

Organization Information

Venice Area Mobile Meals, Inc.
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Contact Information

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Grant Report

- 1. According to the grant category you applied under (i.e. efficiency, effectiveness or earned revenue), describe the measurable impact these grant funds had on your organization.**

Venice Area Mobile Meals, Inc. had faced the challenges of reduced revenues in 2011. Donations for the year were about 60% lower than the previous year, investment income was reduced due to lower interest rates, and meal expenses were higher, because 20% of meal recipients were unable to pay for meals, an increase of 4% from the prior year. The organization was still able to meet the demand for meals without interruption or delay. While its balance sheet shows an operating loss of an estimated -\$17,110 for 2011, note the grant was received and applied to its December 2010 balance sheet. The net improvement of the grant resulted in an added revenue of \$12,890 to the bottom line over the same two year period.

The \$30,000 Grant received from Gulf Coast Community Foundation in December 2010 has allowed Venice Area Mobile Meals, Inc. to upgrade its office and administrative capabilities, with vastly more efficient computers, hardware and software technology, furnishings, and supplies.

- 2. How is your organization stronger and more prepared to operate in this economic climate as a result of the operating grant support?**

The upgrades enable the organization to better utilize office space and provides for better utilization of volunteer time with the provisioning of a multi-computer network that supports up to three volunteers access to different computerized functions at the same time. The completed furnishings provide work space for up to 5 or 6 volunteers to be doing various functions at the same time, e.g. office management, answering telephone calls, updating route schedules, financial management, meals program data entry, generating letters, reports, name badges, invoices, tracking donations, e-mail, etc. Various tasks are now completed in a more timely and efficient, concurrent manner.

The low to high fluctuation in daily meals delivered has been accommodated by timely updates being processed and handled. With the ability to more effectively track, analyze and rebalance meal service demands, the organization effectively introduced two additional routes on November 1, 2011.

3. **Grant funds were awarded under the expectations that your organization would seek long-term, sustainable revenue sources during the grant period.**

a. **Describe a few of the accomplishments you have made toward long-term sustainability**

The economic climate certainly provided additional challenges to meet even the modest goals to develop and maintain sustainable revenue sources, as well as revenue growth. The organization's monetary investments were carefully monitored, and appropriate re-investments were made, given a balance between risk, return and investment horizon. These will continue to be monitored and reinvested at a time when interest rates begin to show signs of improvement.

During the grant period, the organization's online presence was revisited, to revitalize and keep the organization name, services, needs and accomplishments in the public eye. Its website was overhauled, bringing in new content, organization, management and introduced another revenue stream source via a robust online donation capability. The domain registration and hosting contract was extended an additional 5 years, with website security features added. A Press Room was introduced, to maintain a track record of online news releases.

Magnetic signs were purchased that included the website name to increase visibility and name recognition.

A number of relationships were fostered with area churches and civic organizations, which resulted in a number of individual and group donations, in addition to online donations, received. Presentations were made to a number of community groups, to increase public awareness of services, needs and opportunities, which also resulted in an increase of new sources of donations as well as 35 new volunteers joining the organization in 2011.

The primary, almost 30 year relationship with non-profit "partner" Village on the Isle is one that enables the continued success and operation of Venice Area Mobile Meals, Inc., as they provide the office space, assembly area, and utilize kitchen facilities and staff to prepare and package meals, which are then delivered by our volunteers.

The organization's by-laws were reviewed and amended, to reinforce the mandate of its board and officers of the corporation, and introduced 2 new officers, Technology Officer and Website Officer, to not only support current needs, but keep an eye to the future to keep pace with and ensure the best utilization of technology and online media.

b. **Describe some of the challenges you faced in working toward long-term sustainability**

In addition to the current economic conditions, the Board of Directors received the resignation for health reasons of the current president, and grant project leader, with 22 years of service as a board member. However, the board feels it has successfully met its obligations in implementing the planned acquisitions as outlined in the grant application, and is in a good position with a working board of directors of 12 to continue to guide the organization into the future.

Prior to receiving the infusion of December 2010 grant monies, the organization was limited to fewer volunteers in a limited space doing serial tasks. This obstacle was removed with the acquisition of more appropriate furnishings and use of technology.

Sufficient liability insurance ensures that the organization and officers are protected from the cost and risk if threatened by legal action due to accident or unforeseen circumstance or oversight. A portion of the grant was utilized to provide continuing protection in this area.

A continuing challenge will always be the unknown and future demands for services that may exceed the present meal preparation capacity of about 250 meals by Village on the Isle. These trends will continue to be monitored, and contingency plans put in place well in advance to meet growing or changing needs.

4. Overall were the funds expended as anticipated in the grant application or was there a variance in the plan? If there were variances, why did they occur?

There are some areas, where monies were allocated but not spent, as the items were not deemed necessary, either due to current need, or existing supplies were sufficient. A number of items were not acquired which include a water cooler, wall map, 3 book shelves/storage units, Donor Perfect software, website designer/consultant, and internet access.

