

| Agenda Item | cover sheet

for consideration by the Apex Town Council

Item Type: OLD BUSINESS

Meeting Date: April 27, 2021

Item Details

Presenter(s): Vance Holloman, Finance Director

Department(s): Finance Department

Requested Motion

Motion to approve proposed guidelines for the Town's Customer Assistance Program, approve an agreement with Western Wake Crisis Ministries to assist the Town in determining eligibility of customers to participate in the program and authorize staff to execute that agreement. Also to approve Budget Ordinance Amendment No. 18 which appropriates funds to provide assistance to eligible customers and pay associated administrative cost.

Approval Recommended?

Yes

Item Details

Staff has been working for several months to establish a customer assistance program (CAP) to assist customers who have suffered financial hardships due to COVID 19 and are behind on their utility bills. Western Wake Crisis Ministry, Inc. (WWCM) has agreed to assist the Town by performing eligibility determinations of applicants based upon criteria established in the CAP guidelines. The Town will credit assistance to the customer's account based upon the eligibility determinations made by WWCM. The Town will reimburse WWCM for expenses incurred in making the eligibility determinations. Funds to provide the assistance and pay these expenses will come from the Town's General Fund. The source of funding is the refund of prior year grant funds from the NC Rural Center.

These documents were presented to Council for approval at its April 13th meeting. At that time Council asked that staff examine alternative guidelines that would prorate the award amounts based upon different income levels expressed as a percentage of the US poverty level. Staff conferred with WWCM about the appropriate levels at which to prorate the awards of assistance. They recommended that awards not be prorated for applicants whose income levels was no more than 150% of the US poverty level. Based upon their input and Councils request for three income categories, staff recommends that the awards be set as follows based upon income level:

Income Level

Maximum Award

No more than 150% of the US poverty level	100% of the outstanding balance up to \$636
Greater than 150% but equal to or less than 175% of the US poverty level	75% of the outstanding balance up to \$477
Greater than 175% but equal to or less than 200% of the US poverty level	50% of the outstanding balance up to \$318

The proposed guidelines have been updated to reflect this change. Changes are highlighted in red.

Attachments

- Apex Customer Assistance Program Guidelines
- Apex Western Wake Crisis Ministry CAP Agreement
- Budget Ordinance Amendment No. 18
- 2021 US Poverty Levels
- Federal Poverty Thresholds with Hourly Wages

