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Executive Summary

As the sponsoring agency, ElderCircle is requesting \$53,970 to support its RSVP project serving Itasca and Koochiching Counties. An estimated 625 unduplicated volunteers will serve at eighty-nine (89) volunteer stations in the two-county area; sixty-two (62) in Itasca, and twenty-seven (27) in Koochiching. Independent living services for seniors is the primary community need, with a Primary Focus on Healthy Futures.

ElderCircle (EC) was established in 1992 and became a self-governing nonprofit in 2001, and its mission is 'to help seniors maintain their independence by linking them, their families and caregivers to services'. EC has maintained sponsorship of the RSVP project since 2003.

Retired Senior Volunteers (RSV's) will deliver meals through the Meals On Wheels program, and shop/deliver groceries through the Groceries To Go program. Through the local Food Bank and area food shelves, Community Café and Ruby's Pantry, RSV's will distribute food to seniors and low income families. RSV's will provide home modifications, repairs and safety checks for seniors through the RSVP HandyHands program. Seniors will have access to free, bi-weekly osteoporosis exercise and strength building classes led by trained RSVP Bone Builders leaders, and free income tax consulting/counseling will be offered by RSV's serving with AARP Tax Aide.

The federal investment of \$53,970 will be supplemented by the Minnesota Board on Aging in the amount of \$48,695 and the local United Way of 1000 Lakes in the amount of \$6,000.

Some of the anticipated outcomes include the following: 40 HandyHands clients will feel more safe, comfortable and secure, and able to live independently in their homes longer and 355 Meals On Wheels and Groceries To Go clients will maintain good nutritional health, and the ability to maintain their independence longer. In addition, approximately 800 Tax-Aide clients will be confident that the required tax returns have been properly submitted, and they will save money to allocate towards other basic necessities; approximately 125 Bone Builders participants will have better balance and improved health, fitness and physical strength; and an estimated 5,000 food distribution recipients will receive enough food to feed themselves and their families, reducing food insecurity; All volunteers serving and clients served will have increased perception of social ties and social support as a result of the activities listed above.

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Strengthening Communities

ElderCircle (EC) RSVP service area is very rural and is comprised of Itasca and Koochiching (Kooch) Counties located in north central Minnesota. Kooch County borders Canada and is geographically the second largest county in Minnesota with a land area of 3,104 square miles and an average of only 4.3 persons per square mile. Itasca County is geographically the third largest county with a land area of 2,668 square miles and an average of 16.9 persons per square mile. (almost four times as many as Kooch County). In contrast to their size, their populations are quite low.

Itasca County, pop. 45,221, is known for being well forested, making forestry and logging major sectors in the economy, and has more than 1,000 lakes, and many rivers and streams, which support many species of wildlife. There are 16 small cities in Itasca County, all but two with a population less than 1,000, and 41 organized townships. The largest community, Grand Rapids, has a population of 10,916.

Kooch County, pop. 13,208, is relatively flat, covered mostly with uninhabitable swampy areas, and a section of Voyageurs National Park and Black Bay are located in the far northeastern tip of the county. Unlike all other Minnesota counties, Kooch County does not have any organized township governments. The largest city, International Falls, affectionately known as the 'Icebox of the Nation', has a population of 6,357, while the remaining five city governments all have populations of 600 or less.

The chief industries in the two-county area are education, forestry, logging, manufacturing, and tourism. Due to the large geographic size, delivery of services is particularly difficult. There are very few people of diverse ethnic backgrounds, 93.5% are white and the other 6%-7% are primarily Native American. A portion of the Leech Lake Indian Reservation is in Itasca County, and portions of the Bois Forte Reservation are in both counties.

