

Kent County

Coronavirus Relief Fund Activities

Summary as of September 9, 2020

Family Promise **\$500,000**

Grant to reimburse expenses for hotel rooms provided for homeless families to ensure social distancing. Family Promise has so far obtained reimbursements of approximately \$300,000, and the County anticipates receiving reimbursement requests for the balance within the next 30 days. The contract has been executed, and the program is ongoing. Family Promise has indicated that it will be seeking additional funds, although the funding may be available through the County's FEMA Part B grant.

Kent County Small Business Relief Fund **\$25,000,000**

Contract with Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce to administer the Kent County Small Business Recovery Fund. Fund will provide grants of \$5,000-\$20,000 to small businesses to address COVID-19 related losses. The contract has been executed with the Grand Rapids Chamber, and the program is ongoing.

As of September 8, 2020, the Chamber has received 2,675 applications. These applications have come from every zip code in the County. Approximately 60% of the applications were submitted for minority-owned businesses, and about 22% are woman-owned.

The Chamber has recommended grants to 1,900 businesses, and the County has approved grants totaling \$13,395,000. The County has paid out about \$11,200,000 to date to 1,436 small businesses throughout the County. The remaining grants are in various steps on the process including needing verification of tax-identification numbers, and awaiting executed grant agreements from recipients. Plante Moran has significantly reduced the number of grant awards being held because of tax-identification number verification issues.

The Chamber anticipates fully allocating the small-business relief funds in early October.

John Ball Zoo **\$200,000**

Grant to John Ball Zoo to reimburse expenses related to COVID-19 pandemic. The contract has been executed, and the Zoo has so far requested reimbursements of approximately \$167,000.

Business Support Organization Grant Program **\$420,000**

Grants to local and cultural chambers of commerce of \$20,000 and \$40,000 to support business development responses to COVID-19 in Kent County and promote County initiatives. The grants have been executed by 12 of the 14 organizations, and payments totaling \$360,000 have been made. There have been no changes since the last Subcommittee meeting.

Kent County Non-Profit Organization COVID-19 Relief Fund **\$9,500,000**

Contract with Heart of West Michigan United Way to provide grants to Kent County nonprofit organizations for services to address and mitigate the effects of COVID-19 in Kent County. The contract has been executed with Heart of West Michigan, and the program is ongoing.

County has received recommendations on 161 applications. Fifty-five organizations have received their checks, totaling over \$1.5 million. We are awaiting executed grant agreements from 23 non-profits. These 78 grants total approximately \$3 million. Grant agreements are in process for an additional 23 grant recipients, all of which are awaiting additional information from the recipients. Grants awarded to date total more than \$4.5 million. HWMUW has recommended \$435,000 in grants to ten organizations, and those recommendations are being processed by the County this week.

HWMUW anticipates fully allocating the non-profit organization relief funds in October.

Childcare Grant Program **\$1,200,000**

The current proposal is to administer this program through First Steps Kent. FSK has provided the County with a list of needs including age-appropriate toys and educational materials that are easily sanitized, cleaning supplies, food support, and assistance in locating additional resources. The County and FSK have executed a grant agreement, and FSK has received its grant funding.

FSK identified the need for direct financial support for childcare providers and is working with other organizations to promote the County Small Business Relief Fund. The Grand Rapids Chamber has coordinated with FSK to provide workshops for providers to assist them in applying for grants, and more than 30 have so far been awarded grants. In addition, providers are being encouraged to seek PPE from the County's Back-to-Work PPE program.

Right Place Economic Development Grant **\$600,000**

Grant to the Right Place to address economic development related to the COVID-19 pandemic to focus on providing resources for businesses resuming operation, connecting businesses to COVID-19 related resources, and providing talent attraction and retention resources. The contract with Right Place has been executed, and Right Place is performing under the grant agreement.

Experience GR Grant **\$820,000**

Grant to Experience GR to promote post-pandemic economic recovery for tourism and hotel industry. Grant includes \$20,000 for the Sports Commission. The contract with Experience GR has been executed, and Experience GR is performing under the grant agreement.

Urban Outreach Center Grant **\$75,000**

Grant to Urban Outreach Center, led by Rev. Jerry Bishop, to provide summer employment opportunities for youth who are unemployed because of COVID-19 pandemic. The contract with Urban Outreach Center has been executed, and it is performing under the grant agreement.

