



Finance Memorandum

Date: January 25, 2021

To: Greg Harrison, City Manager

VIA: Suzette Sibble, Assistant City Manager

From: Andrew Jean-Pierre, Finance Director
Miriam Carrillo, OHUI Director
Whitney Walsh, Customer Service Manager

Re: Utility bill delinquencies due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The City of Pompano Beach currently has an approximately \$919,000 outstanding balance due from 1,715 utility customers for their utility bill (water, sewer, sanitation, etc.). This is due to the unprecedented impact of Covid-19. Typically the City addresses these outstanding balances by cutting off water service. The American Water Works Association recommends that utilities postpone cutoffs during the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, we are not aware of any Broward City, including Broward County that is processing cutoffs. In order to address unpaid water bills due to the City, and assist our residents, we are proposing the following to minimize disruptions of water services to our residents due to non-payment, as a result of COVID-19:

- 1) Providing our residents access to approximately \$300,000 in CDBG-CV funds to make emergency utility bill payments.
- 2) The City providing an additional \$400,000 (General Fund Fund Balance) match to address the limited funding that has been provided by the Federal Government.
- 3) The Program would be made available to single family households within City boundaries, including City residents served by Broward County Water and Wastewater Services.
- 4) To qualify for the program, residents must live within the City of Pompano Beach, have a household income at or below 80% of the Area Median Income, and have lost income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This Program will be subject to funding availability and verification of application documents and information. The City will not issue payments directly to applicants, but rather payments will be sent directly to the City's Utility Billing department or Broward County Water and Wastewater Services.

- 5) Each household would receive emergency utility assistance for up to six consecutive months for up to \$600, on a first come first serve basis. Amounts delinquent prior to March 1, 2020 are not eligible for assistance.
- 6) For any balance not covered by the payment plan residents will be encourage to inquire about the City's payment plan for Utility bills.
- 7) The program would be rolled out on February 9, 2021. Residents to be notified primarily via direct mailing to residents who are currently showing a past due amount.

On behalf of Finance, Utility Billing and OHUI department, we respectfully request your approval of this program.