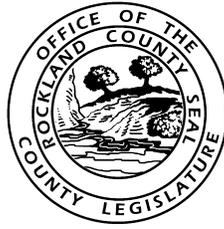


Press



Release

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For Immediate Release

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County Legislature Streamlines Process For Nonprofit Funding Effort Improves Transparency & Accountability While Ensuring Public Benefit Agencies Receive Support For Vital Work

New City, NY (Sept. 26, 2016) – The process for awarding funding to local nonprofit public benefit organizations has been streamlined by the Rockland County Legislature to improve transparency and accountability while also ensuring that worthy agencies receive support for their vital work.

“Our local nonprofit organizations are part of the lifeblood of our County, providing everything from cultural enrichment to educational enhancement,” Rockland County Legislature Chairman Alden H. Wolfe said.

“Our revamped mechanism for funding these organizations has been extremely successful, making the application process smoother while also beefing up safeguards to ensure the money awarded is being properly spent,” said Wolfe (D-Montebello).

Wolfe said an additional measure will soon be put in place to allow for even deeper accountability, with the creation of an oversight committee specifically devoted to reviewing all funding applications and associated requirements.

The County funds certain nonprofits pursuant to County Law 224, which allows appropriations for certain public benefit services. Among others, the agencies that are funded include the Legal Aid Society, which provides defense attorneys to people who are indigent; the Hi Tor Animal Care Center, which serves abandoned and homeless animals; and Keep Rockland Beautiful, which keeps the county’s roadsides and waterways free from litter and conducts environmental education.

The County is awarding 35 such nonprofits a total of \$1.67 million for 2016, including Child Care Resources of Rockland, Inc., which helps family members find out how to select the best early childhood or before/after-school program for their children, and offers high quality professional development to the staff members of all the early childhood and school age programs in the county.

According to Jane Brown, executive director of Child Care Resources of Rockland, Inc., the agency helped 33 new child care businesses open over an 18-month period by providing technical assistance, adding to the economic development of Rockland County.

The \$178,020 in County funding awarded to Child Care Resources also helps businesses in the child care industry ensure healthy children by allowing the agency to provide health care services and medication administration training, as well as specialized training and coaching for child care programs to become nationally accredited. Child Care Resources is also able to notify child care businesses whenever there is an emergency in the county through immediate phone calls. No other agency in Rockland provides such services.

“If we did not have the collaboration between the Rockland County Legislature, Rockland County Executive and Child Care Resources of Rockland, Inc., these services would be greatly reduced or unavailable to the residents of Rockland County,” Brown said.

For 2016, new procedures were put in place to tighten up the overall application and review process, with the Legislature revamping the process to improve its efficiency for 2017.

Each organization seeking funding must complete an annual application that includes a description of its services, its nonprofit tax return (known as a 990) and a copy of its latest financial statement (audit). Additionally, the organization must provide certificates of liability and workers’ compensation insurance or waivers; and two vouchers – one due April 1 and the other due Oct. 1 – with notarized affidavits that specify how funding awarded their organization is being spent.

Rockland County Legislator Douglas Jobson (R-Stony Point) said that the organizations not only provide vital services, but do so at a far cheaper price that the County could if it were to take over the services.

“This improved procedure assures our residents that their money is being spent how it was intended to be spent while also assisting the nonprofits with the important work they perform,” Jobson said. “This work is benefitting all of our residents and I thank the nonprofits for their efforts.”

For the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Rockland, the \$260,620 it receives assists the agency’s 200 volunteers and nine staff members in bringing nonprofit management, youth development, nutrition education, environmental conservation, safe pest control, agricultural sustainability and climate change issues to the Rockland community, according to Ann Marie Palefsky, the organization’s Interim Executive Director.

“All nonprofits are intensely aware of the serious budget issues that face the County of Rockland, but we are also aware of the small percentage of the county budget allocated to programs and services provided by nonprofit contract agencies,” Palefsky said. “That money respectfully provides programs and services that are vital to the people of this county, services which would have to be provided by the County if the funds supporting them are cut.”

She estimates Cornell’s programs annually directly benefit about 20,000 County residents, more than 300 nonprofit organizations, 23 schools, 21 municipalities, 180 small businesses, and seven County departments.

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