



November 16, 2021

African-American Cultural and Historical Grants
Florida Department of State
R.A. Gray Building
500 S. Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250

Re: Zora Neale Hurston Florida Education Foundation Grant Application, Fort Pierce, FL

Dear Sir/Madam:

The City of Fort Pierce is pleased to support the grant application of the Zora Neale Hurston Florida Education Foundation, a 501 C 3 organization that seeks to preserve and promote the literary and local legacy of world-renowned author and anthropologist, Zora Neale Hurston. The Foundation recently acquired the St. Lucie County Welfare Home for Blacks, an historic building that served as a segregated nursing home where Zora spent her final days, passing away in 1960. The former welfare home, located at 809 N. 9th Street in Fort Pierce, now known as the Zora Dust Tracks Museum & Humanities Center, is in need of renovation, enhancement and restoration, due to its age (built in the 1950's), and years of neglect.

The Foundation intends to renovate and maintain this center, which will illuminate Hurston's legacy, showcase positive images in the Fort Pierce community and help stimulate the economy of the Lincoln Park area, an historic African -American neighborhood. The Foundation has a plan for sustainability through collaboration with businesses, other area non -profits, and local governments.

Our City of Fort Pierce has already created the Dust Tracks Heritage Trail, with eight trail markers of historic significance associated with Hurston, who moved to Fort Pierce, after falling on hard times. She was a reporter on the African -American newspaper, The Chronicle, and also served as a substitute teacher at Lincoln Park Academy, an African -American School of excellence since its inception in the early 20th Century. She authored many books, including her most famous, "Their Eyes Were Watching God," and her autobiography, "Dust Tracks on a Road."

Many events are planned by the Foundation at the Center, including the atre productions, historic exhibits, tours and the Zora Festival in March of 2022. The Foundation's Board is made up of people of standing in the academic and business community, who are dedicated to a sustainable operation, with marketing, events and collaboration to educate and excite the community not only to honor Zora's legacy, but also to promote their own legacy of excellence.

Thank you for your consideration of this very worthy project, the Zora Neale Hurston Florida Education Foundation's renovation, restoration and enhancement of its historic Zora Dust Tracks Museum & Humanities Center.

Sincerely,

Linda Hudson
Mayor