

#### **4-H Education Center**

Funding is not state mandated for the 4-H Center since we are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

We subsidize camp costs by approximately \$100 per camper. We strive to make up 50% of that through other rental and user groups and ask the camping counties to help cover the additional 50%. The submitted number is based on the previous summer's camping numbers.

Without funding, we would have to substantially raise camper fees making it less inclusive and more challenging for families to send their kids to camp.

#### **Big Brothers & Big Sisters Greater Fredericksburg**

If funding from Spotsylvania County were to be reduced or eliminated, it would decrease our opportunities to serve youth in our community-based and school-based programs. In FY22 of the 137 children served, 42 (31%) were from Spotsylvania. The cost of supporting a match for one year is \$1,200. Therefore, the cost of serving Spotsylvania children is \$50,400.

The statistics in Spotsylvania for economically disadvantaged children reveal a need for a proven prevention program like ours. Our program supports the education system of Spotsylvania by helping children reach graduation. Research on childhood adversity reveals that the single most common factor for children to develop resilience is a stable and committed relationship with a supportive adults.

Spotsylvania County has been a longtime partner with Big Brothers Big Sisters Greater Fredericksburg. We hope you will approve the level funding request of \$3,000 to help local children achieve their full potential.

#### **Central Rappahannock Regional Library**

81,358 Spotsylvania residents checked out 1,031,940 library materials in FY 22; 39.81% of CRRL's materials are checked out by Spotsylvania residents; the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest in our service area since children's programming resumed after the pandemic-related suspension, 7,544 children and families have relied on the Spotsylvania branches to help their children under 5 learn school readiness and other early learning skills.

Hundreds of residents use Spotsylvania branches to file their taxes, apply for jobs, study online and grow their small business, all of which helps return revenue to the County.

As of April 1, 2023, 84,472 of Spotsylvania residents have library cards, more than 58% of the County's total population.

In FY 22, 17,000 people attended meetings at the Salem church and Snow branches.

So far this fiscal year, more than 3,000 Spotsylvania County students have benefited from library events held at their schools.

With level or reduced funding, Central Rappahannock Regional Library (CRRL) will have no choice but to enact all or some of the following: further reduce hours at Spotsylvania branches, eliminate programming for children, teens and adults, reduce access to meeting rooms at Salem Church and Snow branches, and eliminate the newly reopened satellites locations.

Additionally:

Due to its structure, CRRL is a not for profit local and state government entity. The library operates as a duly constituted public regional library system under the Code of Virginia (1950) Title 42.1, Chapter 2, as amended and the City of Fredericksburg and the Counties of Stafford, Spotsylvania, and West Moreland have joined into agreement for the operation, maintenance and funding of the regional library system.

The regional agreement currently in place requires participating localities to give two years notice of their intent to withdraw the CRRL system. Eliminating library funding is tantamount to withdrawing from the CRRL system. Withdrawing from the CRRL system would be devastating to all Spotsylvania residents as they would no longer have access to free library services such as Wi-Fi and computers; tutoring help; books and other materials like databases and magazines; research assistance; printing and copying; free meeting room space; and library on the go outreach services to facilities such as nursing homes and assisted living residence as well as Headstart and other preschool/childcare programs.

The Board of Supervisors has, rightly, spoken out against the Spotsylvania County School Superintendent's threats to close school libraries and eliminate the school librarians; however level funding of CRRL or eliminating CRRL's funding impacts EVERYONE in the County from children to senior citizens.

Our operating budget is dependent on local funding as well as state aid. State aid is affected by local revenue and will be eliminated or reduced if funding from the participating localities falls below a certain level. At present, CRRL receives the largest amount of State Aid in Virginia due to our regional structure.

Spotsylvania County has level-funded CRRL's budget requests for the previous three fiscal years. Our FY 24 budget request is less than Spotsylvania's approved FY 19 funding; funding from Spotsylvania has decreased 10.5% since FY 19.

CRRL is an important employer in the region and 34% of all CRRL's employees live in Spotsylvania County (84 total). 58 CRRL employees (23%) are regularly assigned to work at Spotsylvania Branches; many other CRRL employees work at the five Spotsylvania locations on a periodic basis. Each of these employees, through their work at CRRL, are adding to the quality of life in the County as well as contributing to the local economy.

## disAbility Resource Center

dRC is the only agency in the area that provides **peer mentoring** to people with disabilities in PD16. That is people with lived experience helping someone adjust to disability, develop community living goals and look forward to the rest of their lives with friends and family. So many people are taught “better off dead than disabled” from society, which could be the media or their own social network. Centers for Independent Living were birthed in 1978 by the Independent Living Movement by a man who lived with an Iron lung and wanted to go to the University of California, Berkley. Although initially denied by the state Vocational Rehabilitation agency, he ultimately became their director. We tell the disability history stories and show the guy who fell off the ladder or the girl who wrecked her motorcycle or the cancer victim, what’s available to them to continue to live a full life.

Additionally, we provide **independent living training**, for example how to cook from a seated position: **Advocacy**, teaching people to identify how to ask for what they need, systems advocacy for change for people with disabilities to live well in communities: **Information and referral**, if don’t know the answer, we will find out: **Transition**, assisting people to move from nursing homes to their community home with supports and working with students with disabilities to have a full life after high school.

Spotsylvania residents are consistently the largest group of people we serve in the Independent Living programs and the Equipment Connection.

Of the 482 current consumers who receive direct service, 242 are from Spotsylvania County. None of these people are charged a fee for the services they receive. Many of them work with a Community Integration Specialist regularly for months achieving their goals.

Of the 1,290 people who received free durable medical equipment from the Equipment Connection in a year, 538 are Spotsylvania County residents.

If the current budget amount is not funded for FY24, we will have a staff reduction and be unable to continue the level of service to the community.

