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City of Florence City Council
250 Hwy 101
Florence OR 97430

14 May 2025

Request for Financial Support for the Boys and Girls Club of Western Lane County

To: Florence City Council/Budget Committee

The Boys and Girls Club of Western Lane County respectfully requests consideration for financial support in the 2025-2027 City Budget.

The Boys and Girls Club of Western Lane County (BGCWLC) is a non-profit service organization sponsored and governed by the Boys and Girls Club of America with a mission of enabling all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, and responsible citizens.

Our Club has been in existence for over 25 years and now provides after school and summer development programs for both elementary age children and teens at our schools and at the BGCWLC facility. The history of the Club ranges from tragic to heartwarming, but thanks to several extremely generous and caring local residents, the Club now offers world-class development programs that our kids don't receive in our public schools. These individuals not only gave financially, but also gave of their time and efforts, including one absolute saint who worked tirelessly for 8 years as the Club Director for \$1/yr.

Historically and currently, Florence has been a beautiful retirement community – but the young, working class families with school age children in our community often struggle finding valuable after school activities, especially when parents often need to work multiple jobs to make ends meet. We find that the kids and parent who participate in our programs are often the neediest in our community – and there are hundreds of heartwarming stories.

Funding for the Club primarily comes from four main sources:

1. Private donations. There have been many very generous donors in our community, but many of them are passing away and the rest are constantly asked to support many charities. This is a full time job, and many of these donations are restricted for certain purposes.
2. Dues. These are the fees charged for children attending our programs. We intentionally keep these low to enable all kids to attend. And those who can't are given scholarships. Nobody is turned away.

3. Grants. Grants can be a huge source of funding, but it comes and goes, takes constant attention, and are many times very restricted. We recently struggled with our school district who teamed with us to receive a grant and then used the funds to start a free competitive program which drew kids away from us.
4. Fundraisers. Like most non-profits, we have several fundraisers every year. Fraudville is held in the early Spring, a Golf tournament in the Summer, and a formal Gala in the Fall. These activities raise significant money, but take a lot of effort, and gradually we seem to compete more and more with other organizations for the same donors.

Surprisingly, the BGCWLC is not supported financially by the national organization or the federal or state government – and most surprisingly by the City of Florence. When you review the local budget, unlike many communities who sponsor youth development either with Youth Centers or supportive funding, we have never received any thing here – although we have asked. In reviewing the City's proposed 2025-27 budget, it's hard to understand when the General Fund is scheduled to have a \$1.3M balance or a City Recorder with 1 FTE has a \$436k budget or the City HR with 1 FTE has a \$482k budget, that they can't afford to support our kids.

So why do we need support now when we have never had it before? Interesting and complicated question, but primarily early on we had some very generous donors who got us out of debt that nearly closed us, and we have been able sporadically to receive significant grants, which have kept us going. But following Covid, much of this funding has dried up – and the writing on the wall was not good. We lost a very dynamic Director due to both personal problems and burnout after giving it her all and seeing a losing game. We also started losing dedicated board members who didn't see a path forward. If the numbers were close, it wouldn't be so bad – but very stable historical budgets resulted in a \$105k loss in 2024 and predicts a \$110k loss this year. This is from a very lean budget with only 4 full time employees (down from 6) who are excellent and dedicated. Projected income for 2025 is only \$436k from the above sources and projected expenses for 2025 are \$535k with the largest expense being wages and benefits of a very reasonable \$340k. Please compare that with the City's labor budget for 89 FTE. So in seeing this along with last year's loss of \$110k, I had Tim Salisbury, a long term financial expert review the data – and he saw what I did. A big long term problem. And so far this year, our accountant just informed me that in spite of a very successful Fraudville, at the end of April, we already have a \$78k loss.

So as a fairly new, but talented and energetic Board of Directors, we have to responsibly look for a path forward before we go bankrupt. So it doesn't make sense that the City with goals of Livability and Quality of Life, Economic Development, Communication & Trust, and Financial and Organizational Sustainability is not supporting such a critical organization in the community when in the big picture, the need is relatively very small (.0029% of the proposed budget). While it's normal in this community to be thanking people for their generosity, we've now been turn down by the Elks and the radio station – and we've never been supported by Rotary. Why? I don't know. Maybe they don't know what we do or the benefit it provides to our youth, or maybe we just haven't asked, but if we don't get some significant financial support, we will need to look at the assets that we have and begin to

shutdown first with programs, then with personnel, and finally with remaining assets. We sincerely hope that this doesn't happen.

So we're respectfully asking the City of Florence for financial support of the Boys & Girls Club of Western Lane County in the amount of \$110k/yr. With this amount and the continued efforts of the staff and Board, we will be able to continue to provide needed programs for our kids and families. And in the future, if additional grants or donations materialize, we can look at growing our programs.

or \$770 for biennium

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Very Respectfully



Terry E. Tomeny

Treasurer

Boys and Girls Club of Western Lane County Board of Directors

1501 Airport Rd

Florence OR 97439



May 13, 2025
City of Florence
250 Highway 101
Florence, OR 97439

RE: Support for the Boys & Girls Club of Western Lane County – Childcare and Early Childhood Development Funding

Dear Mayor Rob Ward and City Council Members,

On behalf of the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce, I am writing to express our **strong support for the Boys & Girls Club of Western Lane County** and their request for funding to sustain and expand their critical role in childcare and early childhood development in our region.

As the recognized **convenor of the Florence Childcare Taskforce**, the Chamber understands the ongoing and growing challenges related to childcare access in our area. The Florence Area—like much of Oregon—is a **designated childcare desert**, and our community's economic vitality depends on our ability to support local providers who are filling these vital gaps.

The Boys & Girls Club is a cornerstone in this effort. Their work not only supports **our current workforce** by providing dependable childcare and after-school programming, but it is also **developing the next generation of employees, entrepreneurs, and community leaders**. Their commitment to nurturing strong students and responsible citizens makes them a key long-term investment in Florence's success.

Importantly, the Club's services also directly impact our **employers' ability to recruit and retain quality employees** across all sectors—including **health care, education, retail, and hospitality**. Without access to consistent, affordable childcare, many working families are forced to reduce hours, decline job opportunities, or leave the workforce altogether. Supporting providers like the Boys & Girls Club is a **strategic solution to one of the most critical workforce challenges** we face.

I also serve on the **Lane Workforce Partnership Board**, which has partnered with us in advancing the work of our Florence Childcare Taskforce. Additionally, in my role as a board member for the **Oregon State Chamber of Commerce**, I can share that **childcare is emerging as**

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a legislative priority statewide. Business and civic leaders across Oregon are recognizing that supporting working families is key to a resilient, thriving economy.

Earlier this month, I attended the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Business Leads Master Class on Child Care, where I saw how other communities are responding with innovation and urgency. In Park City, Utah—a tourism-driven community like ours—municipal investment in childcare returned a **213% ROI** by strengthening workforce participation and community engagement. That success underscores a key point: **this is not a cost; it's a smart investment** in our future.

It's time we take a longer and more meaningful look at how **local government and private partnerships can work together** to build the systems and infrastructure that support a thriving community. The Boys & Girls Club has the foundation, leadership, and impact we need—and they are ready to do more, with your support.

We respectfully urge the City of Florence to affirm its leadership in this space by **allocating funding** to this critical community partner. Together, we can build a Florence where families can thrive, employers can grow, and every child has a chance to succeed.

Thank you for your continued partnership and commitment to our community.

Sincerely,

Bettina Hannigan
President/CEO
Florence Area Chamber of Commerce
FlorenceChamber.com
(541) 997-3128