



RESOLUTION # 50-2/21

TO: HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE LA CROSSE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

ITEM # 2-30

BOARD ACTION

Adopted:
For: 29
Against: 0
Abstain: 0
Abs/Excd: 0
Vote Req: 2/3 Full
Other Action: _____

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTION

Adopted:
For: 9
Against: 0
Abstain: 0
Abs/Excd: 0

RE: APPROVING AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN ECONOLodge AND LA CROSSE COUNTY TO PROVIDE VOLUNTARY TEMPORARY SHELTER IN ORDER TO MITIGATE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN THE UNSHELTERED POPULATION

WHEREAS, it is difficult for homeless/unsheltered individuals to take recommended steps to reduce the risk of infection and spread of COVID-19 when they do not have a residence in which to isolate or quarantine; and

WHEREAS, in September of 2020, the La Crosse County Board approved an agreement between La Crosse County, the Coulee Collaborative to End Homelessness and the EconoLodge to provide temporary shelter to unsheltered individuals and families; and

WHEREAS, that previous agreement ended on October 31, 2020; and

WHEREAS, between October 31, 2020 and now, the Warming Center, Salvation Army and the County as part of the Coulee Collaborative to End Homelessness have been working with local hotels to provide shelter for individuals that are beyond the capacity for the shelters to accommodate on a case by case basis; and

WHEREAS, these alternative efforts were successful until the end of January 2021 when the incidence of COVID positive individuals at shelter facilities started increasing at the same time that the weather conditions have not only increased the need for shelter but have created safety issues related to extremely low outdoor temperatures; and

WHEREAS, only two shelters exist in La Crosse County – the Salvation Army and the Warming Center (operated by Catholic Charities) – however, when addressing outbreaks and potential outbreaks neither have the physical capacity to effectively isolate COVID positive individuals; and

WHEREAS, given the increase in the incidence of COVID in the homeless/unsheltered population, it is more effective and efficient, both from an economical and epidemiological perspective, to attempt a collective response versus a case-by-case response; and

WHEREAS, Catholic Charities with input from community stakeholders including the Coulee Collaborative to End Homelessness, the School District, the Human Services Department and the Health Department, has determined that the best response to the current situation is for Catholic Charities to move the services currently provided at the Warming Shelter to a larger facility so that they are able to serve both COVID positive and non-COVID positive individuals at the same location through April 15, 2021 the date on which the Warming Shelter annually closes; and

WHEREAS, the owner-operator of EconoLodge of La Crosse has again agreed to provide the exclusive use of the hotel to provide temporary shelter to unsheltered individuals and families; and

WHEREAS, EconoLodge has sufficient space to house individuals (55 rooms with total numbers served depending on length of stay and family group sizes) which includes space to safely quarantine individuals that are COVID positive; and

WHEREAS, Catholic Charities has staff available to provide needed services and is willing to do so with support from La Crosse County staff as needed;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the County Board approves entering into an agreement with the EconoLodge of La Crosse to provide temporary shelter to unsheltered individuals at the rate of \$3300 per day in an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this agreement will extend only until April 15, 2021 and that any necessary expenses will be submitted for reimbursement through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA);

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, after approval by Corporation Counsel, the County Board Chair and County Administrator are hereby authorized to sign all necessary documents required to effectuate this agreement.

FISCAL NOTE: The cost of leasing the facility and other expenses will be approximately \$300,000 and shall be submitted for reimbursement to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Date: 2/16/21
[Signature]
COMMITTEE CHAIR

Date: 2-10-21
[Signature]
RECORDING CLERK

	Reviewed Only	Recommended	Not Recommended	
Co. Admin.	_____	<u>SO</u>	_____	Requested By: Steve O'Malley
Fin. Director	_____	_____	_____	Date Requested: February 8, 2021
Corp. Counsel	<u>[Signature]</u>	_____	_____	Drafted By: Corporation Counsel
Board Chair	<u>[Signature]</u>	_____	_____	

Adopted by the La Crosse County Board this 18 Day of February, 2021

STATE OF WISCONSIN
COUNTY OF LA CROSSE
I, Ginny Dankmeyer, County Clerk of La Crosse County do hereby certify that this document is a true and correct copy of the original resolution required by law to be in my custody and which the County Board of Supervisors of La Crosse County adopted at a meeting held on the 18th day of February 2021.

[Signature]
Ginny Dankmeyer, La Crosse County Clerk