## Empowerhouse

Operating in Spotsylvania County and PD16 since 1978

The organization as a whole- Over 3700 people regionally assisted in FY 2022- 1,182 were Spotsylvanians

If Empowerhouse were dissolved, we would see decreased health and economic status for many of our citizens particularly women and children. Homicides and suicides of men, women, and children would increase; injuries would increase. Increased risk of harm would befall emergency responders who would continue to be called to escalated situations. There would be no-one to call at night, when law enforcement is on the scene, to discuss with them how to connect with shelter and mobilize resources to affect that connection. Our work improves the safety of DV victims (cost savings in not treating new injuries) and their children. It also does so for responders because we provide alternatives to what victims have been living.

We provide support to obtain jobs, access protective orders, and obtain court system relief. We move victims from crisis to stability. The shelters, rental subsidies, and employment services provided via donations and grant funding to DV victims are crucial in helping local citizens take control of their lives and gain economic stability that decreases the burden on taxpayers. Our clients retain employment, pay taxes, and participate in the area's economy. This help stops survivors from spiraling into poverty and homelessness. Empowerhouse leverages over 12 dollars for every locality dollar invested. We make huge community improvements with the services made possible by the dollars Empowerhouse brings into the region and raises in our community. It makes fiscal sense that we partner with governmental systems. Our nonprofit wages cost significantly less than government workers performing comparable but different tasks and purposes. Our nonprofit leverages in-kind and volunteer contributions that unite with governmental support and make the total dollars expand the impact made in our region. We operate regionally, which saves repetitive functions that would duplicate in each jurisdiction if services were stand-alone in each locality.

Hotline program- 2112 answered calls in FY 2022.

Phone planning makes a huge difference to DV victims' safety, ongoing economic struggles and coercion faced, pressure to return home where the abuser attempts to regain control so the abuse can continue unchallenged and unfettered. Without this program, victims would have no one confidentially to discuss this with in incremental steps and say, "Did you realize this behavior is against the law?" or "I am concerned for your safety." There would be no-one to call at night, when officers are on the scene, to discuss with them how to connect with shelter and mobilize resources to affect that connection. Communities everywhere value confidential and 24- hour access locally because victims are more likely to call if they know they can do so safely as their information is not shared and decisions are not made for them. Dedicating time to the hotline by 24-hour workers who perform other DV functions is an efficient way to respond quickly, expertly, and with dedication to DV victims. Reduced staffing would compromise the Empowerhouse ability to answer every call which endangers our citizens counting on critical life-saving response.

### Children's services for those exposed to domestic violence – 218 FY 2022

When victims are able to break free (not always within their control; sometimes they are murdered in the process), child abuse decreases if a byproduct of partner violence, but not if an abuser is a predator and gains full access to a child during custody/visitation (at which time the protective parent would not be present). With no avenue for protective parents to seek domestic violence (DV) help, more children would be direct child abuse victims. We ensure fewer children enter care systems otherwise needed to step in for child injuries, danger, neglect, or lack of dwelling. Current in DV National trends, we ensure best practices for our community. As a DV program, we have access to A Window Between Worlds art project database specific to DV work with exposed children. Empowerhouse mission and 24-hour services define us uniquely as responders to child domestic violence witnesses including ones not victimized by code defined child abuse/neglect. Without this program, child DV witnesses would fall through the cracks.

### Domestic violence education and support – 833 adults in FY 2022

If dissolved: DV victims often believe there is nowhere to turn but to their abusers which was the case 44 years ago (when governmental workers and local concerned citizens formed a committee to determine a response to domestic violence ultimately forming a nonprofit 501 (C) 3 in Empowerhouse). Victims would have no free expertise in educational support groups where they learn from prepared topics and other peer group members facing similar trauma and would have no expanded support system. They would not learn how to spot abusive behaviors or what healthy relationships look like-gaining communication skills for future relationships. No one would train their healthcare providers to screen routinely and safely for DV offering a lifeline to an immediate advocate. They would not be repeatedly accompanied to all court hearings when they bravely face a person who professed to love them but instead had terrifying behavior and who remains a symbol of fear or an actual threat. Homicides and suicides of men and women, injuries, and child fatalities would increase; and increased risk of harm would befall emergency responders who would be called to continuing escalated situations.

### Domestic violence shelter and housing supports – 423 in FY 2022

Empowerhouse's specific mission brings grant funding to our community. Without DV Shelter and housing we would lose lives, diminish health and decrease safety and economic status for many. If Empowerhouse dissolved or its mission was diluted DV victims have no place to go in the middle of night to an expert response set up to effectively and efficiently mobilize via the simultaneously operating hotline staffing at shelter. They would remain in dangerous homes, routinely terrorized, reduced to non-human status with their children who are exposed and often direct victims. Because they are able to break free, child abuse decreases; fewer children in care systems that otherwise need to step in due to child injuries, endangerment, neglect or lack of residence. We move victims from crisis to stability. The shelter, rental subsidies and employment work provided via donations and grant funding to DV victims are crucial in helping local citizens take control of their lives and gain stability.

**Generally, cuts have significant impacts.**

Empowerhouse is a lean organization administratively and in terms of direct services personnel. Cuts to our budget directly impact on our ability to provide services and directly correspond to cuts in the number of services and people we can serve. With a growing population in the region, the complexity of needs, the pandemic impacts continuing, (to name only a few concerns) the services of this nonprofit and others are in increased need every day. This region is growing, not slowing down. There are more people, which translates into more people who need area services as the region continues its growth pattern.

**FAILSAFE-ERA**

If funding for our services were to be reduced or eliminated, there would be significant consequences and impacts on individuals, families, and our community. Incarceration is costly and without our services individuals will likely end up back in the criminal justice system which will lead to increased costs for the taxpayers; significant strain on law enforcement, courts, and the prisons. Our programs play a critical role in helping our clients find employment, transform their thought process through evidence-based training, manage behavior, and receive immediate and coordinated trauma-informed care, and other essential resources. Without a sustainable community reentry and family reintegration program individuals and families will struggle to overcome the challenges associated with incarceration which will ultimately lead to negative impacts.

