



TOWN OF RANDOLPH, VERMONT

Economic Development Council

Via Teleconference
Minutes of April 16, 2020

Members present: Mary Richter, CJ Stumpf

Guests: Peter Reed, Julie Iffland, Maury Smith, Dan Bennett

Town of Randolph: Joshua Jerome

Selectboard Liaison: Perry Armstrong

Public Attendees: None

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment – None present
3. Approval of Agenda (*no quorum*)

Topics Discussed:

The group met to provide updates and progress relating to the Coronavirus (CoVID-19) relief benefits, communication and supporting local businesses and the community.

1. Business outreach

- RAMAN (Randolph Area Mutual-Aid Network) <https://racdc.com/covid19>
Julie reported RACDC and Capstone are meeting tomorrow, April 17 to discuss the development of a fund raising collection and distribution campaign initiative. Mary will forward to group for feedback to Julie. A draft is appended to the minutes.

RAMAN Site “I Need Help” and “I Want to Help” has been successful and have been able to fill all of the requested needs with food deliveries, miscellaneous assistance. Julie contacted Albertson (Shaw’s) to provide a charge account for the volunteers to use.

- SBA (Small Business Association) <https://www.sba.com/vermont/>
Peter reported the SBA has run out of money. RAMAN continues to be a good resource as well as ACCD (Agency of Commerce and Community Development) <https://accd.vermont.gov/>.

If anyone needs help, they can contact:

Joshua Jerome | Joshua@randolphvt.org | Office: 802-728-5433 x19 | Cell: 802-431-5385.

- Vermont Revolving Loan Fund

Josh is working on availability for small businesses who were denied a loan or did not qualify for a loan through SBA. There will be a \$20,000 cap and will include underwriting criteria.

Communication to the community will include and not limited to Front Porch Forum, Our Herald, Facebook, Bulletin Boards i.e. invite public to REDC Zoom meeting(s), local Post Offices, Shaw's Central Supplies, Chef's Market, etc.

Additional discussions included:

- Inform more small businesses about the PPP program and other SBA loans
- Our book-keeper/accountant has offered to help small businesses fill out & understand the SBA loan process. She also has done USADA loan packaging & could help with options that come out of USDA...
- RACDC will use up to \$5k of its business revolving loan program as a grant to stimulate community support of local business (board approved it). Can also give loans to businesses who need it.
- Want to keep an eye out for stimulus funding that could be used to recapitalize the BRLF fund <https://www.racdc.com/loan-program> as we have lent out a lot of the fund over the past 2 years and are running out of capital.

- Small Business Support

Josh is working on a survey and will reach out to the local regional businesses to join our REDC meeting.

Julie noted there will be a local version of Zoom, free allowing 100 attendees.

2. Coronavirus Pandemic (CoVID-19) Local Testing

Dr. Maury Smith brought attention to the Council the need to develop a strategy and protocol for testing to get people back to work and how he could utilize his skills towards this effort.

There were questions if there was a program on the State and regional level. Dan advised there were no options yet and he had a conference call with Dr. Levine from the Vermont Department of Health and will address Maury's question with him.

Email update from Dan Bennett date April 17, 2020 at 11:24 AM

"The Governor just announced that the State is developing guidance for businesses and the greater population on testing, tracing, phased opening, training, and policies and procedures. This is the centralized approach that his administration has hinted at previously. He did note that the administration will include hospitals in the process for testing and tracing. I will share any information I receive as I receive it.

The Governor is also continuing to emphasize tele-commuting and work-at-home programs and social distancing. I'll work with Gifford's communications team to support these messages to our wider community, where possible.

Feel free to reach out to me with any questions (contact info below)."

Dan Bennett | President and CEO | Gifford Health Care |
(802) 728-2304 | dbennett@giffordhealthcare.org

Adjourned: 6:12 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Mary V. Richter, Chair



**Two Rivers Community Fund
Parameters for Collection & Distribution of Funds**

Draft updated April 13, 2020

Section 1 - Purpose:

The purpose of the Two Rivers Community Fund is to provide direct financial assistance on behalf of community members to assist them in meeting basic needs both during the disaster and during the recovery period following the disaster.

The Two Rivers Community Fund is being created in the spring of 2020 in order to respond to needs stemming from the COVID-19 disaster within the Two Rivers Service Area. This encompasses the towns of:

Barnard, Bethel, Bradford, Braintree, Brookfield, Chelsea, Corinth, Fairlee, Granville, Hancock, Newbury, Pittsfield, Randolph, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon, Stockbridge, Strafford, Thetford, Topsham, Tunbridge, Vershire and West Fairlee.

Any funds remaining at the conclusion of the COVID-19 disaster, will be maintained to assist community members in future disasters. The parameters of assistance are subject to change based on the needs each disaster presents.

