



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: COUNTY MANAGER

File #: 21-507

Board Meeting Date: 6/29/2021

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Michael P. Callagy, County Manager
Subject: Emergency Food Relief

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution:

- A) Approving an allocation of \$2,550,000 in American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (“ARP”) funds to Second Harvest of Silicon Valley to support emergency food assistance for vulnerable populations in San Mateo County, to respond to continuing increased need for food assistance and continuing increased costs in the distribution of food assistance due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, and to establish a grocery delivery program for older adults; and
- B) Authorizing and directing the County Manager, or designee, to negotiate and execute an agreement or agreements with Second Harvest of Silicon Valley to support food assistance for vulnerable populations in San Mateo County, to respond to continuing increased need for food assistance and continuing increased costs in the distribution of food assistance due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and to establish a grocery delivery program, for a total amount not to exceed \$2,550,000 and for a term of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023.

BACKGROUND:

On March 3, 2020, pursuant to Section 101080 of the California Health and Safety Code, the San Mateo County Health Officer declared a local health emergency throughout the County related to COVID-19. The Board of Supervisors ratified and extended this declaration of local health emergency, which remains in effect.

In addition, on March 3, 2020, pursuant to Section 8630 of the California Government Code and Chapter 2.46 of the San Mateo County Ordinance Code, the San Mateo County Director of Emergency Services proclaimed a local emergency throughout San Mateo County related to COVID-19. The Board ratified and extended the proclamation of local emergency, and this local emergency remains in effect.

On March 4, 2020, Governor Newsom issued a Proclamation of State of Emergency related to COVID-19 effective throughout California.

While the County and the State have made progress in recovery from some of the most immediate impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency, much remains to be done to respond to the negative economic impacts of the pandemic. Many County residents continue to suffer from the economic dislocation caused by the pandemic, including significant income loss due to layoffs, business and school closures, and a loss of work hours and wages, as well as extraordinary out-of-pocket medical expenses. Many County residents have been pushed deeper into poverty and a large number of our neighbors have sought out food assistance for the first time and are continuing to rely on such assistance.

On April 24, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom announced the launch of the Great Plates Delivered (GPD) program, a prepared meals delivery service. For the last year, the GPD program has helped seniors and other adults at high risk of COVID-19 stay home and stay healthy by delivering three nutritious meals a day to their homes. The Federal Emergency Management Agency, which authorized and fully funded the GPD program, has announced that funding for the program will end on July 9, 2021. When GPD ends, an estimated 1,200 older adults in San Mateo County currently served by the program will continue to have unmet nutritional needs. Approximately 700 clients will need grocery deliveries and approximately 500 clients will continue to need prepared home delivered meals.

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. 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 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (“ARP”) was signed into law in January 2021 and, among other things, it allocates money to States and local agencies that can be used to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency and the negative public health and economic impacts caused or exacerbated by it.

DISCUSSION:

In light of the continuing economic hardship and dislocation caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency and the corresponding food insecurity that many County residents continue to experience, staff recommends an allocation of \$2,000,000 in ARP funds to assist Second Harvest in meeting the continuing extraordinary need for food assistance in the County. This \$2,000,000 in ARP funds will help Second Harvest cover food and operations costs, providing grants to local community based organizations to maintain and expand capacity to assist in food distribution and providing additional staffing in warehouse, transportation and distribution operations as well as procuring trucks and other infrastructure necessary to meet the COVID-19 related demand for food assistance and ensure COVID-19 safe distribution of the food assistance.

In addition, to address the nutritional needs of County older adults when the GPD program ends, staff proposes a two-year pilot program through Aging and Adult Services and the Office of Sustainability to: 1) initiate a grocery delivery program in partnership with the Second Harvest Food Bank; and 2) expand the County’s existing Home Delivered Meals program. Staff recommends an allocation of \$550,000 to support the delivery costs associated with the grocery delivery program for older adults

post-GPD. When combined with the \$2,000,000 allocation discussed above, this constitutes a recommended total allocation of \$2,550,000 to Second Harvest. (Also on the Board's agenda for this meeting is a recommendation for additional funding for partner agencies to support expansion of the Home Delivered Meals Program.)

Because the need remains acute, 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 maintain and expand food assistance for vulnerable populations in San Mateo County to begin immediately.

Staff will provide a report back to the Board regarding this agreement with Second Harvest, and will provide information regarding the distribution of allocated ARP Act funds to support the maintenance and 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 to expand food assistance for vulnerable populations in San Mateo County based on the continuing increased need for food assistance and increased costs in the distribution of food assistance due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and its negative economic impacts. The County anticipates that the \$2,550,000 will be provided through the federal American Rescue Plan. However, to the extent appropriate, these costs may ultimately be covered by reimbursement from funds provided through other state and/or federal funds that may be made available in connection with the County's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.