The most recent data (2013) provided by Minnesota Compass for Itasca and Kooch Counties:

	Itasca	Kooch
Total Population:	45,221	13,208
Percent of Color:	7.7%	6.4%
Percent of those age 65+:	20.4%	20.9%

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Percent in poverty:	13.8%	12.9%	
Voter turnout (2012):	67.7%	61.9%	
Median Household Income:	\$43,504	\$43,762	
% of Adults Working--age 16-64	66.7%	69.1%	
% w/ bachelor's degree or higher	20.8%	17.5%	
Share of all households paying 30% or more of income for monthly housing			30.3%
	27.0%		
Homeownership rate	80.5%	75.8%	

The 2010 U.S. Census identified that about 26.5% of the adult population in the project area is age 60 or older, and is expected to increase to about 38% by 2030. This dramatic increase may be attributed to Baby Boomers being the largest segment of the population and often retire to these outdoor recreational communities that host a low cost of living and a high quality of life; and younger people oftentimes leave the area for higher education and tend not to return due to a lack of employment opportunities (unemployment rate 8.6%). As the younger generations tend to leave, combined with the Baby Boomer generation being demographically much larger than any other generation (about twice the size of GenX), the older adults remaining are left without family to care for them as they age. EC RSVP has seen a consistent increase in the need for volunteers to meet the increasing needs of our senior population.

Volunteers serving in Work Plan 2.1 support seniors Aging in Place by enabling them to remain in their homes longer by providing grocery shopping and delivery. RSV's serving in Work Plan 3.1 also supports Aging in Place by providing food security and enable seniors to remain living independently by delivering hot, nutritious meals. RSV's serving in Work Plan 4.1 support seniors living independently in their own homes by performing home modifications, handyman repairs and safety checks provide a safe and comfortable environment for seniors to remain in their homes longer. All of these services activities also build relationships with possibly isolated and homebound seniors, thus creating perceived social ties and social support in the lives of the seniors served.

Gathered on an on-going basis, data is collected from RSVP database software, client surveys and volunteer station database reports to ensure that programming is appropriate and that objectives are being met. Impact statements and testimonials from clients, participants, volunteers, etc. are kept on

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file to document the effect RSV's have in helping to meet specific community needs.

Since 1999, EC RSVP's Volunteer Reporter software has proven to be an invaluable tool to track data and manage volunteers and stations. Data collected includes enrolled and active volunteers, hours served, stations, job placements and descriptions, mileage to/from impact stations for reimbursement, etc. A primary placement can be designated for each volunteer to track unduplicated volunteers, and hours at work plan sites are also easily tracked. All of this data is compiled on a monthly, quarterly, biannual and annual basis, and reports are available for review. Current statistics, survey results and testimonials are included in grant applications, grant reports, board reports, RSVP enrollment packets, information packets, agency newsletter and website, and press releases.

EC and RSVP have developed and maintain strong working relationships with the Itasca County Veterans Service Office and other Veteran organizations that provide a great number of referrals for Veterans in need. For the purpose of better serving Veterans and tracking the data, the question 'Are you a Veteran, or the spouse of a Veteran?' has been added to all EC agency forms and to all RSVP enrollment and initiative intake forms.

With careful RSVP Staff consideration, historical information and meticulous planning, Primary Focus Area Work Plans identify each community need, explain the service activities to be performed by RSVP volunteers, describe each instrument and data collection plans, and include target numbers that are reasonable and appropriate to the number of volunteers assigned.

Approximately 21% of EC RSVP unduplicated volunteers will serve in National Performance Measure outcome plans. It is important to note Work Plan 1.1 Obesity and Food (Food Distribution) will utilize 229 (37%) unduplicated volunteers for food distribution at area food shelves. These food distribution agencies/volunteer stations simply do not have the capacity, the systems in place, nor the resources available to track unduplicated clients. Therefore, Work Plan 1.1 cannot fulfill the National Performance Measurement Outcomes requirements. If Work Plan 1.1 Food Distribution Outcomes were measurable, approximately 58% of EC RSVP unduplicated volunteers would be placed in Outcome Plans.

Recruitment and Development

ElderCircle (EC) RSVP assures a high quality volunteering experience by offering 'one stop shopping'

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for a wide choice of activities with numerous (89) partnering sites. Volunteer stations include a highly diverse selection of private nonprofits, public agencies, and other organizations. In addition, RSVP members have the opportunity to work with station supervisors to explore jobs that offer opportunities for the volunteer to share their experience, skills and interests to provide the most rewarding, challenging or meaningful experience.

