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Towns of Acton, Boxboro, Littleton, Maynard, and Westford Share Success of Regional Grant Initiative

Block Grant Funding Supported Communities During COVID-19 Pandemic

Acton Town Manager John Mangiaratti, Boxborough Interim Town Administrator Carter Terenzini, Littleton Town Administrator Anthony M. Ansaldi, Maynard Town Administrator Gregory Johnson, and Westford Town Manager Jodi Ross are pleased to share the success of regional initiatives designed to support businesses, families, and food pantries affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The five towns launched three regional programs after \$1.6 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDGB) funding was awarded to the Town of Acton through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act in January 2021.

- The Childcare Subsidy program, which provided funding to many low-moderate income families who needed assistance with childcare, assisted 88 children across 23 participating childcare providers. More than \$245,000 was spent.
- The Food Pantry program helped cover higher operation costs, including the purchase of more equipment, technology, healthcare items, and food during times of great need in the community. Five pantries received assistance totaling nearly \$232,000.
- The Microloan program, which provided loans of up to \$25,000 to help cover rent,

staffing, and utility costs to small businesses, received more than 50 applications. More than \$384,000 was loaned to 19 qualified applicants.

All programs ended on or before June 30 with the end of the grant period.

"Each of these programs allowed our communities to support families and businesses, and provide stability and security when it was needed most," Town Manager Mangiaratti said. "We are grateful to the state Department of Housing and Community Development for this funding, and thank our partnering communities for their teamwork in making this effort a success."

"Littleton was fortunate to be involved in this regional program during the pandemic. Our Elder and Human Services Department offered families facing economic challenges a childcare subsidy when employment and income were uncertain," Town Administrator Ansaldi said. "To some families, their job was dependent on having access to affordable childcare. Through this program, we could bridge a resource gap and help relieve some financial burdens during a critical time."

"This DHCD grant opportunity enabled Westford to join with other communities to help those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Food Pantry and child care subsidies helped support many families during their time of need," Town Manager Ross said. "Thank you to the DHCD for this opportunity and our neighboring towns for partnering with us on this very successful endeavor."

"We are incredibly proud to have partnered with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and the towns of Acton, Boxborough, Maynard, Littleton, and Westford in providing microenterprise loans, food pantry support, and childcare subsidies to the area's low-moderate income residents during the COVID-19 pandemic," said Cassie Boyd Marsh, a partner with Bailey Boyd Associates. "These programs have had a meaningful impact on the lives of residents through the region, providing stability and support during an incredibly challenging time."

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