**Fredericksburg Regional Food Bank**

As the current fiscal year stands, we have distributed 1.65 million meals through community partners and program sites in Spotsylvania County and provided food assistance to more than 14,600 Spotsylvania County residents, equating to 41% of our overall service.

If Spotsylvania County were to reduce or eliminate funding for the Fredericksburg Regional Food Bank, we would lose the capacity to provide two meals for residents facing food insecurity for every dollar that Spotsylvania County did not invest in our operations.

## **Fredericksburg SPCA**

The short answer is eliminating or reducing funding would be devastating to the services we provide to residents of Spotsylvania and the community as a whole. This includes being here as a trusted resource that is available to the Sheriff's Department when assistance is needed to help manage hoarding cases and other discovered tragedies.

Currently, LESS than 1% of our annual budget is funded through PD16 despite the level of social services provided.

Spotsylvania is by far the largest recipient of our services.

Please see slides 11, 12, 18 of attached slide deck that was distributed to the Spotsylvania Board of Directors.

We served nearly 400 Spotsylvania families last year via our P.E.T.S. Program (People Empowered Through Support) at an combined average cost of \$10,000 (\$25/per family).

We provided 926 spay/neuter surgeries were performed on animals from Spotsylvania County through our Locke Community Medical Clinic.

4,000 animals from Spotsylvania County were seen as public clients through our Locke Community Medical Clinic.

More than 300 animals came into our care from Spotsylvania County with a combined average cost to us of \$134,000.

We need help keeping pets with their families. Working with other social service organizations, we are a trusted resource providing Safe Haven intake options when families/individuals are displaced due to a variety of crisis.

Our request of \$50,000 is actually a fraction of the cost of the programs and services we offer to the residents of Spotsylvania and to the community as a whole.

Please do consider this a priority. Families are stressed enough – being forced to surrender their family pet(s) is devastating – particular for those who are alone. Pets provide a tremendous amount of support to those who are isolated.

## **Healthy Families Rappahannock Area**

At Healthy Families we prevent child abuse and neglect through the promotion of positive parenting. **Anyone who's ever had a baby knows that they do not come with a how-to-guide.** A parent that is dealing with life stressors such as *broken family, inadequate income, domestic violence or a poor childhood themselves* is not able to focus on bonding with their baby and are considered to be at-risk.

Currently we are serving 74 Spotsylvania County families who have been identified as being at-risk.

Studies have shown that families who participate in programs like HFRA are less likely to be a part of Child Protective Services. The overall cost for children involved in the foster care system/child protective services is well over the cost of prevention.

HFRA is a non-profit program, who is allowed to continue servicing families due to the support of locality funding. This year marks 25 years of HFRA providing services to Planning District 16 and Spotsylvania County has always been a part of that support.

The impact for reduced or eliminated funding would cause financial hardships for HFRA not to mention would increase the caseloads of our already overworked and overwhelmed Department of Social Services-Child Protective Services.

HFRA improves child safety and prevents maltreatment. Through our combined efforts, we are able to make a difference in our community through prevention programs. We are truly appreciative of the support we have received from Spotsylvania County and are hopeful that this support will continue.



## **Ladies Memorial Association of Spotsylvania**

The Ladies Memorial Association was formed in 1866 for the purpose of gathering the remains of fallen soldiers who died in and near Spotsylvania County battlefields to reinter them in one final resting place. Today, our mission continues as we care for the graves of 751 soldiers buried there. The Confederate Cemetery is part of Spotsylvania County's tourism and is visited by hundreds of people each year.

Until 2020, we received an annual state Grant from the UDC (through the Virginia Department of Historic Resources); however, the program was cancelled in 2020. The Grant was used to help us maintain the cemetery by purchasing flags and brochures, cleaning and repairing headstones, planting, clearing, trimming and cutting trees, maintaining the roads with blue-stone gravel/grading, maintaining the overhead ornamental sign, fertilizing and mulching ornamental trees, shrubs and flower beds, and cleaning and maintaining the story boards. In addition, we also maintain the grounds by mowing, aerating and seeding, mulching, and removing trash.

Tourism, preserving and sharing Spotsylvania County's history are our main contributions to the community and to our visitors. Our income comes from private donations, the sale of private burial plots, if any are sold, and until 2020, the State Grant. In 2021 and 2022, the County's contribution was a welcome relief when the DHR discontinued their annual allocation.

The Association is made up of six (6) Trustees who work in a volunteer capacity; there are no paid employees, and we are a not-for-profit organization. Our expenses and income last year were about the same. We have not sold any plots or received any donations so far in 2023, and we hope you will continue to fund us in the amount of \$4,800.00 as you have done so over the past two (2) years. Without the funding, the cemetery will become overgrown and unsightly, and would, most likely, have an effect on the County's tourism program. We have been told that the cemetery is the best kept in the state of Virginia. With the County's assistance, we will be able to maintain that status.

### **Lake Anna Advisory Committee (LAAC)**

The Lake Anna Advisory Committee was created by a state and County mandate to administer to the lake's extensive buoy system as well as manage aquatic weeds like hydrilla.

We spend approximately 4,000 a year tending to the buoy system and use volunteers to do the actual work - saving the counties approximately over \$10k in staffing costs.

This year we will spend over \$12,000 treating hydrilla using a licensed contractor to apply herbicide as well as stock 200 grass eating carp.

The funds LAAC received from Louisa, Orange and Spotsylvania Counties are well used and a sound investment in keep County costs and liabilities low.