NAACP Grant **\$100,000**

Grant to NAACP to address COVID-19 related needs in the African-American community throughout Kent County. The agreement with NAACP has been executed, and NAACP has received its grant funding.

Hispanic Community Center Grant

\$TBD

Grant to West Michigan Hispanic Center to address COVID-19 related needs in the Hispanic community throughout Kent County. Hispanic Center is in the middle of a leadership change which delayed its proposal. A proposal was received and is being reviewed.

Kent County Grants to Local Units of Government

\$15,000,000

Grants to local units of government to reimburse them for COVID-19 related expenses that are not subject to reimbursement by the State or other federal government grant programs. County staff has identified a list of principles to apply to determine which expenses will be reimbursed including the principle that the County will reimburse expenses that are similar to those that it is using CARES Act funds for within County operations.

This reimbursement program has been beset by various challenges as the State has rolled out a variety of programs to reimburse local units of government for COVID-19 related costs. Not only has the State agreed to fund public-safety and health payroll expenses for at least the months of April and May, but the State has also indicated that it will provide CARES Act funds in the amount of 150% of the standard August revenue sharing payment in lieu of that revenue sharing. This has placed all local units in the position of having to determine whether their COVID-19 expenses exceed the State-provided CARES Act funds. Discussions continue regarding how to allocate funds to each local unit.

Cure Violence

\$TBD

County Administration recently received an initial inquiry and statement of support for funding to address the impact of COVID on young adults; the need for intervention with young adults to prevent violence, criminal activity; and to provide guidance, good role models, and support. Additional discussion involving community leaders, the City of Grand Rapids, Prosecutor Becker, and County Administration recently occurred. Upon receipt of additional information regarding the scope of this program, the necessary agreement will be prepared for review and approval based on the grant size consistent with the policy the Board adopted in June. .

Black Impact Collaborative

\$TBD

On August 25, 2020, the County discussed with various community representatives a proposal under which the Black Impact Collaborative would solidify a communications and education platform that would help the County have culturally rich communications to engage the Black community on the risks of COVID, how to minimize those risks and the spread of COVID, and to assist in locating and obtaining access to services.

Housing**\$2,500,000**

This allocation contains two components. First, after consultation with various interested groups, the County is working with the Salvation Army to expand and extend the State of Michigan Eviction Diversion Program already being administered by the Salvation Army. County CARES funds will be used as a supplement to the State funds which will allow more families to qualify for eviction diversion assistance. The County and Salvation Army are working on a grant agreement for \$1,000,000 to address these needs, pending approval based on the grant size consistent with the policy the Board adopted in June. Staff are currently awaiting approval of the agreement by Salvation Army, and met with Salvation Army yesterday to discuss the impact of the CDC moratorium and the possibility of providing additional assistance to process applications.

The second component is addressing homelessness. Here, the discussion has focused on providing permanent solutions. County staff and counsel have had discussions with Community Rebuilders, LINC-Up, AYA Youth Collective (formerly known as 3:11 and HQ), ICCF, and the Continuum of Care, as well as others that work in this area. The County received proposals to increase the amount of affordable housing and provide other services to those experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity from ICCF, AYA Youth Collective, and Community Rebuilders (to work with LINC-Up). A recommendation to partially fund each organization's proposal is being reviewed, and work to prepare grants agreements has begun, pending approval based on the grant size consistent with the policy the Board adopted in June.

Wifi Hot Spots**\$1,000,000**

The County has been working with a internet-service provider and local units of government to identify sites throughout the County to provide wifi hotspots. Approximately 8% of County residents do not have access to the internet. Public wi-fi equipment will be installed at township halls or in their parking lots thereby allowing residents a place to access the internet. All townships have been contacted to determine interest; several have responded indicating interest and are in the process of signing up. Additional locations in parks are also being considered. Each location would costs approximately \$6,000 which would include a data plan lasting through December 2020. The Right Place has been brought on to help with completion of the project, which is being extended to all municipalities.

Schools**\$2,000,000**

Grants to each school and school district (public and private) in the County based on the 2019 pupil count to provide funding for needed PPE, sanitation materials and supplies, and such other items as the school or school district determines it needs that are compliant with all CARES Act regulations, statutes, and Constitutional provisions. The grant agreements were sent to each school the day after the Board of Commissioners approved the allocation, and the County has received several notes of thanks from grateful schools and school districts.