

**County of Sonoma  
Agenda Item Summary Report**

Clerk of the Board Use Only  
Meeting Date  
\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Agenda Item No:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Department:** Human Services

**4/5 Vote Required**

**Contact:**  
Marla Stuart

**Phone:**  
(707) 565-5849

**Board Date:**  
June 23, 2009

**Deadline for Board Action:**  
June 23, 2009

**AGENDA SHORT TITLE:**  
Government Capacity Building Grant

**REQUESTED BOARD ACTION:**

Authorize the United Way of the Wine Country to apply for a \$250,000 Government Capacity Building Grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Strengthening Communities Fund on behalf of the County of Sonoma. Provide grant writing support to United Way via the county contract with Glen Price.

**CURRENT FISCAL YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT**

**EXPENDITURES**

**ADDL FUNDS REQUIRING BOARD APPROVAL**

Estimated Cost	\$	000.00	Contingencies	\$	000.00
			(Fund Name: )		
Amount Budgeted	\$	000.00	Unanticipated Revenue	\$	000.00
			(Source: )		
Other Available Approp. (Explain Below)	\$	000.00	Other Transfer(s)		000.00
			(Source: )	\$	
Additional Requested:	\$	0.00	Total Source of Funds:	\$	0.00

**Explanation** (if required):

**Prior Board Action(s):**

- Strategic Plan: In December, 2007 the Board approved the Sonoma County Strategic Plan. Goal III seeks to enhance the capacity of County programs and community systems to more effectively meet the changing needs of individuals, families, and communities in Sonoma County. This goal includes a strategy to better identify and strengthen the community-based assets and support systems (existing networks, community leadership, volunteers, etc.) that senior, Latino, and low-income populations can bring to bettering the entire community. Strategic Project 28 is chartered to enhance the effectiveness of interactions and engagement with growing populations and improve community based assets and systems. Project 32 is designed to build upon existing collaborative relationships. Project 67 aims to increase county participation in community based organizations.
- 2-1-1: On February 10, 2009, the Board accepted a report about the implementation of 2-1-1 in Sonoma County. 2-1-1 is provided as a collaboration between the United Way of Sonoma County, the Volunteer Center, the Community Foundation, and the County of Sonoma.

**Alternatives – Results of Non-Approval:**

Loss of an opportunity to bring \$250,000 in federal stimulus funding to the community.

**Background:**

On March 30, the Human Services Department partnered with the Department of Health Services to host a meeting with community partners. We invited our partner community organizations to talk to us about their current economic and caseload challenges through a survey and at an evening meeting. 58 organizations submitted the survey and 72 people, representing 49 agencies, came to the meeting. Two key themes emerged.

First, overwhelming, partner agencies report seeing more clients and a shift in client's needs. Right now, clients are seeking assistance in four main areas:

- Basic needs such as food, housing and employment
- Mental health and substance abuse counseling
- Financial, credit, foreclosure, and bankruptcy assistance
- Affordable health care

Second, partners feel an urgent need to convene a regular forum to share ideas, improve efficiencies, and identify innovative service options.

Since March, the Human Services and Health Services Departments have been in discussions with United Way of the Wine County, the Volunteer Center, Community Action Partnership, and the Community Foundation to develop a mechanism to support continued networking among partner agencies. To support this work, this group has agreed that United Way of the Wine County will be the lead agency in applying for a federal stimulus grant to enhance the role of 2-1-1 as a community-building and capacity-building tool.

**Grant Description:**

As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Section 1110 of the Social Security Act and Title VIII of ARRA), the Strengthening Communities Fund (via the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services) is offering 48 grants up to \$250,000 for Government Capacity Building. Applicants must be a government entity or a nonprofit organization authorized by a government entity through a statute, resolution, or executive order. The intent of these grants is to build capacity with community-based and faith-based non-profits and to provide training and technical assistance to help non-profit, faith-based and community organizations better serve those in need and to increase nonprofit organizations' involvement in the economic recovery. Grantees will use program funds to provide free capacity building services to non-profit organizations, such as a beneficiary benefits clearinghouse, outreach and education, facilitation of partnerships between and among non-profits and other government agencies, and training and technical assistance to improve awareness of and access to ARRA efforts/benefits and to improve organizational capacity to be active participants in ARRA efforts/benefits.

**Background Cont'd**

**Summary of Sonoma County Grant Application:**

Acting on behalf of Sonoma County and in collaboration with the Volunteer Center, the United Way of the Wine Country will use grant funds to enhance the effectiveness and capacity of service organizations and access to services for those most in need through expansion and enhancement of 2-1-1 as a community-building and capacity-building tool. Currently, 2-1-1 acts as a clearinghouse of information about real-time available community services. Any entity throughout the community (individuals in need or agencies providing services) can call 2-1-1 for immediate and accurate information. 2-1-1 operators provide information and seamlessly transfer callers to appropriate resources. For instance, emergency rooms can call upon discharge of a homeless individual. Alternative Sentencing can call for immediate referrals to substance abuse counseling. With this grant, United Way will be able to expand outreach and education to increase provider use of 2-1-1. As a service clearinghouse 2-1-1 can increase efficiencies for service providers as staff spend less time seeking available services. This will support the desire expressed at the March meeting to improve efficiencies and implement innovative service delivery options. Expanding the use of 2-1-1 will also foster long-lasting collaborations between local service providers as 2-1-1 becomes a hub of information and communication. Finally, the daily aggregate information about community need that is currently available from 2-1-1 will become more comprehensive and accurate as a greater proportion of all need is routed through 2-1-1.

**Recommendation:**

Authorize United Way of the Wine Country to apply for the Government Capacity Building grant on behalf of the County of Sonoma. Provide grant writing support to United Way via the county contract with Glen Price.

**Attachments:** Due to the short timeline for this grant, the application is still being developed. A copy of the final grant application will be provided to the Board as an informational item.

**On File With Clerk:**

**CLERK OF THE BOARD USE ONLY**

**Board Action** (If other than "Requested")

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**Vote:**