

## Irma Glidden

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**From:** Ben Calica <ben@d20alameda.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 7, 2020 6:29 PM  
**To:** City Clerk  
**Cc:** Kathy Weber; Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft; ron@ronmooney.net; Jim Oddie; Malia Vella; John Knox White  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Item #6-F---Fix 1/2 for sole proprietors criteria: Important Recommendation miscommunication regarding Alameda Strong qualification Criteria

At the meeting of WABA, DABA, GABA, the Chamber of Commerce and COA on May 6th, the issue was brought up about not preventing sole proprietors to count as employees in the criteria for qualification for the next series of grants. This was widely considered as a significant oversight in the first set of grants, and we had been informed that we would have a chance to address this in the next round. The group universally agreed that this restriction should be removed from the next grant, particularly when it came to brick and mortar retail shops.

The recommendation was: "The applicant must be a small business or non-profit with up to twenty-five (25) employees," which removed the "doesn't count as one" problem.

However, what was done instead was to take sole proprietors of restaurants and put them in a "you are fine" group, but put the retailers into a group that would at least be qualified, but for half the amount everyone else could get.

Why is this important : Many of the businesses that are an important part of what makes Alameda unique and attractive are these kinds of businesses. They include little gems like The Sewing Room, and, yes, us D20 Games. We serve hundreds of kids and adults in Alameda, giving them a place to learn kindness and mutual respect. And we have between 3 and 5 part timers on staff, usually having their first jobs in high school. Giving businesses like ours a chance to survive through this is exactly why the city has done these grants. And we are some of the most vulnerable. It is, However good the intention was the first time around, the distinction between a sole proprietor and an employee is a matter of accounting. Choosing to take a draw is often what a sole proprietor does so they can make sure that the business has what it needs to survive before they take out anything for themselves. Frequently they will have a couple of part time employees, but they tend to work far more than full time themselves to keep that business around to serve Alameda.

The state made changes to the unemployment criteria to acknowledge the "realness" of the work that we sole proprietors do. A couple of years ago, an issue with a landlord put us in a situation where we could have closed our doors. There was such an outpouring from the community that I knew I could not take away something that meant that much to them. I could make way more money doing something else, but I choose to work my heart out for the community that has cared so much for me. To be told now that all the work I do only counts as half a business, is dismissive and dismaying.

This is a simple, unnecessary issue, Please repair it this time around.

Ben Calica, Owner  
D20 Games LLC  
A place to play face to face

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**From:** Ronald Mooney <ron@ronmooney.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 7, 2020 10:31 PM  
**To:** City Clerk  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] 6F 7/7 agenda

Submitting my comments on item 6F 7/7/20 City Council agenda.

Honorable Mayor & Council,

I hope you will clarify the issue of a sole proprietor business applying for funds from the Alameda Strong campaign.

I believe a 'brick and mortar' sole proprietor - or one that works out of a commercial unit for clarity, should be eligible for a full grant even if they have no employees.

I certainly would agree a sole proprietor working out of a residential property should be eligible for the reduced (50%) amount.

Ronald Mooney  
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