



Buncombe County Board of Commissioners

Request for Board Action

Meeting Date: 04/07/2020

New Business

Department:

Budget

Presenter(s):

Jennifer Barnette, Budget

Contact(s):

Jennifer Barnette, Budget

Subject:

One Buncombe Fund appropriation

Brief Summary:

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, our local governments, business community, and other stakeholders are coming together to create a single point of donations to help individuals and businesses impacted by COVID-19. This effort will be branded the "One Buncombe" campaign. A donation page will be hosted by Buncombe County with funds sent to the Buncombe County Service Foundation (BCSF), which is a non-profit created by Buncombe County. Funds placed in the BCSF for the COVID-19 response will be managed by a nine-person board, which will include members of the banking, local government, and business community. Funds will be used for individuals and small businesses that have been impacted by COVID-19.

Funds for individuals who have lost employment due to COVID-19 will be delivered via the Health and Human Services' (HHS) existing General Assistance (GA) program model. However, new funds will need to be allocated for this purpose. Funds will be used for life essential needs caused by the COVID-19 public health crisis such as electric bills, deposits, fuel oil, kerosene, natural gas, propane, wood, mortgages, overnight lodging, etc. Funds will be paid to the service provider, not directly to individuals. Individuals will be screened and referred to other HHS programs, as needed.

Small businesses impacted by COVID-19 will be eligible for loans up to \$10,000 with an initial 6-month period of no payments of any kind. Interest will accrue during that period but is not paid and rolls up into the loan at the end of the 6 month period. Loans will be designed to provide low-cost "bridge funding" to help businesses stay open and limit job losses until businesses can qualify for longer term disaster funding from the SBA or others. The BCSF will contract with a third-party to administer this program.

This amendment appropriates \$200,000 in funding from the General Fund to be transferred to BCSF for the above stated purposes.

Recommended Motion & Requested Action:

Approve budget amendment

County Manager's Comments & Recommendation:

County Manager recommends as presented