



The following is a mid-year report on “Baldwin Together” as required by the Appropriations Agreement with the Baldwin County Commission.

Committee Reports

In August 2020, the Baldwin Together Personnel Committee advertised for and hired two Case Managers (CMs). Their names are Alicia Gourlay and Ilene Baskette. They each came highly recommended and have backgrounds in assisting the community. They were trained using an adaptation of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) Disaster Case Management Training, and began work on September 1, 2020 at their office provided by Prodissee Pantry.

The original Case Management Proposal outlined a multi-phase plan in which the CMs were to operate as a referral source and comprehensive resource for individuals impacted by COVID-19 for the first phase. However, funding from the Mapp Family Foundation and the State of Alabama for client assistance allowed the CMs to begin meeting financial needs right away (as outlined in Phase Two.) The Development Committee continues to seek additional funding for client assistance.

The CMs work with each of the impacted individuals to assess the needs, verify the COVID-19 impact, develop a plan for future stability and make appropriate referrals. If needed, the Case Management Committee is available to offer guidance on any cases that involve extraordinary circumstances or require creative problem solving.

Once the cases are complete, they are presented to the Allocations Committee. This group meets once or twice a week as needed and approves, denies, or alters the allocation requested by the CM. Once a case is approved, it is submitted to the Community Action Agency (CAA), acting as fiscal agent of Baldwin Together, for payment directly to the vendor.

As part of the collaborative approach to this project, a plan is being developed for the Baldwin Together CMs to be able to access programs that have received significant CARES Act funding to be allocated for Baldwin County Residents. This will be universally beneficial because it will allow more clients to have access to the CARES funding, and assist the other programs in processing applications, while alleviating some pressure on the Baldwin Together client assistance funding.

Conclusion

It is the opinion of the Baldwin Together Committee that this project has been demonstrated as viable, that the hired CMs have provided an invaluable service to the community, and that the impacts of COVID-19 will continue to affect our County. We would like to request that the Baldwin County Commission move forward with allocating the remaining \$25,000 of the appropriation approved on July 21, 2020.