RSVP staff have customized a detailed enrollment form from which RSV's can choose sites and activities that best suit them, as well as list any special training, experience, education, skills, talents, or interests they have so staff can match them in a beneficial placement. Members who exhibit leadership potential are encouraged to engage in activities where they can utilize their skills by recruiting, training or coordinating other volunteers. It is gratifying to place volunteers in assignments where they can make a difference in their communities, and to witness their enthusiasm as they embrace new experiences through the RSVP program.

Initial and ongoing training is provided for both volunteers and agency staff. RSV's receive orientation materials and are notified when training that applies to their work is available. Staff provide information and training through speaking engagements, and station supervisors are provided with program updates or changes. Sites are contacted via telephone, fax, email or in person, and program information is mailed to sites several times per year.

To deliver the most impactful program, the EC RSVP strategic plan includes 'New to Volunteering' orientation sessions offered semi-annually for new volunteers, and refreshers for seasoned volunteers. These sessions will develop relationships between RSVP staff and volunteers, and volunteers can learn more about how and where they can contribute their experience and skills.

Historically, the RSVP Volunteer Handbook has been distributed to new members during initial meetings, and updates were shared in volunteer packets provided at the annual recognition events (or mailed to those not in attendance). Due to recent changes in RSVP programming (i.e. disbanding three program initiatives, graduating volunteer stations that do not fit the mission or focus areas, mileage rates and policy changes, creation of a Community Advisory Group, etc.) the Volunteer Handbook has been in need of revision and updating. RSVP staff is currently working on this project and all active volunteers will receive a copy of the new handbook upon its completion.

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Although the EC RSVP project service area is racially homogenous (94% are white and 6% are members of a minority group, primarily Native American Indian), there are other diverse backgrounds such as age, education and economic levels, work experience, religious beliefs, and occupational status to be considered. The U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts shows the 2010 Kooch County population was 13,311 people with 25.4% under age 18, 55.1% age 18-64, and 19.5% age 65 and over. 50% of the population is female. 89.4% of persons age 25+ are high school graduates or higher, and of these, 17.2% have a Bachelor's degree or higher. Of the 6,194 households in Kooch County, 76% are homeowners. The median household income is \$43,504 and 12.6% of the population lives below the poverty level. A total of 1,327 (10%) Veterans reside in Kooch County.

The U.S. Census Bureau Quick Facts shows the 2010 Itasca County population was 45,058 people with 27% under age 18, 53.8% age 18-64, and 19.2% age 65 and over. 49.5% of the population is female. 92.5% of persons age 25+ are high school graduates or higher, and of these, 21.2% have a Bachelor's degree or higher. Of the 18,761 households in Itasca County, 81.6% are homeowners. The median household income is \$43,762 and 11.4% of the population lives below the poverty level. A total of 4,968 (11%) Veterans reside in Itasca County.

Of the 625 currently active RSVP members, 463 (74%) reside in Itasca County, and 162 (26%) in Koochiching. There are 481 female (77%) and 144 male (23%) members serving the two-county area. A total of 93 (15%) of the volunteers are 55-65 years of age; 250 (40%) are age 66-74; 219 (35%) are age 75-84; and 63 (10%) are age 85 and over. The average age of EC RSVP's volunteers is 74.

EC and RSVP have developed strong working relationships with the Itasca County Veterans Service Office and other Veteran organizations serve as great referral sources directly with Veterans. For the purpose of better serving Veterans and tracking the data, the question 'Are you a Veteran, or the spouse of a Veteran?' has been added to all EC agency forms and to all RSVP enrollment and initiative intake forms.

Every effort is made to engage volunteers with disabilities. For example, a 93-year old Kooch County vision-impaired volunteer has served as an RSVP volunteer at the same station for more than 30

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years. Because her vision has declined over the recent years, she is now unable to drive, and has since been matched with an RSVP member who drives and escorts her to/from her volunteer assignment each week. This arrangement has kept two elderly volunteers engaged in the community and both are experiencing the healthy benefits of volunteering. Opportunities such as this are consistently sought out to engage volunteers regardless of limitations. Homebound RSV's are also engaged in volunteer activities that can be done from their homes, including telephone surveys, confirming delivery and appointment schedules, taking grocery orders, friendly and safety check-in calls, and sorting/organizing historical files and information, etc.

