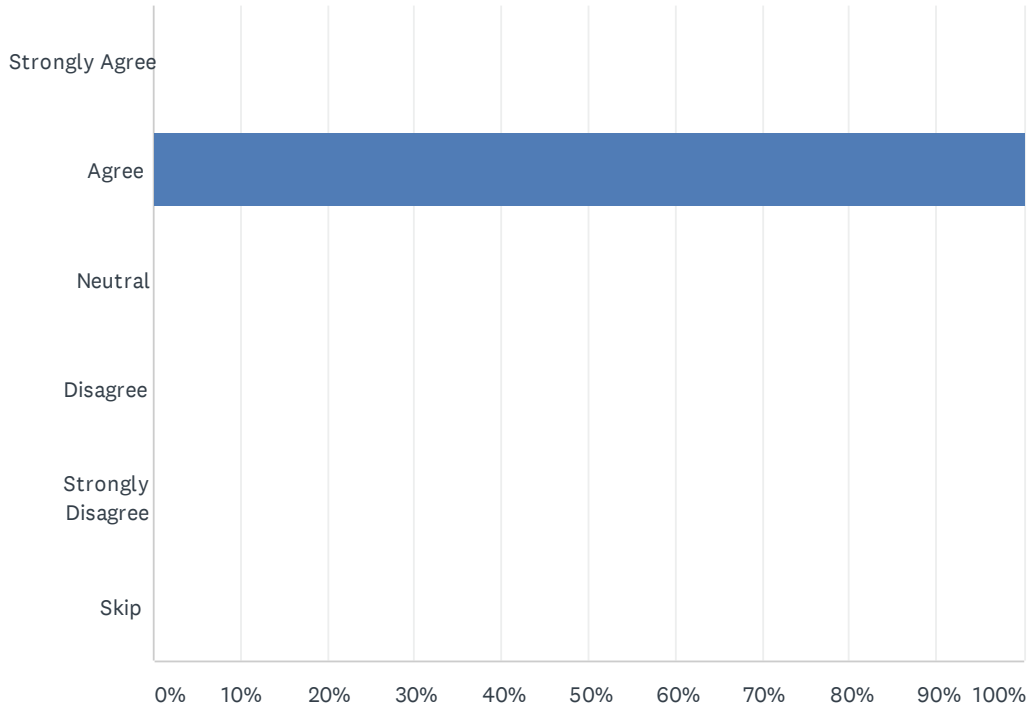


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly Agree	14.29%	1
Agree	71.43%	5
Neutral	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
Skip	0.00%	0
Comments/Suggestions for Improvement:	14.29%	1
TOTAL		7

#	COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:	DATE
1	Not all expenses can be encompassed at the planning stage for a new event. Therefore, some additional flexibility needs to be built into the budgeting process.	2/12/2021 2:29 PM

Q10 The amount of information requested about my organization to measure the success of the program or service was reasonable.

