Summary
Medfield Cultural Council request for municipal support

There is a Case Study on MA Cultural Council website: https://www.mass-culture.org/lcc_public_spotlight_medfield.aspx

1. Determine process for approval (Medfield has 3 Selectmen and annual Town Meeting)
   a. Meet with Town Administrator (he was the first to ask “What are other towns doing?”...which set me on the path to the supporting documents)
   b. He suggested our request could be a line item in the town budget OR be part of the Selectmen Committee’s budget (but our request to match MA Cultural Council’s request of $4,250 is BIG for their committee budget)

2. Prepare supporting documents
   a. Fact Sheet about the Council/LCC program (included History, Purpose, Members, Allocations, Management of Funds)
   b. Case for Support (identified the amount request, the issue (why we are seeking funds), other communities, reasons to provide support)
   c. History of Grant Allocations (export from MA Cult Council website – and a very good reason why you should also enter those that are not approved). Identify who got the grant, where they held the program to be clear ALL of our grantees deliver in Medfield, how much they were allocated and what percent of all requests by dollar were funded. It is compelling and demonstrates need when you see that state funds allow us to fund about 25% of the total amount requested for each of the last 2 years.
   d. List of other towns receiving support. MCC provided me with the initial list, I contacted the LCC chairs and heard back from several. Then I researched their population and median household income to show how our request compares to other towns.

3. Meet with Selectmen (their task is to determine if a request is advisable) November, 2013
   a. Provide your documents in advance of your meeting. At the meeting, summarize and ask for questions.
   b. There were few questions and a unanimous vote in favor of our request

4. Address subsequent questions immediately
   Our town accountant raised the question of whether the municipality could fulfill our request legally. Town counsel agreed. I reached out to MA Cultural Council for help and their response made the difference.

5. Watch proceedings closely
   I happened to read in Patch that the Warrant Articles were to close that day and I realized I had not seen a warrant article for our request. I contacted a Selectman
who thought we were not pursuing the request because of the legal question. We were able to straighten it out but it caused a flurry of panicked emails with the town, myself and MA Cultural Council for a day or two. Constantly ask: “What’s the next step? Who will I hear from and when? Follow up.

6. Meet with the Warrant Committee (this is the finance committee of the town that recommends if requests are affordable). March, 2014
   a. Present the case again, send the same documents in advance
   b. They would not say how they plan to vote (they are still trying to resolve an overage of the town budget as of this writing but they did indicate that the Selectmen’s vote was influential to them)

7. Increase your visibility
   a. April, 2014 Hold a grantee reception – we invited Selectmen to give out the Certificate of Appreciation to grantees
      Grantees spoke about what the grant allowed them to do = powerful testimonials
      MA Cultural Council (Jen Atwood) spoke about the Council and the LCC program
      Our State Rep. agreed to come and say a few words – she said be sure to always invite your State Rep. – they want to know about these
      The press came and interviewed me in advance and at the event
      Get some great photos and generate press after the event
      Our cable TV station filmed the event

      Which leads us up to...

8. Town Meeting: April 28, 2014 We are planning to:
   Generate awareness on FB, Council members’ personal pages, and on our website
   Display our visual board announcing grant recipients
   Prepare a one page handout of summary information
   Prepare to present our Case verbally (I fully anticipate that this will not pass without discussion)
   Ask and prepare grantees to speak in support at Town Meeting

Recommendation:
1. If you aren’t already going in front of your Selectmen or town leaders at least once a year, begin to do it now. Don’t assume they understand the LCC network or how it functions. Many people I talk to are surprised to learn we are all volunteers. Announce your work, the grant recipients, the programs brought to the community as a result. This was our first grantee reception and it made a much bigger impression than a credit line on the press release, or even than our press releases announcing the recipients. I know….one more thing to do but it was worth it. The next day a Selectmen emailed me and asked why we don’t do that every year.

2. Reach out to the MCC and State Reps. – tell them what you are doing and invite their participation. Their presence at our grantee reception added gravitas. MCC can better help other LCCs when they know what you are doing and where you are encountering issues.