A number of other items were purchased under budget or planned expenditure, with the exception of furnishings which costs and needs were under-estimated. Three computer desks and chairs were purchased, rather than 2, to enable an existing computer to be utilized. These are clearly identified in the attachments.

A resulting amount of \$3,533 is remaining in the category of Undesignated Funds. Venice Area Mobile Meals, Inc. is preserving these remaining funds to cover items planned in the grant application, and are in process of being acquired and will be completed in 2012, including purchase of color printer and ink supplies, and adjustment to the driver sign-in stand/pedestal to reduce its height and provide storage shelves within the unit.

5. Finally, please use the space below to tell us your most compelling story about this grant. If not the grant, then about your organization.

At the heart of the organization are the efforts of 200 volunteers that provide their compassion, time and talents, all enabling a mobile meals service to be continuously provided to the Greater

Venice area for the past 42 years. In 2011, 49,744 meals were delivered to those in need, 9.76% more meals delivered than the prior year, all without any increase in meal cost to meal recipients.

Improved technologies, furnishings and needed supplies have improved morale and productivity, particularly of the office staff, board of directors and officers of the corporation. The list of improvements made possible by the Gulf Coast Community Foundation grant and put in place by Venice Area Mobile Meals, Inc. in 2011 is practically endless: Quality data, accessibility, security, functionality, ease of access, improved space and time utilization, ergonomic furnishings, multi-tasking abilities, improved management and reporting, timely updating, effective tracking, ability to meet growing service demands, online visibility, ability to attract and retain new volunteers, enhanced public trust, additional revenue sources, name visibility and recognition, fostered new and continued community and donor relationships, continued liability protection, a strong team of officers and updated by-laws that support the organization into the future.

With the infusion of grant monies to provide needed improvements, Venice Area Mobile Meals, Inc. is positioned and prepared to continue to meet the mobile meals needs of area residents now and in the foreseeable future.

Thank you.

Attachments

**Supporting Report to Gulf Coast Community Foundation
(supporting text for each acquisition area)**

Grant Tracking Itemization

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Background

The Gulf Coast Community Foundation provided a \$30,000 grant to Venice Area Mobile Meals, Inc. in December 2010 to help the organization operate more efficiently. These funds were targeted for computer, software and equipment upgrades. This report accounts for where grant monies were applied and identifies the benefits gained from these improvements.

(Past) President Bob Nicholson reports “This is the first upgrade since we moved to the Village (on the Isle) in 1983. The recent office improvements have made the office much more efficient and allow people to work at each of the computers at the same time. We have done all of this at no cost to the MOW (Meals on Wheels) program. We have much more room and a more efficient office due to the expansion of the office by VOTI (Village on the Isle), and by equipping the space with appropriate furnishings and upgraded technologies made possible by a \$30,000 grant from Gulf Coast Community Foundation.”

Summary

Total of all expenses applied to the subject grant is \$26,467, with \$3,533 remaining in undesignated funds. Venice Area Mobile Meals, Inc. is preserving these remaining funds to cover items planned in the grant application, and are in process of being acquired and will be completed in 2012, including purchase of color printer and ink supplies, and adjustment to the driver sign-in stand/pedestal to reduce its height and provide storage shelves within the unit.

GCCF Grant Tracking Itemization (attached) provides an accounting of the actual costs incurred against the categories identified in the grant application. These categories are used in this report to group the realized benefits from the investment in the requested upgrades.

Prior to receiving the December 2010 grant, the operations were all conducted using one outdated computer in a serial manner. Consequently, when an individual was trying to manage the recipient schedule, no other computerized function could be accomplished. Post grant, operationally the process is significantly enhanced, with each of the major functions able to be undertaken concurrently and simultaneously. For instance, a volunteer can be doing data entry of applications, changes and corrections from applicants into the meals program or preparing invoices from the meals program on one computer while financial data entry into QuickBooks on another computer is done, at the same time that name badges and notices for volunteers are created or updated on the third computer.

A major downfall of a single computer operation is the vulnerability inherent in a single point of failure. This was overcome by the additional computers and the ability to have onsite, offsite and cloud backup. Should any single computer fail, the operation will continue seamlessly on the remaining equipment.

In the event of a catastrophic physical outage, such as fire, hurricane, etc., the operation can be restored to an offsite computer and processing resumed as needed.

Significant time and commuting expenses were spared for key officers that perform critical functions by granting remote computer access to the computerized meals program, accounting and billing functions.

Changing of the technology into a multi-user, multi-equipment configuration was further enabled by the acquisition of office furnishings that optimized the use of newly acquired space, provided needed desktop space for easy access to printers and desktop supplies, and was more ergonomically appropriate for use by multiple users at the same time.