In our original budget submission we listed \$14,000 for hydrilla, \$4,000 for navigation and \$4,000 for boating safety signage, plus \$6,000 to maintain an agreed Reserve Fund. LAAC recently modified this, by increasing hydrilla treatment to \$18,000 due to increased outbreaks and additional necessary treatments, while postponing the \$6,000 effort to the future. Hence, our specific foreseen costs amount to \$26,000, while requesting funding of \$7,000 from each of the three counties for a total of only \$21,000.

In addition, I would note and emphasize that LAAC is a formal governmental "Administrative Committee" created by the three counties under Virginia state law. Hence, we are very different from many of the "regional agencies" that apply for funding support under this process. In addition, the LAAC Application contains detailed description of the many substantial benefits provided to our residents, visitors and the region in general. Our focus is on human life, water quality, boating safety, pollution, recreation, wildlife, fish and fishing conditions, and related environmental factors. Finally, our application points out that "Abandonment or reduction of this arrangement would leave a major gap in the cohesive approach to many lake, safety, and environmental issues, and have a negative impact on the community and region."

## **Lake Anna Civic Association (LACA)**

The Lake Anna Civic Association (LACA) is dedicated to preserving water quality in the entire Lake Anna watershed. Water quality is a major issue facing the counties surrounding Lake Anna today. Many of the streams in the watershed are listed as impaired by Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), most notably for high levels of E.coli bacteria. In addition, and most alarming is the fact that the 2022 DEQ Integrated Assessment Report listed the upper portion of Lake Anna (areas north of the route 208 bridge) as impaired due to the Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) recreational advisories issued over the past five recreational seasons by the Virginia Department of Health (VDH).

LACA's largest program is the Water Quality Monitoring Program (WQMP), a citizen water quality monitoring effort that provides significant value to the state and the local communities. The Virginia DEQ published a report in January of 2019 titled, "The Monetary Value of Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring in Virginia". This report concluded that, "Citizen volunteer groups provide an impressive amount of water quality data to Virginia. As indicated by the survey, the actual value contributed by collecting this data is often far greater than what is referenced in a monitoring plan or grant request. Drawing from the responses received, it can be reasonably estimated that over \$3,252,100 worth of volunteer time and expense was provided by citizen water quality volunteer groups to Virginia in 2018. Over \$2 million of that amount represents the time donated by volunteer monitors in 2018." This report clearly highlights the significant value of citizen water quality monitoring programs throughout the Commonwealth, and LACA's program is viewed by many in DEQ as a model program. LACA's volunteer hours for calendar year 2022 totaled more than 2,350 hours.

LACA's calendar year 2023 WQMP plan includes monitoring at 31 lake and stream stations across the Lake Anna watershed. Nine (9) of those stations are in Spotsylvania County. Another three (3) stations are on the Louisa-Spotsylvania County border. The twelve (12) Spotsylvania stations account for a total of 38% of LACA's monitored stations. LACA deconflicts our monitoring stations with the Virginia DEQ Northern Regional Office and except for one station that is used as a Quality Assurance station, DEQ and LACA stations are unique. In addition, LACA data are used in DEQ's regulatory activities. LACA is a certified Level 3 citizen water quality monitoring organization, meaning that our data can be used to list or delist water on the 303(d) impaired waters list.

LACA's WQMP has averaged an annual expenditure of more than \$44,500 per year over the past four years (the annual average does not include the large "Kick the HAB" campaign that was executed in 2022). Membership dues support LACA's Water Quality Monitoring Program (WQMP) at approximately \$10,000 per year. In addition, LACA received grants from the Louisa and Spotsylvania FY23 budgets in the amount of \$10,000 from each county. LACA also received \$11,000 from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for execution in calendar year 2023. These funding sources provide a total of \$41,000 to execute LACA's 2023 WQMP efforts. Again, none of these expenses support LACA's Kick the HAB program which is a separate program that is funded through member and concerned citizen donations.

The grant funding we receive from DEQ and the counties is spent on water monitoring equipment, laboratory costs, instrument repairs, and supplies. All staffing is provided by volunteers who enable

the organization to do a great deal with the limited financial resources we have. None of the DEQ or County grant funds are used to compensate the volunteers for their time, boat use, fuel, or any other person resource to complete the monitoring objectives.

The impact of a lack of grant funding would be a reduction of the number of stations that can be monitored in LACA's WQMP. This would reduce the amount of data available to DEQ for analysis and development of their biennial Integrated Assessment Reports. In addition, LACA publishes easy to understand maps on our website so anyone using the lake's recreational resources can understand the state of water quality on the lake. The visualizations published by LACA benefit the local communities and recreational users of the lake by providing water quality data for the lake and the streams feeding Lake Anna. Reducing the number of stations monitored by LACA will decrease information flow to County residents and could have an adverse effect on tourism. LACA's President and Water Quality Program Manager are contacted by potential visitors and by local real estate agents multiple times each recreational season. It is clear that people make decisions on visiting and recreating at Lake Anna based on water quality data and the visualizations published by LACA. Reducing the number of monitored stations will impact our ability to provide timely, accurate information to these residents and visitors.

### **Legal Aid Works**

If Spotsylvania County were to reduce or eliminate funding of Legal Aid Works, the impact would be significant. Of the seventeen counties we serve, the greatest number of clients in need of our services reside in Spotsylvania County. Without that funding from Spotsylvania, we would be forced to prioritize our scarce resources to turn away more of the residents of your county, and as a result, domestic violence survivors would struggle to obtain civil protective orders and be less safe; your DSS office would have to process more applications for food stamps and TANF benefits because we would no longer be able to assist clients with applications for child and spousal support; and more of your residents would be homeless as a result of illegal evictions that we would not be able to prevent by our advocacy.