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0

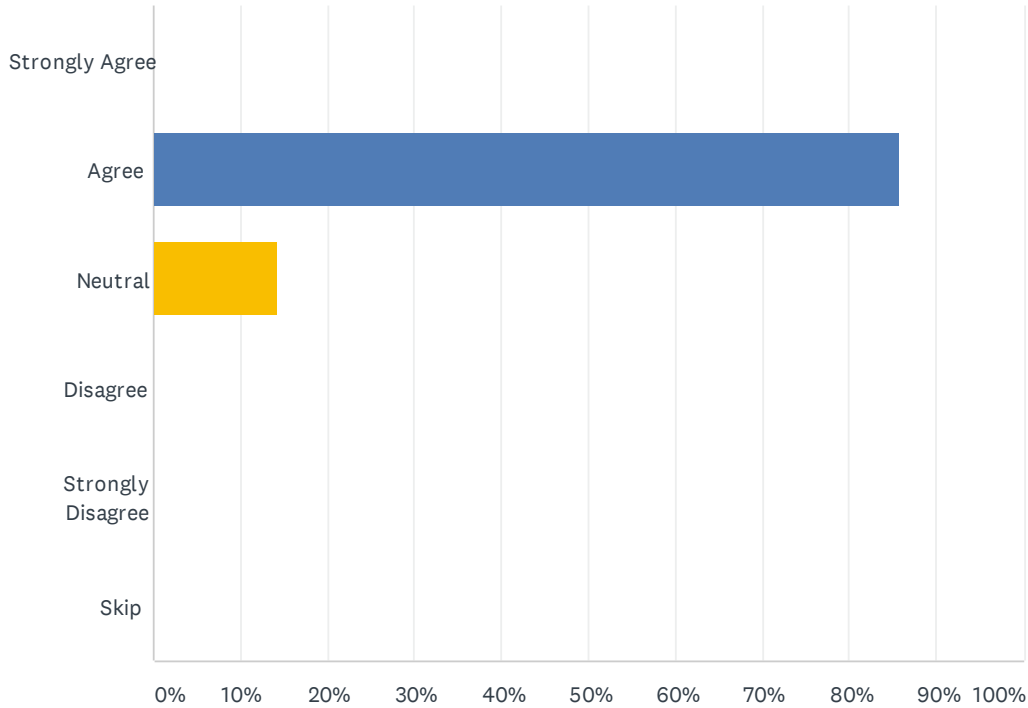


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly Agree	0.00% 0
Agree	100.00% 7
Neutral	0.00% 0
Disagree	0.00% 0
Strongly Disagree	0.00% 0
Skip	0.00% 0
TOTAL	7

#	COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q11 The 2021 intake for CGP opened on September 1, 2020 and closed on November 10, 2020. The application intake period worked well for my organization.

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0

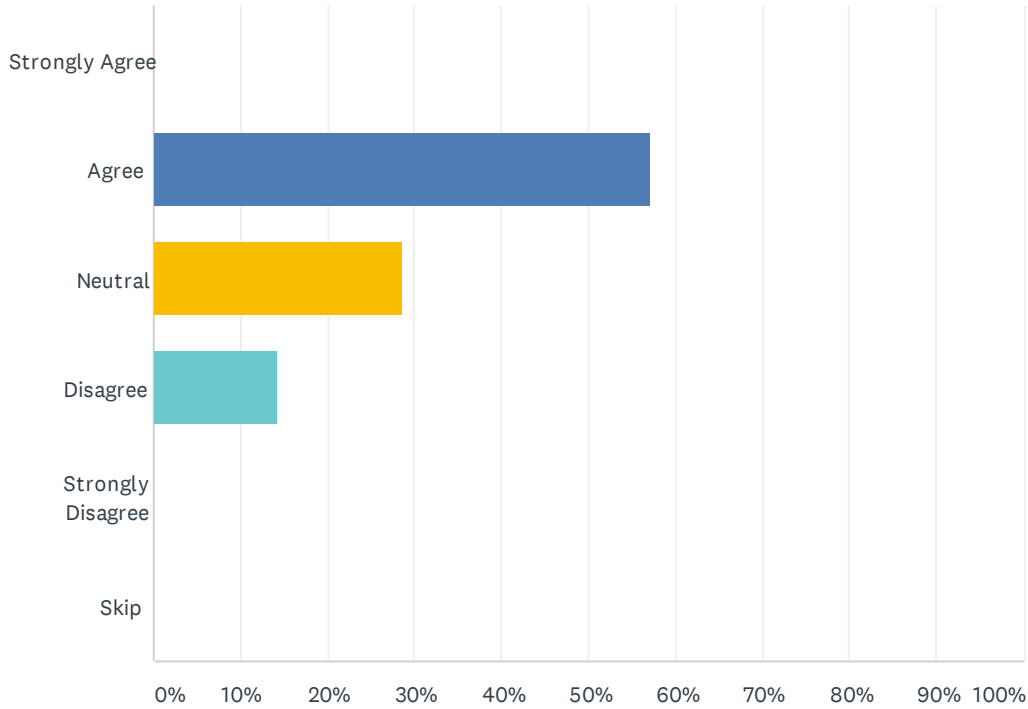


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly Agree	0.00% 0
Agree	85.71% 6
Neutral	14.29% 1
Disagree	0.00% 0
Strongly Disagree	0.00% 0
Skip	0.00% 0
TOTAL	7

#	COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:	DATE
1	For this year however it is over the time period of our fair which is the busiest for our organization.	2/16/2021 2:04 PM

Q12 I understand from the CGP guidance documents how proposals are evaluated by the Rural Initiatives and Planning Advisory Committee.

