



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

STAFF REPORT

December 16, 2020

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Garrett Toy, Town Manager

SUBJECT: Receive update on the Town’s Residential Rental Assistance Program to assist extremely low-income renters whose household incomes were adversely affected by COVID-19 and who are at risk of homelessness and direct staff as needed

RECOMMENDATION

Receive report and direct staff, as needed.

DISCUSSION

At its August 19th meeting, the Council approved the creation of a rental assistance program for residents and allocated \$60,000 for the program. The purpose of the program is to help residents in need whose household incomes are adversely impacted by COVID-19. The program is modeled after the County program, which was limited to extremely low-income households (i.e., earning 30% or less of median income adjusted for household size) and who were also at-risk of homelessness. St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP) and Ritter Center both volunteered to administer the program on behalf of the Town. For simplicity, the funding was split between SVdP and Ritter Center. The two non-profits coordinate their efforts to ensure there is no duplication of services to residents.

SVdP and Ritter Center provided the following status update on the program:

Status of Fairfax Rental Assistance Program			
	As of 10/13/20	As of 11/20/20	As of 12/9/20
	Number	Number	Number
Grants Awarded	8	16	18
Grants in process	1	0	1
Waiting for applicant documentation	4	6	6
Still in process of being contacted	10	2	2
Closed due to no response after multiple efforts (3)	8	8	8
Ineligible/no longer need assistance	7	6	6
Total applicants	38	38	41
Original waiting list	23	23	23
Total amount of grants awarded	\$ 15,967.50	\$ 24,608.50	\$ 28,953.50
Balance remaining	\$ 44,032.50	\$ 35,391.50	\$ 31,046.50
Average grant amount/household	\$ 1,995.94	\$ 1,538.03	\$ 1,608.53
Median of grants (50% above and 50% below)	\$ 2,037.50	\$ 1,491.50	\$ 1,591.50
Highest grant amount	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Lowest grant amount	\$ 1,387.50	\$ 490.00	\$ 490.00

The above table shows that they are waiting for six (6) applicants to submit documentation, one (1) application is in process, and they are in the process of contacting two (2) applicants. They received 3 additional applications since the last report. If all 9 of these applicants receive grants, based on the average grant amount of approximately \$1,600/household, the project would award another \$14,400 (approx.) in grants. This would leave an approximate balance of \$17,000.

Both non-profits have indicated they would be willing to continue to administer the program if the Town revised the guidelines and allocated additional funding. However, their preference would be for the Town to consider aiding those households who previously received rental assistance from the Town or other programs but require additional assistance. Anecdotally, SVdP believes upwards of 80% of the households assisted could use additional assistance and more households will need assistance because of the County's new Stay Home Order. Also, the County of Marin is considering a new rental assistance program using CDBG funds.

Given the need, we recommend the Town Council consider modifying the program to allow an additional one month of rental assistance to be requested by those households who have previously received assistance from Fairfax or other rental assistance programs, but otherwise would be eligible for the program. Priority would be given to those households who have not previously received any type of rental assistance.

FISCAL IMPACT

n/a