## **Mental Health America of Fredericksburg**

The requested increase is the minimum Mental Health America of Fredericksburg (MHAfred) would need during FY24 to respond to the increasing number of Spotsylvania County residents finding mental health services through our HELPLINE program. This program is unique to our area. MHAfred continually reaches out to providers in our area to maintain a current database. Searchable criteria include insurance accepted, services offered, ages served, and if the provider is accepting new clients. Additionally, if someone is placed on a waitlist, MHAfred will rerun the search weekly and stay in contact with that person as often as needed – wellness checks – until their appointment. Our HELPLINE program saves lives, reduces emergency placements, and gives people hope during this mental health crisis.

More than half of our mental health providers are not accepting new clients. Some providers are so overworked they are not returning phone calls from those who are not clients already. It is not as easy as a Google search and making a call. We have assisted people who have made over 30 calls and still could not schedule an appointment – even for children at risk for suicide. (We keep working on their behalf to get them the help they need.)

We hoped to hire more staff to handle the month-to-month increases in first-time callers and to make the required follow-up so that people remained connected to the community.

Please do not reduce funding to MHAfred – we are assigned most of the CHIP strategies for mental health and are working tirelessly to meet these needs in our community.

## **Micah Ministries**

Micah Ecumenical Ministries receives funding from Spotsylvania County to operate the only shelter for chronic and street homeless individuals in the region. Many who ended up in this predicament are differently abled due to mental illness, developmental limitations, the effects of trauma or physical health issues. They have often experienced a catastrophic loss of familial relationship that prevents them from having an invested support system to keep them off the street. While our organization fundraises, grant writes and seeks resources from many different channels to provide a continuum of support to this population, the only program we seek local government funding for is the cold weather shelter—an effort that provides basic, life-saving accommodations to those who would otherwise be outside at risk of freezing.

In the most recent completed winter season, we sheltered a total of 267 people between November and the end of March. The numbers also include 9 children who were part of families seeking access to other shelters in the region that did not yet have bed space. The season also revealed an increase in aging adults and youth age 18-24, many who aged out of foster care. Thirty-three percent of those seeking shelter this winter originated from Spotsylvania. Shelter stayers were accommodated between a 35-bed congregate space at 750 Kings Highway and budget hotel rooms throughout the region. All of the pandemic money will be exhausted as of June 30, and we are hopeful that local governments in the region will help us sustain this hybrid model.

Pre-pandemic, congregate shelter was the only space available, which led to upwards of 60+ people with a variety of complex needs sleeping in space meant for half as many people. It was a very challenging way to offer shelter to that many people with complex needs. During the pandemic, the increase in state, local and federal funding allowed us to shelter people with social distance. This opportunity enlightened us on the great benefits of sheltering people in an adequately sized space and a combination of congregate and hotel options. For example, severely mentally ill clients who would have never sought shelter in a congregate space did seek shelter in hotel settings. People with emotional support animals who were not allowed in congregate shelters could be adequately supported in hotels. Meanwhile, we learned that the drop-in nature of the congregate setting played an important role in determining who is most in need of shelter.

Shelter operations this year were easily much safer and more humane with the ability to supplement actual beds with hotel rooms and minimize the number of people staying in congregate spaces. We use the current congregate space for free. Even if we had money to rent or buy a larger location, zoning regulations and stereotypes of homelessness in the region make it close to impossible for us to complete the approval process required to relocate. Adding a second location would double our staffing cost, when we can meet the same capacity for lower cost, while diversifying options for different needs, by renting hotels.

Should Spotsylvania County decide to reduce or eliminate funding for the cold weather shelter, the potential consequences are as follows:

1. Eliminating hotels as a supplement to congregate settings, which means one undersized congregate setting will be the only option for all those who are outside during the winter. In this circumstance, we will have to evaluate whether we will have to cap the number of people who can stay at the shelter at 35. Without alternative hotel shelter, there is an increased risk that those with trauma, social anxiety, PTSD and other serious mental illness will choose to remain outside in frigid temperatures, which is a health and safety hazard. It also means people with emotional support animals will have no options for shelter.
2. Evaluating whether we use only hotel shelter vs. congregate shelter. Staff costs are lower in this model, but facility costs are higher. While this solution would still limit the number of people who could be kept off the street during the winter, it would guarantee that the most vulnerable could have the type of shelter needed.
3. Considering whether winter shelter is the best use of time and resources. Micah has no requirement to provide winter shelter. We began this ministry more than two decades ago at the request of local governments that wanted to prevent unnecessary death or health hazard for people who have no options other than places not meant for human habitation. They knew that it would cost the government more to operate a solution, and they chose to contract with Micah to meet the essential community need. As Micah knows the street population and cares for their health, housing, basic needs, income development and community needs throughout the year, it is our pleasure to also help local governments in addressing their basic shelter. We would also support local governments, at any time, if they would prefer to provide shelter internally.

- a.) Providing no winter shelter or lower than necessary capacity could result in health hazard (i.e. frostbite, hypothermia, death) for people sleeping on the street and more for local governments to manage in other ways. Statistically, people on the street cost the community \$68 per night in jail, \$718 a night in a psychiatric hospital, \$1471 a night in the hospital vs. \$30 a night in a shelter or \$20 a night in housing. To our knowledge, the next closest low barrier and/or winter shelters are in Prince William, Culpeper and Richmond.

Beyond shelter, evidence supports that the community looks to Micah as a resource in a variety of gaps in systemic solutions. Deputies from Spotsylvania, Stafford and Fredericksburg all drop off people at the cold weather shelter when they need to move from where they are but do not need to go to jail. During severe weather events, local governments have counted on Micah to offer shelter for the unique needs of the street homeless, as relief shelters operated by DSS are not particularly equipped to serve those who have no house at all. After catastrophic fires, such as Madonna House, DSS and emergency response groups have counted on Micah to supplement with resources over and above what they can offer.

### **Moss Free Clinic**

The Lloyd F. Moss Free Clinic has a long tradition and reputation of providing excellent health care services to low-income, uninsured and underserved individuals which, in turn, assists our patients to become successful, contributing members of our society. As such, many people throughout the state look to the Lloyd F. Moss Free Clinic as a model.