Strategies to recruit and retain new volunteers also includes, but are not limited to: presentations at area churches, senior centers, healthcare facilities, area nonprofits and with retired professional groups; Community Education workshops; referrals from active RSVP members, partner stations, EC and RSVP staff, board of directors and collaborating agencies; press releases to five area newspapers and EC's quarterly newsletter; email blasts to EC's extensive email contact list; and periodic posts to the agency's website and facebook page.

The number of new enrollees doubled during the twelve months of July 2013-June 2014 (85) over the previous year (43) due to strong relationships having been developed with station supervisors who regularly enroll eligible new volunteers at their stations, and EC RSVP having established the status of the 'go-to' organization in the community for older adults seeking volunteer opportunities.

Coordination by RSVP staff with each station supervisor for up-to-date timesheets and volunteer rosters is conducted on a regular basis. Station supervisors are asked to roster all volunteers on their timesheet, and if any eligible volunteers listed on the timesheet are not currently enrolled, RSVP staff works with the station supervisor to obtain that volunteer's RSVP enrollment, and follow-up is done by RSVP staff to further engage the new volunteer.

For the past 33 years, the RSVP project serving Itasca and Kooch Counties has maintained a strong corps of senior volunteers. In more recent years, EC RSVP has maintained a roster of active RSV's in the 620-650 range.

RSVP staff host annual recognition events in the fall of the year. New RSV's enrolled within the

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previous twelve months and volunteers who meet the healthy volunteering threshold of serving 50 or more hours during the previous 12 months are invited to these mid-afternoon celebration(s). RSV's can meet with EC agency and RSVP staff, other volunteers, and station supervisors for networking and sharing stories. Awards for annual service hours, lifetime hours and 20+ years of service and membership are presented, and attendees are informed about the accomplishments and impact their service has provided. Each attendee receives an information packet that contains statistics and performance measures, and information about the health benefits of volunteering. Any RSVP member unable to attend the event is mailed the information packet and their award(s).

In addition, each year the Itasca County Fair Board hosts the annual 'Outstanding Senior Volunteer' awards, and RSVP staff nominates two (one female, one male) RSV's for consideration. A Selection Committee selects the honorees, the awards are presented at 'Senior Day at the Fair', and the nominations are forwarded for consideration of the State Award(s) at the Minnesota State Fair. The quality of EC RSVP volunteers has been acknowledged on a state level three times in recent years when Itasca County RSV's were honored in 2006, 2011 and in 2013, respectively, with first-runner up (1) or the state award (2). This state award considers volunteers age 70 years or older, hours served, diversity in activities, and accomplishments. Unfortunately, Kooch County Fair Board chooses not to participate in this award process.

EC RSVP also recognizes and retains volunteers on a regular basis throughout the year by:

- *Communicating with site supervisors to ensure placements are appropriate and meaningful to the volunteer(s)
- *Communicating with RSVP members to ensure they are satisfied with their placement(s)
- *Building relationships between RSV's and RSVP staff that allows volunteers to feel comfortable in giving their honest input and suggestions regarding all aspects of programming
- *Offering program benefits such as mileage reimbursement, supplemental insurance while volunteering, and ongoing recognition and support
- *Telephone inquiries or postcards to check-in with volunteers whose hours served have declined or stopped
- *Posting to the EC Facebook page and submitting to area news publications frequent Public Service Announcements that feature RSV's and their activities, accomplishments and community impact
- *Publishing in-depth articles in EC's 'Full Circle' quarterly newsletter, which currently reaches more

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than 5,000 homes, businesses, partner sites, government officials and funding sources in the two-county area

*Sending thank you notes to the extraordinary RSVP members who make a significant impact in the lives of individuals and the community through their volunteer activities

Program Management

ElderCircle (EC) RSVP underwent a federal compliance review in March 2014 with CNCS Grants Management Specialist Jeffrey Montgomery and MN State Program Specialist Jamie Renner. Of the fourteen findings found to be out of compliance, eleven were immediately responded to and implemented, and the remaining three required Board of Directors approval, which took place on August 20, 2014. Pending the update of a revised Volunteer Handbook that is currently under construction, EC RSVP is in full compliance with all RSVP program regulations.