Section 2 - Collection of Funds:

The Two Rivers Community Fund will be funded by donations from individuals, businesses and organizations.

Capstone Community Action will track donations and provide financial oversight. Capstone Community Action will provide development support around messaging, including but not limited to creating materials and social media content. Communities supported by the fund will provide support with distribution of the funding requests created by Capstone Community Action.

Funds can be contributed by check, money order or online through a platform provided by Capstone Community Action. For checks or money orders, donations can be sent to the address below. Donors should indicate in the memo line that the funds are for Two Rivers Community Fund. There will be an option on the online platform to indicate funds should be directed to the fund. Anyone who has received assistance through the funds who wishes to pay it forward are encouraged to contribute back to the Two Rivers Community Fund.

Section 3 - Distribution of Funds:

Funds will be distributed on behalf of community members based on Capstone Community Action's approved Fiscal Policies & Procedures.

- Funds will be disbursed on a first come first serve basis
 - Amount of assistance is based both on eligibility and availability of funds
 - **The least amount of assistance necessary to resolve a situation should be utilized and community members should be encouraged to contribute as much as they can. Households should receive no more than \$500 in total assistance.**
 - *Additional assistance may be provided on a case by case basis in extraordinary circumstances and will be determined by Capstone Community Action Staff.*
 - Funds will only be disbursed to 3rd party vendors.
 - Capstone Community Action will need an invoice to pay from that lists the vendor's name, mailing address and a description of the service / product provided.
 - Vendors must provide a W-9 to receive payment.
 - In the event funds are used to purchase gift cards (food, gas, etc.) to distribute to community members, staff member or approved volunteer will provide:
 - A copy of the receipt as back up to the credit card statement or the invoice submitted for reimbursement
 - An accounting of how the cards were distributed that will include:
 - Name
 - Town
 - Date of assist
 - Amount of assist
 - # of people in household
 - Confirmation that household self-certified income eligibility for assistance (see below)
- Capstone Community Action will provide a spreadsheet for people to enter gift card disbursement information.
- Accounts payable are run weekly and checks are cut on Thursdays. Invoices are due by noon Monday each week.

Section 4 – Eligibility for Assistance:

To be eligible for assistance households must:

- reside in one of the towns listed in Section 1

- have difficulty meeting their basic needs directly related to the disaster
- self-certify that their gross income for the past 30 days is equal to or less than, 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (see chart below)
 - *If a household has recently lost employment, this may be based on the estimated income for the next 30 days using anticipated unemployment benefits, etc.*

2020 Federal Poverty Guidelines		
Household Size	200% FPL Annual	200% FPL Monthly
1	\$ 25,520	\$ 2,127
2	\$ 34,480	\$ 2,873
3	\$ 43,440	\$ 3,620
4	\$ 52,400	\$ 4,367
5	\$ 61,360	\$ 5,113
6	\$ 70,320	\$ 5,860
7	\$ 79,280	\$ 6,607
8	\$ 88,240	\$ 7,353
<i>For households with more than 8 people add for each additional person:</i>	\$ 8,960	\$ 747

Section 5 - Eligibility Determination & Assistance Documentation:

- Gift Card / Gas Card Distribution:
 - A Capstone Community Action staff member or approved volunteer will screen the community member to:
 - determine if the need is directly related to the disaster
 - determine if they are aware of, have exhausted other resources relating to the expressed need
 - determine income eligibility through verbal self-declaration that the household’s gross monthly income is at or below 200% Federal Poverty Level (see chart above)
 - If they are eligible and gift card / gas card is provided staff member or approved volunteer will complete spreadsheet provided with:
 - Name
 - Town
 - Date of assist
 - Amount of assistance provided
 - Number of people in the household
 - Confirmation they self-certified as meeting income eligibility

Capstone Community Action will provide a tracking sheet.

- Financial Assistance provided directly to 3rd party vendor:
 - A Capstone Community Action staff member will screen the community member to:
 - Complete basic Capstone Community Action Intake in client management system to collect basic demographic information needed for reporting
 - Ask if the need is directly related to the disaster
 - Screen for needs relating to assist requested as well as any additional needs that Capstone or other community resources might be able to assist with such as:
 - Energy assistance
 - Housing counseling
 - Budget coaching
 - 3 Squares and Fuel Assistance Application Assistance
 - Weatherization
 - Head Start Services
 - Request verbal confirmation that they certify their gross monthly income is at or below 200% Federal Poverty Level
 - If they are eligible for the assist Capstone Community Action staff member will work with community member and vendor to:
 - Arrange for assistance
 - Obtain invoice
 - Obtain w-9
 - Submit Purchase Order to Finance
 - Make payment

Section 6 - Eligible Expenses:

The Two Rivers Community Fund is meant to supplement existing resources and should only be accessed once all other resources available to the household have been exhausted. See section 3 above relating to limits on distribution of funds. Additional general guidelines can be found below. The fund can assist with the following:

- **Food access:**
 - **Purchase & distribute grocery store gift cards to local grocery stores.**
 - General guidelines for providing assistance:
 - The household should have exhausted all resources available to them for the month, for example – 3 Squares benefits, WIC, Commodities, Food Shelf Visits, etc.