The Free Clinic is a key component to the Fredericksburg area's quality of life and to maintaining a healthy and vibrant community. It is a major contributor to the local economy and to keeping families healthy and secure by providing essential health care services.

Early this year, the White House announced that the federal public health emergency will end on May 11—just a little over a month from now, and almost 38 months since the start of the pandemic shut-down in March of 2020. For most of us, the pandemic now isn't as life-altering as it was in those early days, but we also know that COVID-19 will continue to affect our lives for years to come.

At the Lloyd F. Moss Free Clinic, it's clear that there's still an overwhelming need for the care we provide. People still get sick—with COVID, flu, and other viruses that come and go, along with chronic illnesses and more. Families still struggle with food and housing insecurity, made worse by the pandemic. Anxiety and depression continue to be some of our most frequent diagnoses. Our neighbors don't stop needing us because the public health emergency comes to an end.

In addition, the current Medicaid "unwinding" process is predicted to result in scores of individuals losing their coverage over the next 12 months. The Free Clinic will be here as a refuge to individuals who find themselves uninsured.

The Lloyd F. Moss Free Clinic provides a wide range of health care services and maintains an open door to patients regardless of their ability to pay. With over 350 volunteers, the Free Clinic strives to provide a system of quality health care to low-income, uninsured individuals. Ideally, the health care

safety net would be woven tightly enough to catch all those who cannot afford the health care they need. However, the sheer number of low-income people who are in need of care exceeds the Free Clinic's resources.

At the Free Clinic, there is more work to do. We need local government support to continue on the journey of providing compassionate healthcare. The 1,200 clients we served last year are only a fraction of our area neighbors who need us. With your help, we can fund our ongoing work and support expansion of our programs and growth of our client numbers. We can make sure that our patients know that we're here for them as a source of hope and healing, wherever their own journeys may take them.

The data and information contained in this report provides strong evidence that the economic benefit of our Clinic on the local economy is significant. To continue to attract jobs and maintain families in the region, it is critical that the localities embrace and support high quality health care providers and services.

We urge our community leaders to recognize that our Free Clinic is instrumental to supporting our local economy and that vital steps need to be taken to continue to invest in the health care safety net.

#### Impact of Funding Reduction or Elimination

In the past year, 480 (40%) of the patients served at the Lloyd F. Moss Free Clinic were Spotsylvania County residents – more than any other locality served.

A reduction or loss of funding from the County of Spotsylvania would result in the significant loss of operating funds for the Lloyd F. Moss Free Clinic and a loss of healthcare services to underserved people.

The mission of the Lloyd F. Moss Free Clinic is daunting and the demands are growing. The Free Clinic has established a high quality of service, offering care that meets the unique medical and social needs of a very diverse group of patients. In the absence of universal health insurance coverage, the health care safety net serves as the back-up for hundreds of disadvantaged people.

A resurgence of inflation in health care costs, an economic downturn, and further increases in the rolls of the uninsured emphasize the need to expand the capacity of the Free Clinic. Without health insurance or access to care, patients turn to the Free Clinic for affordable care. When the Free Clinic cannot provide what is needed due to insufficient funding, we will not be able to continue our mission to the poor and uninsured.



### **Rappahannock Area Agency on Aging**

Reduction or elimination of Spotsylvania County's Healthy Generations Agency on Aging funding would severely limit the Agency's ability to provide information and services to those aging in Spotsylvania. The County's funding assists with matching funds, as well as direct funding for programs. Home delivered meals, homemaker hours, socialization activities, nutrition, and no participant cost specialized transportation will all require reduction of persons served.

Just one example of the importance of Spotsylvania County's funding of the Home Delivered Meal Program (HDM). Meals sent to those aged 60 and over who are homebound, unable to prepare meals and have no one to assist with meal preparation, provide an essential resource to remaining in one's home as they age. We currently serve 60 Spotsylvania County clients at a cost of \$13,440 per month. Without the provision of matching funds, a minimum 20% client reduction would be necessary. With a 66% population growth of those over 60 in the County in the last 10 years and projections of this growth only showing an increase of those aging, a reduction of funds would cause a severe impact to services being provided.

### **Rappahannock Refuge/Loisann's Hope House**

A loss of Spotsylvania County funding would be detrimental to the region at-large and families at-risk of or experiencing homelessness. Investment in our programs is ultimately more cost-effective for Spotsylvania County by addressing familial needs in housing, health, and employment rather than families rotating public systems. Last year alone, Loisann's Hope House served over 100 individuals and children in Spotsylvania County through our shelter and homeless prevention programs.

At this moment, there are 85 adults and children seeking shelter in the region. Loisann's Hope House operates the largest family shelter, with 60 beds available for families. We are reliant on Spotsylvania County funds to address the continued needs of families experiencing economic hardship resulting in homelessness. Spotsylvania County should be aware of the decreased number of families served through Thurman Brisben Center's family shelter program, and our continued effort to work with other community partners, such as Spotsylvania County Schools, to adequately address the needs of families in your locality experiencing homelessness. We will continue to serve these families and fill the service gaps that currently exist, but need the funding to do so.

Loisann's Hope House is also the lead agency for the Homelessness Helpline and Homeless Prevention efforts. Our helpline averages nearly 1,200 monthly calls from those experiencing a housing crisis, with 51% of assessments from households experiencing housing instability, such as those facing eviction, doubled up, or living in motels. In the most recent Point-In-Time Count for PD16, conducted in January of 2023, Spotsylvania School districts reported 325 children that fall into this category. Loisann's Hope House prevention program is the only intervention available to work with at-risk families to prevent them from entering into the homeless system.

Without this funding, families and children will suffer the consequences, and our agency will be unable to meet the increased need we are seeing from Spotsylvania County residents.