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0

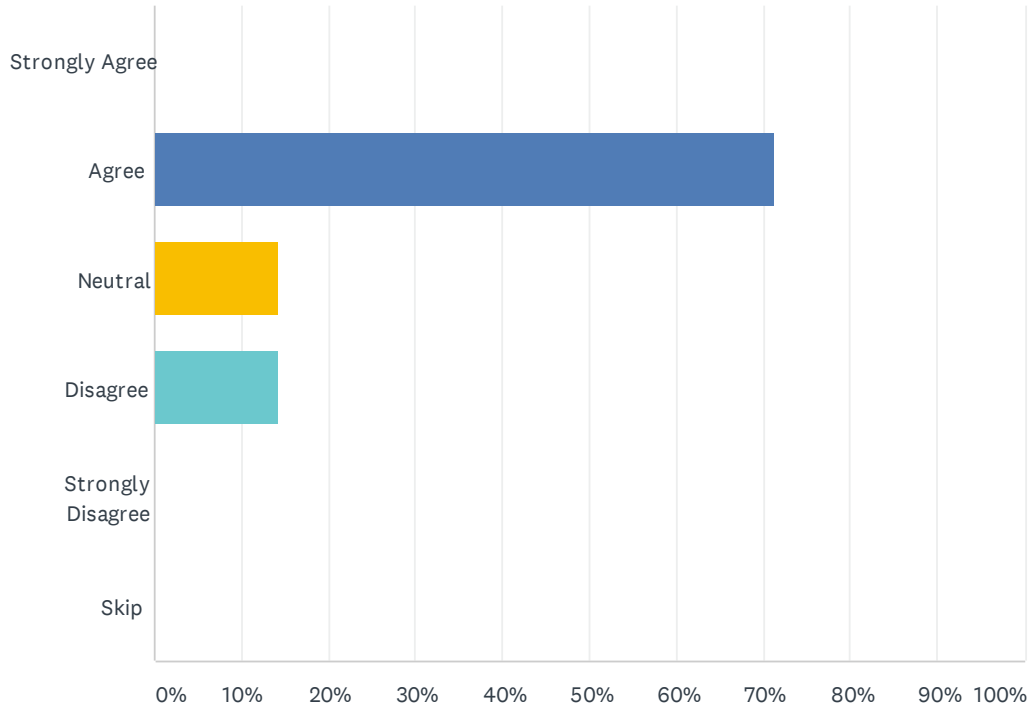


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly Agree	0.00% 0
Agree	57.14% 4
Neutral	28.57% 2
Disagree	14.29% 1
Strongly Disagree	0.00% 0
Skip	0.00% 0
TOTAL	7

#	COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:	DATE
1	Not really, our board reviewed the terms and conditions and thought we had fulfilled the requirements.	2/16/2021 12:13 PM
2	There are not enough particulars given regarding how the points are awarded and leaves one to think that there is an element of subjectivity in awarding points in the segmented areas.	2/12/2021 2:29 PM

Q13 The evaluation of CGP proposals is fair and transparent.

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0

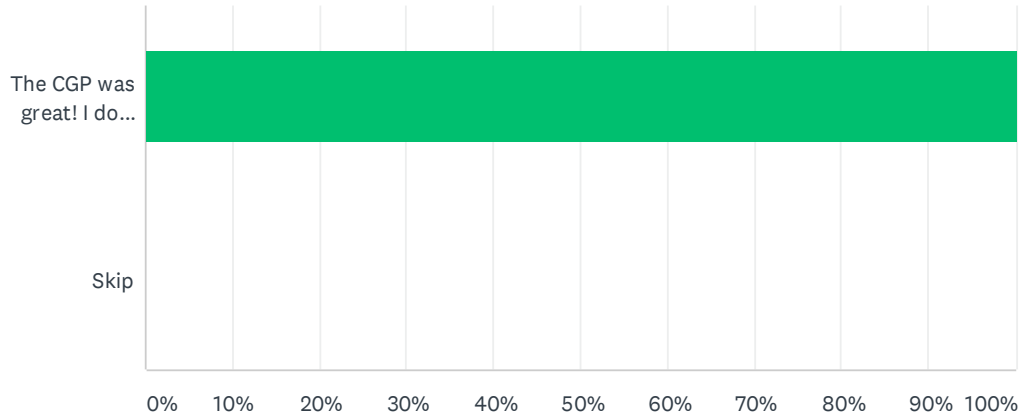


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly Agree	0.00% 0
Agree	71.43% 5
Neutral	14.29% 1
Disagree	14.29% 1
Strongly Disagree	0.00% 0
Skip	0.00% 0
TOTAL	7

#	COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q14 Please share any additional feedback or considerations for the Committee while they review the Community Grant Program in the coming months.

Answered: 5 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
The CGP was great! I don't have any suggested changes to the CGP	100.00% 5
Skip	0.00% 0
TOTAL	5

#	COMMENTS:	DATE
1	Thank you so much for your support. This will improve and help stabilize our organization and help us get back on track.	2/16/2021 2:04 PM
2	Comments already expressed in other sections. Thank you for the opportunity to try for this grant to make a difference in our community and at our local school. Our executive would really like to have a better understanding of what we could have done better.	2/16/2021 12:13 PM
3	As above. This was extremely disappointing, especially when your own Economic Department Head thought we were eligible for funding.	2/12/2021 2:29 PM