

# Board of Commissioners Resolution

**B2020-231**

15 West Kellogg Blvd.  
Saint Paul, MN 55102  
651-266-9200

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**Sponsor:** Finance

**Meeting Date:** 11/17/2020

**Item Number:** 2020-542

**Title:** COVID-19 Authorization for Procurement Contracts and Amendments funded through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act

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**Background:**

Since last March, Ramsey County has been actively responding to the needs within our community to address the effects of COVID-19. The County received CARES funding in the amount of \$96.027 million. These funds need to be expended by December 30, 2020. On March 17, 2020, the County Board authorized the County Manager to approve purchases up to \$1 million until the County manager, acting on the advice of the Director of Emergency Management and Homeland Security and the Director of Saint Paul Ramsey County Public Health, notifies the Board Chair that the State of Emergency is no longer warranted. On May 26, 2020, the County Board authorized over \$56 million in CARES Act funding to be allocated to COVID-19 relief programs in the areas of financial, workforce and small business assistance. Staff is now seeking final approval for several COVID-19 related items prior to the end of the grant period.

The County has been focused on the financial, workforce, homelessness and small business assistance responses. Most of the funds in these areas have been used and at this point staff is looking to pivot some remaining, unspent funds to a new non-profit relief program. Ramsey County has set up a Resiliency Fund in the areas of workforce, food security and health/well-being to provide emergency assistance grants up to \$10,000 (workforce) or up to \$50,000 (food security and health/well-being) to eligible nonprofit organizations that have been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Grants will be awarded based on demonstration of economic impact from COVID-19. Providing this funding will support capacity in nonprofit organizations to survive the current crisis and continue to provide critical assistance to residents. The establishment of the workforce fund was part of the board approved \$15M of CARES workforce supports. The funds for food security and health/well-being has been launched but additional board authority is required to establish enough funds to fund the program through the end of grant period. The Resiliency Fund is being administered by SPEDCO, a nonprofit economic development organization, headquartered in Arden Hills, with over 30 years of experience lending to small businesses in Minnesota and Wisconsin. SPEDCO has also operated a grant program for economic and workforce development organizations in the same service area for over a decade. SPEDCO worked with the cities of White Bear Lake and Saint Paul to administer CARES Act funding. Staff is requesting Board approval for a contract of up to \$1.65 million for SPEDCO for this program.

The Board has taken three actions so far related to the \$40 million in CARES Act operating funds. Two actions were specific to Homelessness and totaled \$16.3 million. They included \$4.1 million for 130 limited duration positions and \$12.2 million for the overall homelessness response. An additional \$14 million was previously approved by the Board that provided funding across personnel, non-personnel, community engagement and public health. This report requests authority to spend the remaining \$9.7 million on personnel and non-personnel CARES act eligible expenditures. This will assist in ensuring all funds are spent by the end of the grant period.

This request is also seeking authority to accept two additional grants related to COVID-19 response. One is from the Secretary of State for election work and the other is additional funding for the Ramsey County Care Center from the federal CARES provider relief fund.

CARES Act funding will end on December 30, 2020. As a result, efforts to use CARES Act funds is moving at a rapid pace and we will return to the Board with any additional requests for action and updates as needed.

**Recommendation:**

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Authorize the County Manager to enter into a contract with SPEDCO for \$1.65 million to run a non-profit relief fund program utilizing remaining CARES Act funding dedicated to addressing emergency response costs.
2. Approve \$9.7 million of the CARES Act funding be used to address emergency response costs associated with operating the County during the emergency period.
3. Authorize the County Manager to accept \$748,620 for the Ramsey County Care Facility from the CARES Act Provider Relief Fund.
4. Authorize the County Manager to accept \$421,304 to support election work from the Minnesota Secretary of State Elections- CARES Act funding

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Carter, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt. Ayes – 7: Frethem, MatasCastillo, McDonough, McGuire, Ortega, Reinhardt, Carter. Motion passed.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Janet M. Guthrie, Chief Clerk – County Board