## **Rappahannock United Way Vol/Info Prog**

Rappahannock United Way (RUW) is a local nonprofit serving Spotsylvania County and the city of Fredericksburg, Stafford, Caroline and King George. Our office is physically located in Spotsylvania and I am a proud resident of the Salem District of Spotsylvania. I want to thank you and share with you just how very important past Spotsylvania County budget allocation dollars have been to Rappahannock United Way and to ask that you reconsider zero-ing out that investment in the FY 24 budget.

It is no secret that the pandemic hit our county hard and many Spotsylvania County households are still experiencing the long-term financial impact. In addition, to the pandemic there are the ever-increasing costs of living impacting the hard-working residents of our county.

Each year we directly serve over 2,500 individuals. In total 25% of these individuals served are Spotsylvania County residents.

Spotsylvania County households are served by Rappahannock United Way programs and they have received:

- ALICE Assistance – financial assistance covering rent and mortgage payments, car repair bills and childcare costs – keeping Spotsylvania residents safely housed, and able to access employment and school.
- Financial coaching and education services – Spotsylvania residents met one-on-one with our certified financial coaches to help them on their journey to financial stability focusing on building budgets, eliminating debt, creating emergency funds and pulling their credit scores.
- Tax preparation services – once again hundreds of Spotsylvania residents took advantage of free tax preparation services at the two tax sites located within this county. Saving them more than \$56,000 in tax preparation fees and putting more than \$330,000 in tax refunds back in their pockets last year. While we serve households that have an income of up to \$80,000 or less, our average adjusted gross income for tax clients is around \$26,000.
- Transportation services – through our Ride United program more than 100 Spotsylvania residents have accessed free Lyft rides worth over \$5,000. The majority of the rides were to medical appointments and employment – keeping Spotsylvania residents healthy and working.

All of these services are provided free of charge to County residents. Rappahannock United Way is able to do this through not only the generous support of individual and corporate gifts, but also grants. This is where an investment from Spotsylvania County comes in. In order to draw down local, state and federal grants to support our vital programs, our grantors require RUW to demonstrate local government support. A modest investment of \$6,000 can be leveraged as a 'local match' to generate on average over \$350,000 in other grant funding to serve County residents. We can't afford to lose county level support.

What may seem like a small amount in your budget has a multiplying effect in Rappahannock United Way's budget as we are able to use it to qualify for other grants. Your budget allocation to RUW

matters. The impact of eliminating Rappahannock United Way from the Spotsylvania County budget is significant to our organization and most importantly the Spotsylvania County residents we serve.

### **Rappahannock Area Court App Special Advocates (CASA)**

If Spotsylvania County reduced or eliminated funding to Rappahannock CASA, the impact on our program and on Spotsylvania's most vulnerable children could be significant. Rappahannock CASA serves more children in Spotsylvania than in any other locality in the Fredericksburg area, and the advocacy we provide children can be absolutely pivotal to their safety. As just one example, in the past year, our investigative work, coupled with our close, protective monitoring of an abused child who was living at home under a protective order, led to that child being removed from the care of a dangerous parent. While a judge and social worker initially said they felt the child was safe and should remain at home, we continued to generate information that made it clear she wasn't. Ultimately, the child was rescued -- as she had begged to be -- and the parent she'd been living with was arrested. Any cutback to our funding will challenge our ability to provide children with the careful, individual attention they deserve.

We have requested steady funding of \$25,000 from Spotsylvania County for FY24. We understand the County Administrator's proposed budget would cut that funding to \$22,000. Over the past few years, we've faced major cuts in state, federal and United Way funding; we're receiving about \$53,000 less from them in FY23 than we did in FY21. We have been scrambling to acquire other grants and solicit private donations to plug those holes, and it will be tough to absorb any further cuts. Fundraising takes time and focus away from our mission of helping traumatized children. We already operate in an extremely cost-effective way thanks to the service of dozens of volunteer advocates, who donate thousands of dollars' worth of service each year. Our budget is lean; we have only four people on staff and offer no health insurance or retirement benefits, yet we make major contributions to the well-being of Spotsylvania children. We hope the county will continue to demonstrate its commitment to helping children by maintaining steady funding of CASA's services. We provide a tremendous amount of assistance to Spotsylvania children at a very low cost.

Our child advocates serve just one or two sibling groups at a time -- a much smaller caseload than those of social workers and Guardians ad litem. And that means that our advocates, under close supervision of our staff, have more time to assess children's needs and get to know their caregivers and potential caregivers. We make sure things don't get overlooked, and we share what we learn with key decision-makers, including judges and Spotsylvania DSS. We've been a vital part of the Spotsylvania child welfare system for decades, and we wish to remain a strong, protective force for good in children's lives. The collective experience of our staff -- about 50 years combined -- is beneficial to children, especially in a system where there is often so much turnover. We sincerely hope the county will sustain its contribution to our efforts to help guide traumatized children to safer, healthier lives.

## **Safe Harbor Child Advocacy Center**

Safe Harbor CAC is the only child advocacy center serving Planning District 16. In FY 2022, Spotsylvania County (DSS and/or Law Enforcement) referred more than ninety (90) cases of child sexual and/or physical abuse to Safe Harbor for trauma-informed forensic interviews and other related services. This represented over a quarter of our total referral count for that year. Year to date in FY2023, Spotsylvania has already referred 85 cases to Safe Harbor – we expect to exceed 100 referrals from Spotsylvania County alone in FY2023.

Multiple pervasive and negative impacts would occur resulting from a reduction or elimination of funding from Spotsylvania County:

1. A significant delay or complete lack of availability for child victims of abuse to receive trauma-informed medical, therapeutic, and/or support interventions;
2. The loss of coordinated and comprehensive services that not only address the immediate safety of children, but also their long-term health and ability to heal; and
3. The loss of a cost saving of more than \$1,000 per case when approached using best practices through a CAC as compared to the traditional approach.

