



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Grants Management Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Mayor Diane Wolfe Marlin and Urbana City Council Members

FROM: Sheila Dodd, Manager, Grants Management Division

DATE: May 21, 2020

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CONSOLIDATED SOCIAL SERVICE FUND FY 20-21

Introduction

This memorandum provides information regarding the potential changes to the review process for Consolidated Social Service Fund (CSSF) applications to better address emerging needs related to COVID-19. CSSF combines funds from three sources: City of Urbana general funds, Cunningham Township funds, and City of Urbana CDBG funds. Funds are awarded to agencies following an extensive, fair, and open application process, and Council approval.

Discussion

Requests to fund 31 programs were received for the FY20-21 CSSF program. Applications were due February 28, 2020 at 4:00 pm via email. Initially, City and Township staff intended to bring funding allocations to the Committee of the Whole in mid-April and make funding available to agencies July 1, 2020. In the meantime, a global pandemic has dramatically changed the course of daily life. With this at the forefront of current decision-making, staff believes the community would be better served by funding a select few programs now and waiting to fund other programs later in the year. The programs recommended for immediate funding will address issues surrounding food insecurity and healthcare. These are extremely necessary services as many residents face unemployment and subsequently need additional resources to cover basic needs.

Postponing funding to other programs will give agencies the necessary time to adjust their programs as they adhere to new health and safety guidelines related to COVID-19. Staff will reach out to agencies that submitted complete applications by the deadline that supported CSSF program priorities to inform them of a new timeline to submit changes to their application. Only changes to the program description will be requested from agencies. Those agencies that did not qualify for funding this year will receive denial letters. By allowing agencies to adjust their programs as needed, staff believes this will remain true to the goal of having a fair and open application process. It will also prioritize the needs of low-income residents and address the fact that needs have changed rapidly over the course of a few months.

Anticipated Fiscal Impacts

Funds for this program have previously been set-aside and approved by Council. There will be no additional fiscal impacts on the City as a result of changing the process of the CSSF.

Recommendation

Staff recommends funding three agencies initially and postponing funding to other agencies until a later date. This will allow agencies to amend their programs to meet emerging community needs as a result of COVID-19. The three agencies and the suggested funding amount are listed below.

Agency	Requested Funding	Recommended Funding
Health Care Consumers	\$20,000	\$20,000
Sola Gratia	\$6,500	\$6,500
Wesley Food Pantry	\$10,000	\$10,000