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Computers and Related Items

With a proposed budget of \$7,800, a total of \$7,682 was invested in the acquisition of hardware technology to allow the office to function in a multi-user environment. This includes a small business server, two computers and monitors, two printers, a router, external hard drive, wireless keyboards and mice, and allows the integration of an existing computer and printer. All contribute to a more stable, maintainable and robust operating environment.

Software

With a proposed budget of \$1,125, a total of \$988 was invested in software technologies to enhance computerized functions, maintain current software versions and support levels, and enabled a multi-year extension of its website features and contract.

A number of software programs were acquired through the Techsoup software donation program, which charges administrative fees, much less than retail cost of software. Techsoup is an online organization that assists non-profit organizations acquire donated and discounted technology products on an annual allotment basis. Software acquired in 2011 included MS Office Professional 2010, Adobe Acrobat, and QuickBooks 2010. These upgraded versions provide a vast improvement in productivity, efficiency, functionality, system stability and compatibility.

Also during 2011, Venice Area Mobile Meals, Inc. extended its website hosting contract and domain registration with Network Solutions for 5 years and was enhanced with the acquisition of a 4-year term for SSL security for the website. Having the ability to purchase a multi-year website hosting contract reduced the cost that would have been incurred on an annual renewal basis, by approximately 25%. The SSL security features added provides added protection of inquiry data received by the website, and furthers public trust when making financial donations via the website.

Office and Volunteer Support Supplies

As in previous year's usage of GCCF Grant monies, a number of necessary operating supplies were acquired at a cost of \$1,211, within a proposed budget of \$4,360, which included coolers, cooler liners, magnetic car signs, and hanging name tags.

These acquisitions allow the Meals on Wheels drivers to deliver warm meals, and to identify the driver and organization while on delivery, further enhancing public trust and name recognition.

Furnishings

Much needed furnishings were acquired at a cost of \$9,038, well over the proposed budget of \$3,300, to support the office and computerized functions for the day-to-day administration of mobile meals services. The office space had been expanded by Village on the Isle (VOTI). To better utilize available space and meet the growing multi user needs, the following furnishings were purchased:

1. a sign-in stand for volunteer daily check-in, at a more ergonomically suitable height
2. Locking file cabinets, to secure supplies and records
3. Fireproof safe, to secure most sensitive documents and valuables
4. 3 computer desks, to support a multi-user computer and server access, and to provide better placement of printers, monitors and improved desktop utilization

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5. Office manager's desk, replacing a worn unit with more suitable storage
6. Small office desk, to support assistant's tasks
7. 5 desk chairs, which adjust to each user's height needs

Other Expenses

Other expenses proposed in the grant application, including insurance, administrative costs, professional services, and office program supplies are detailed below. With \$13,415 proposed for these other expenses, only \$7,549 was expended. The \$5,866 savings in this area helped balance the shortfall of \$5,738 in proposed funds for Furnishings.

Insurance

As planned, Directors and Officers Liability insurance and auto owners liability insurance was purchased within a budget of \$1,800 at a cost of \$1,779 to protect the corporation and its volunteers from future legal costs in the event of unforeseen circumstances and potential legal action.

Administrative Costs

A number of administrative items were purchased at a cost of \$1,102 within a budget of \$3,800 to better utilize technology and features available to protect data, increase accessibility, reduce telephone costs and increase supportability.

A one year offsite hard drive backup service was implemented with Carbonite. MemoPal was acquired to perform a cloud backup. A subscription to LogMeIn Pro was purchased to allow officers remote access to office computers to increase productivity and reduce travel time and cost, while preserving and securing original source data. Backup disks were purchased to allow back-up, which can be physically taken offsite for back-up and resumed operation in the event of foreseen circumstance, such as Storm Preparedness. Norton Antivirus for 3 computers was purchased to protect the operating environment from unwanted intrusion and software attacks. Verizon West Telephone costs were defrayed. Vonage VOIP 3-month trial was implemented to provide a lower cost solution for long distance calls, as well as to provide an enhanced voice mail capability for all incoming calls. However, as of the writing of this report, the telephone system will be reverted to Verizon "land line" technology for local and long distance voice service, due to VOIP packet loss over the existing Comcast network installed at Village on the Isle, not under direct control or management by Venice Area Mobile Meals, Inc. Telephone handsets including 2 year warranty and telephone batteries were purchased to replace dated and failing handsets.

Professional Services

A total of \$3,755 was spent, slightly over the proposed budget of \$3,750, on professional services (consultants, computer, attorney, accounting) to effect Corporate By-laws changes, and to provide a professional organizational review performed by Dowd Whittaker. The funds planned for Website Designer/Consultant were not spent, with the addition of a volunteer position of Website Officer. The position was filled by the individual who implemented the original website for the organization.

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Office Program Supplies

Within a budget of \$3,065 for office program supplies, a total of \$913 was spent on Equipment Maintenance, primarily for the acquisition of printer ink and toner cartridges costing \$887, and provided a waste basket, step stool, and Secretary's recorder battery. These items were deemed necessary to support the continued day-to-day operation.