

Open Door Clinic Request to the Bristol Selectboard: Proposed Allocation of ARPA Monies to Retrofit Mobile Medical Exam Van

The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed the stark discrepancies in access to health care of those in our community. In particular, migrant and immigrant agricultural workers living on our county's dairies, orchards, and poultry farms face almost insurmountable hurdles to accessing care. They work long hours throughout the season, often ignoring back, shoulder, and knee pain so as not to miss work. Because they do not have transportation, they rely on their employers to take them to the grocery store, bank, and medical appointments. Many workers are reluctant to let their bosses know that they need to see a doctor, afraid that they may not be asked to return if they are not 100% well. This often leads to delays in care that may exacerbate their health issues, as well as negatively impact their ability to work their jobs. Lack of transportation also adversely impacts farm managers and owners who have to take time out of their days to take their workers to medical appointments.

Our solution to help address these inequities is to bring health care and services to the workers where they are. Last November, we purchased a brand-new sprinter van to be retrofitted into an "exam van." Our exam van will allow patients to take minimal time off from work to see the healthcare provider, remove the transportation barrier, and provide a private space between provider and patient to discuss sensitive health information. The van will be outfitted with ample storage for needed medical supplies, including a separate storage compartment for all of our vaccination supplies. With our exam van, we can see as many patients on the farm/orchard as want to be seen.

Last year, we provided services to 87 Bristol residents; and our healthcare providers saw 33 individuals in the field across 41 appointments or interactions. Funding this project is an investment that will result in short-term and long-term benefits for our entire community. It will be easy to implement, impose no adverse tax impact on residents, and provide direct tangible benefits to Bristol and Addison County residents.

While we have been extremely successful in raising \$143,060 for the exam van, we are still seeking the final \$10,010. Monkton has committed \$3,000 of their ARPA funds contingent upon two or more towns contributing as well. **Thus, we are requesting \$2,500 in ARPA funds from the Town of Bristol to complete the retrofitting project.**



**Gifts and grants already received for the purchase of the vehicle
(\$83,000 total cost)**

Private local donor	\$60,000
VDH Covid ER Grant, Y3	\$10,500
Sylvamo* Corporation	\$12,500
<i>*Formally International Paper</i>	

**Gifts and grants already received for the retrofitting elements
(\$70,070 total cost)**

VDH Health Equity Grant	\$41,060
VDH Covid ER Grant, Y4	\$10,000
Tides Foundation*	\$ 0
<i>*Asked for \$50,000</i>	
Rotary Club - committed	\$ 9,000

Balance remaining to complete project \$10,010

In closing, I want to acknowledge our continued gratitude and appreciation for the generous annual allocation provided by the town of Bristol at Town Meeting Day.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.



Heidi R. Sulis, MPH
Executive Director

May 11, 2023

