



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: COUNTY MANAGER

File #: 20-789

Board Meeting Date: 10/20/2020

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Michael P. Callagy, County Manager
Subject: Support of Expansion of Food Assistance for Vulnerable Populations in County

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution:

- A) Approving an allocation of \$2,000,000 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to Second Harvest of Silicon Valley to support the expansion of food assistance for vulnerable populations in San Mateo County to respond to the increased need for food assistance and increased costs in the distribution of food assistance due to the COVID-19 public health emergency; and
- B) Authorizing and directing the County Manager, or designee, to negotiate and execute an agreement with Second Harvest of Silicon Valley to support the expansion of food assistance for vulnerable populations in San Mateo County to respond to the increased need for food assistance and increased costs in the distribution of food assistance due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, for a total amount not to exceed \$2,000,000 for a term of October 20, 2020 through December 30, 2020.

BACKGROUND:

The COVID-19 global pandemic has amplified inequities and created extreme hardship for the community's most vulnerable. Job loss, wage loss, and depletion of savings has pushed many families deeper into poverty and caused others to seek food assistance for the first time.

Second Harvest of Silicon Valley ("Second Harvest") is a food bank dedicated to ensuring that anyone in Silicon Valley who needs a healthy meal gets one. Since February 2020, an average of five hundred thousand (500,000) people per month have received food from Second Harvest - double the number of people that Second Harvest served before the COVID-19 pandemic.

In March 2020, as a result of the pandemic, Second Harvest began experiencing increased demand for food assistance in San Mateo County. The need for food assistance has steadily risen since then,

and now stands at more than double the February 2020 service levels, based on pounds of food distributed. Additionally, costs to provide food assistance have increased due to increased demand as well as implementation of safety protocols to ensure COVID-safe distribution of the food assistance.

The federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("CARES") Act was signed into law on March 27, 2020 and, among other things, it established the Coronavirus Relief Fund which provides payments to state, local and tribal governments to cover certain costs incurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic ("CARES Act funds"). The CARES Act permits local governments to use these CARES Act funds to cover costs that are necessary expenditures due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, that were not accounted for in the government's most recently approved budget as of March 27, 2020 and that are incurred during the period from March 1, 2020 through December 30, 2020. These include, among other expenditures, expenses for food delivery to residents, including, for example, senior citizens and other vulnerable populations, to enable compliance with COVID-19 public health precautions and the provision of economic support in connection with the COVID-19 public health emergency.

DISCUSSION:

Staff recommends an allocation of up to \$2,000,000 in CARES Act funds to assist Second Harvest in meeting the increased need for food assistance in the County following the COVID-19 public health emergency and covering increased costs associated with implementing COVID-19 safety protocols for food distribution to vulnerable populations in the County, such as pre-boxing food for distribution and providing home delivery of groceries to clients unable to attend distribution events due to increased risk of transmission of COVID-19. The CARES Act funds from the County would help Second Harvest cover costs of providing grants to local community based organizations to expand capacity to assist in food distribution, providing additional staffing in warehouse, transportation and distribution operations as well as procuring trucks and other infrastructure necessary to meet the increased demand for food assistance and ensure COVID-19 safe distribution of the food assistance.

Since expenses for use of CARES Act funds must be incurred by December 30, 2020, time is of the essence. Granting the County Manager, or designee, the authority to negotiate and execute an agreement with Second Harvest will allow the work necessary to expand food assistance for vulnerable populations in San Mateo County to begin immediately.

Staff will provide a report back to this Board regarding this agreement with Second Harvest, and will provide information regarding the distribution of allocated CARES Act funds to support the expansion of food assistance for vulnerable populations in the County.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact on the County General Fund associated with approving this allocation of \$2,000,000 of CARES Act funds to support the expansion food assistance for vulnerable populations in San Mateo County to respond to the increased need for food assistance and increased costs in the distribution of food assistance due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.