CHRISTIAN
HEALTH
CARE
CENTER

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July 7, 2023

Dear Executive Sidhu and County Council Members,

I am writing to request your consideration for granting funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to assist Christian Health Care Center (CHCC) with an emergency IT and communication situation.

Since 1956, CHCC has served north county residents from a health care campus in Lynden. We operate the only locally owned not-for-profit skilled nursing facility in Whatcom County, currently providing an essential service to approximately 100 older adults who need long-term care and short-term therapeutic rehabilitation services. (Visit chcclynden.org or contact me for additional information or an informational tour.)

Like many businesses, CHCC experienced unprecedented hardships during the pandemic. As healthcare professionals, we did everything in our power to provide quality care 24/7 to our residents, but the toll was high. Staffing, admissions and revenues decreased to all-time lows between 2020 and 2023. We had to cut back on numerous nonessential updates and improvements, including IT and communications, during that time.

As an organization, we are now focused on increasing staffing, admitting more residents, and prioritizing updates and improvements that were put on hold during the pandemic.

Unfortunately, our IT and telephone systems have been inspected by local experts—Bellingham-based ITonDemand—who report that our systems are in a situation of existential threat. The servers, overall infrastructure and telephone system are all obsolete and unable to be updated. We must replace them immediately as they could cease to function at any moment.

Such a cessation would impact our ability to receive, review and enter health care data. It would threaten our ability to provide services to our residents and could require an immediate transfer of the residents to other facilities, likely not in this area. A communications system failure would also impact approximately 200 people who work at CHCC as they would likely be without employment.

All of that to say, our need is critical and immediate. Your assistance through the ARPA funds would be nothing short of lifesaving. The funds would bridge a financial gap as we work to rebuild CHCC's financial health to pre-pandemic levels. Our goal is to ensure the long-term sustainability of this valuable north county resource for decades to come.

I am attaching a summary of the work that needs to be done, and I can provide detailed invoices for the first three projects, which total approximately $88,000. The fourth project, which is the telephone system, is currently out for bid, but we expect it will cost between $300,000-$400,000.

On behalf of CHCC, its residents and staff, I am seeking ARPA grant assistance in the amount of $350,000.

I acknowledge that this is a significant request and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter by phone or in person. Our IT team can be included if their expertise is needed to answer your questions.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Tonja A. Myers
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Summary

CHCC has four critical projects to implement in order to maintain and sustain operations and security for the organization.

These four projects have dependencies and need to be completed in the following order:

1. Microsoft 365 E-Mail Migration
2. Network Infrastructure Refresh & Expansion
3. Server & Power Infrastructure Refresh & Expansion
4. Phone System Replacement

The following brief provides an overview of each project object, statement of work summary, materials, and cost estimates. Detailed quotes will be made available separately for each project.

Projects

PROJECT 1
Microsoft 365 Email Migration

Objective

Migrate customer email solution from on-premise Exchange server to Microsoft 365 Exchange Online. The current e-mail exchange server is currently unreliable and not capable of being backed-up for disaster recovery. Moving to the cloud will alleviate the cost of upgrading, managing, and hosting the Exchange server along with the licensing costs associated with an on-premises server.

Statement of Work

- o Perform configuration discovery
- o Ensure Exchange has the latest Exchange service roll-up installed
- o Ensure secure remote access and auto-discover is properly configured to interconnect with Microsoft 365
- o Configure Active Directory account UPNs
- o Review and/or set up Azure AD Connect user synchronization
- o Configured Exchange Hybrid features
- o Migrate existing mailbox data to seed from Exchange to respective Microsoft 365 mailboxes
- o Cut over mail flow to Microsoft 365
- o Perform delta migration of existing mailbox data to Microsoft 365 in phases
- o Reconfigure SMTP servers relaying off of Exchange
- o Decommission Exchange server

Materials

- o Microsoft 365 licensing requirements

Cost Estimates

Estimated costs for this project, excluding licensing, will be $6,000.00

PROJECT 2

Network Infrastructure Refresh & Expansion

This project is a prerequisite to phone system replacement

Objectives

o   Modernize network hardware infrastructure for speed, security, resiliency, and ease of management
o   Expand network capacity for a new modern Voice over IP phone system

Statement of Work

o   Design new network topology
o   Procure network hardware
o   Configured new network infrastructure hardware prior to onsite installation
o   Install new network infrastructure onsite
o   Provide support to clients as needed

Materials

o   SonicWall TZ470 w/ Advanced Security Gateway and Technical Support licensing
o   SonicWall TZ470 High Availability appliance
o   SonicWall TZ rack mount equipment x2
o   Unifi U6+ Wireless Access Points x14
o   Unifi Standard 16 PoE x1
o   Unifi Standard 48 PoE x10
o   Unifi Standard 24 PoE x5
o   Unifi USW-Pro-Aggregation x2
o   Cloud Key G2 Plus x2
o   SFP+ 10GBASE-LRL 3010nm 2km x36

Cost Estimates

Estimated costs for this project will be $39,037.00.

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PROJECT 3

Server And Power Infrastructure

Objectives

o   Replace physical server infrastructure with modern and vendor warranty support
o   Upgrade server operating systems to vendor support and compliant versions
o   Replace and expand power redundancy and capacity across the network
o   Increase business resiliency

Statement of Work

o   Design new server and power topology
o   Procure server and power hardware hardware
o   Configured new base settings of new server and power infrastructure hardware prior to onsite installation
o   Install new server and power infrastructure onsite
o   Migrate existing server resources to new server resources
o   Provide support to clients as needed

Materials

o   Dell Power Edge R550 Server x2
o   TrippLite PDUMNH20 x7

Cost Estimates

Estimated costs for this project, excluding licensing, will be $45,711.00.

PROJECT 4

Replace Toshiba Phone System

Objectives

- o Replace antiquated and unsupported analog phone system with new, vendor warrantied VOIP phone system
- o Remove single point of failure with Toshiba PBX system
- o Improve reliability and security for patients, nurses, and administrators

Statement of Work

- o Discovery and planning for rewiring of all offices, residences, and location necessitating phones (estimated at ~200)
- o Rewire all infrastructure while maintaining existing PBX lines
- o Purchase and install all phones and equipment for new phone system
- o Install all phones in designated systems
- o Test connections between IDF and MDF systems
- o Test security, 911, and other critical communications
- o Cut-over phone systems
- o Provide support to clients as needed
- o Decommission Toshiba system
- o Recycle and remove all old phone equipment

Materials

To be determined.

Costs Estimates

To be determined. Wiring vendors are currently engaged in estimates and planning site surveys.