Data exists which demonstrates that communities with CACs have dramatic improvement in felony prosecution of child abuse as well as faster case processing time. The recent case of a trusted member of the community (a teacher), Edward Gent, provides an example of how a child advocacy center — just one of several partnering organizations comprising a multidisciplinary team — is critical to providing voice, hope, and healing to vulnerable children.

Reference: [https://fredericksburg.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/man-pleadsguilty-to-child-rape-in-spotsylvania/article\\_f69171ea-cceb-11ed-9f43-a73c2fc2ea08.html#:~:text=Edward%20D.,girl%20who%20is%20now%2017](https://fredericksburg.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/man-pleadsguilty-to-child-rape-in-spotsylvania/article_f69171ea-cceb-11ed-9f43-a73c2fc2ea08.html#:~:text=Edward%20D.,girl%20who%20is%20now%2017)

## **Spotsylvania Dog Park**

As you may know we are solely funded by grants and small user donations. 100% of our work and administration is done by volunteers. Thus operational support (only \$5500 was requested) is crucial to keeping the park open.

My husband and I have personally provided lawn maintenance equipment and maintain the park's mower at our home for over two years. We need a shed for the donated mower, weed eaters, a leaf blower, gas/gas cans, and miscellaneous items to keep three acres of lawns operational without relying on one family to provide these things. We have requested \$8000 for this.

Given the great service we provide for families and dogs of the County and beyond this \$13,500 is a very small request. And given the precarious nature of our funding from other sources we are really in need of this small amount to keep this community service functioning safely. When the County considered funding a dog park it was estimated to cost over \$200,000 and tabled. We have the only public dog park in our County and crucial for as many as 1,000 individuals and approximately 200 dogs.

## **Spotsylvania Emergency Concerns Associations**

Spotsylvania Emergency Concerns Association (SECA) was founded in 1986 as an organization through which concerned individuals and groups can work together to alleviate local human suffering and meet emergency needs of citizens of Spotsylvania County without consideration of religious creed or ethnic background.

Approximately 85% of our clients are referred from the Spotsylvania County Department of Social Services. In the past fiscal year, we assisted 555 families consisting of 1,628 individuals. Assistance consisted of food, electricity, water/sewer, medical, rent to avoid eviction, shelter and fuel. Client expenditure amounted \$53,138.67.

SECA is a 501(C)3 non-profit organization. We are manned totally with volunteers, unpaid. There are no fees attached to our ministry. Funding is received through Thrift Shop sales and donations.

Our requested funding helps cover our administrative cost of operation. During the previous fiscal year our expense for operation was \$21,202.29. Any funding from the County is designated to offset the expense to operate. Therefore, the majority of donations and Thrift Shop proceeds can be designated for assistance to the citizens of our County in need. Loss of this funding would impact thousands of citizens of our County.

## Thurman Brisben Center

Jurisdiction	# Inds.	% Inds.	# BNs	% BNs	Actual Cost by Inds.	Actual Cost by BNs	Pledged \$ FY23
Caroline	18	8%	942	6%	\$ 106,092	\$ 81,088	\$ 3,150
King George	6	3%	380	3%	\$ 35,364	\$ 32,711	\$ 32,473
Spotsylvania	61	28%	4,089	27%	\$ 359,534	\$ 351,984	\$ 50,000
Stafford	60	27%	5,098	34%	\$ 353,640	\$ 438,840	\$ 109,849
Fredericksburg	74	33%	4,474	30%	\$ 436,156	\$ 385,125	\$ 80,000
Non-PD16	2	1%	149	1%	\$ 11,788	\$ 12,826	\$ -
<b>Totals</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>15,132</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,302,574</b>	<b>1,302,574</b>	<b>275,472</b>

What wraparound services does the Brisben Center provide?

- Safe, modern, cost-effective shelter for homeless families with children and singles.
- Case management
- Health screening and education
- Career coaching for livable wage employment
- Parenting for Success
- Renter education
- Mobility Mentoring informed coaching to transform root causes of homelessness.
- Financial skills development (Your Money, Your Goals)
- Veterans support
- Chaplain services

The Brisben Center wraparound services measures of success far surpass that of the HUD/FRCoC metric of heads-on-beds emergency shelter only.

The FRCoC metric results in a redundant and costly churn of homelessness without required focus on addressing root causes of homelessness: e.g. sobriety, mental stability, capability-based employment.

Moreover, the number of evictions and resulting increases of homelessness in our region, coupled with reductions in funding from government, public and private sources, are forming a perfect storm of epic proportions.

Therefore, if funding from Spotsylvania County and other jurisdictions are further cut or eliminated, we project a corresponding reduction of shelter with wraparound services and increasing homelessness.

## **Virginia Community Food Connections**

We are a small nonprofit organization with a large footprint in food and nutrition security work in Spotsylvania County by offering programs that make fresh food available to those who need it.

For well over a decade, VCFC has operated the Virginia Fresh Match (VFM) program at regional farmers markets which not only provides access to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients but also matches their spending dollar for dollar each week (currently up to \$30). In 2022 alone, through this program we distributed more than \$346,000 regionally in fresh, local food of which \$182,000 was in Planning District 16 and more than \$108,000 in Spotsylvania County.

Our capacity and operating budget is limited but our outcomes are impactful for this community in more ways than one. By supporting local farmers and food producers, we are keeping more SNAP dollars in the local economy. By ensuring access to spend SNAP at local farmers markets and offering additional incentives for healthy food, we are affecting short and long term health outcomes for Spotsylvania residents.

Without the support of locality funding, VCFC will struggle to continue providing these services to local families, farmers and other vendors that very much rely on the income provided through the SNAP and VFM program. Studies have shown that SNAP has a positive effect on local economies, in some cases for every \$1 in SNAP, resulting in \$2 in additional economic activity.

(Source: [https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/93529/err265\\_summary.pdf](https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/93529/err265_summary.pdf))