- If the household is not currently receiving / utilizing benefits listed above but may be eligible, one month of assistance may be provided and they should be referred to those programs prior to additional assistance being approved.
 - Limits for assistance:
 - \$20 per household member per month
 - ***See section 3 above re: limits on assistance***
 - Distribution:
 - Staff and volunteers may distribute gift cards through local networks created to respond to the disaster.
- **Transportation Assistance:**
 - **Purchase & distribute gas cards to local gas stations for essential trips (i.e. picking up essential supplies / health care / work for essential service providers).**
 - General guidelines for providing assistance:
 - The household should have exhausted all resources available to them – public transportation options, gas vouchers available through other resources, etc.
 - Limits for assistance:
 - 1 \$25 gas card per week
 - ***See section 3 above re: limits on assistance***
 - Distribution:
 - Staff and volunteers may distribute gas cards through local networks created to respond to the disaster.
 - **Car Repair**
 - General guidelines for providing assistance:
 - The household should have exhausted all resources available to them
 - Access to the car must be necessary to meet essential needs that can't be met in any other way (i.e. access to health care / work for essential service providers).
 - Limits for assistance:
 - ***See section 3 above re: limits on assistance***
 - Distribution:
 - Funds will be distributed based on the parameters in sections 4 and 5 above, following eligibility determination by a Capstone Community Action Staff member

- **Energy Assistance:**
 - **Utility Payment:**
 - General guidelines for providing assistance:
 - The household should have exhausted all resources available to them
 - Limits for assistance:
 - 3 months' worth of utility arrearages for electric, water, sewer, metered fuel or Cap – whichever is lower.
 - ***See section 3 above re: limits on assistance***
 - Distribution:
 - Funds will be distributed based on the parameters in sections 4 and 5 above, following eligibility determination by a Capstone Community Action Staff member
 - **Category 2 – Fuel Payment:**
 - General guidelines for providing assistance:
 - The household should have exhausted all resources available to them
 - Limits for assistance:
 - Assistance for heating fuel only
 - Emergency trip charge and fuel pressure test are allowable
 - 125 gallon delivery of fuel or 1 ton of wood or pellets (consistent with state assistance regulations) or Cap – whichever is lower
 - ***See section 3 above re: limits on assistance***
 - Distribution:
 - Funds will be distributed based on the parameters in sections 4 and 5 above, following eligibility determination by a Capstone Community Action Staff member
- **Housing Assistance:**
 - **Rent or Mortgage Payment:**
 - General guidelines for providing assistance:
 - The household should have exhausted all resources available to them including but not limited to talking with their landlord or mortgage company to set up payment plans
 - Limits for assistance:
 - 1 month rent / mortgage (current or back) or Cap – whichever is lower
 - ***See section 3 above re: limits on assistance***
 - Distribution:

- Funds will be distributed based on the parameters in sections 4 and 5 above, following eligibility determination by a Capstone Community Action Staff member
- **Medical Assistance:**
 - **Prescription Co-Pays and other health related expenses:**
 - General guidelines for providing assistance:
 - The household should have exhausted all resources available to them
 - Limits for assistance:
 - ***See section 3 above re: limits on assistance***
 - Distribution:
 - Funds will be distributed based on the parameters in sections 4 and 5 above, following eligibility determination by a Capstone Community Action Staff member
- **Communications Assistance:**
 - **Phone Cards:**
 - General guidelines for providing assistance:
 - The household should have exhausted all resources available to them
 - Limits for assistance:
 - 1 month of phone access per household per month
 - ***See section 3 above re: limits on assistance***
 - Distribution:
 - Staff and volunteers may distribute phone cards through local networks created to respond to the disaster.
 - **Internet or Connectivity Expenses:**
 - General guidelines for providing assistance:
 - The household should have exhausted all resources available to them
 - Limits for assistance:
 - ***See section 3 above re: limits on assistance***
 - Distribution:
 - Funds will be distributed based on the parameters in sections 4 and 5 above, following eligibility determination by a Capstone Community Action Staff member
- **Other Assistance:**
 - **Meeting basic needs previously un-identified:**

- General guidelines for providing assistance:
 - The household should have exhausted all resources available to them
- Limits for assistance:
 - ***See section 3 above re: limits on assistance***
- Distribution:
 - Staff and approved volunteers may distribute gift cards through local networks created to respond to the disaster.
 - 3rd Party Vendor payments will be distributed based on the parameters in sections 4 and 5 above, following eligibility determination by a Capstone Community Action Staff member