In regards to volunteer stations specifically, EC RSVP requires all stations to have a designated station supervisor. These supervisors complete and sign a Partnership Agreement (MOU) that outlines RSVP's responsibilities, the station's responsibilities, what RSVP members are allowed to do, and to ensure that RSV's are treated ethically, are in a safe environment, and are utilized in a proper manner. The MOUs are renewed every two years, or whenever contact information changes. In addition, EC RSVP staff have regular telephone, email and in-person contact with all volunteer station supervisors to ensure that RSVP members are performing their assigned service activities.

EC RSVP intends to retain all 89 existing volunteer stations. Recent station graduations have taken place typically only at the station's request, or when or two stations consolidate. For example, the Second Harvest North Central Food Bank and the Grand Rapids Food Shelf are under the same 501c3, operate in the same building and utilize the same volunteers, so these two stations recently consolidated. This created a more streamlined process for both the station and RSVP in tracking volunteers, services and impact, and volunteers experienced no disruption to their volunteer experience.

In 2011, EC RSVP graduated a number a volunteer stations due to a 20% decrease in funding. A process was established at that time, and remains current, to send a letter to each station explaining the graduation. A letter is also sent to each active volunteer at the graduated station(s) with an invitation to serve in a volunteer position listed on the menu of choices provided with the letter.

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Since 2003, EC RSVP has a long and proven track record of placing and managing volunteers, and tracking and measuring data in the volunteer activities of delivering hot and frozen meals, distributing food at area food shelves, shopping for and delivering groceries, preparing and submitting income tax and property tax refund forms, leading Bone Builders classes at eight (8) sites, and completing in-home handyman repairs and safety checks, among other activities.

With a rapidly growing senior population, EC has positioned itself to be the 'go to' organization for senior services and referrals in the project service area. EC agency volunteers are utilized to build capacity and provide delivery of services, and nearly all of EC's programs are volunteer-driven.

EC RSVP has an established RSVP Advisory Group consisting of six (6) advisors, three from each of the two counties served. The Advisory Group meets quarterly, and identifies and addresses community needs, assists with RSVP recognition events and presentations, and act as ambassadors to the general public about the RSVP program.

As a result of the federal compliance review, all station MOUs were reviewed and updated, and a procedure was established for the RSVP Volunteer Station Partner Agreement (MOU) to be renewed every two years, with the next due date being February 28, 2016. In addition, MOUs are updated regularly if/when there is a new station supervisor. Following the federal compliance review and to ensure a volunteer's eligibility to enroll in RSVP, a 'staff use only' line was added to the RSVP enrollment form confirming the volunteer's age at the time of enrollment and the enrollment date.

Organizational Capability

The organizational capacity of ElderCircle remains strong. In late February 2014, RSVP Coordinator Deb DeMuth resigned from her position, at which point ElderCircle (EC) Executive Director Kristi Kane and RSVP Program Director Valerie Cromell developed a strong succession plan that would ensure compliance with program requirements, ensure accountability and efficient and effective use of available resources, and offer sound day-to-day operational support.

The plan encompassed the hiring of a new Program Manager (36 hrs/week) to be groomed and trained by Valerie to assume the Director's position at the appropriate time; and the hiring of a new Program Assistant for the RSVP Bone Builders initiative. After being properly trained-in, the Program

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Manager and Valerie would exchange positions, ensuring a smooth and seamless transition without disrupting daily operations. The plan was approved by MN State Program Specialist Jaime Renner and went into effect on May 1, 2014. Lisa Randall was hired as the new Program Manager and Kayla Evans as Bone Builders Program Assistant.

As of September 1, 2014, Lisa Randall assumed the role of Program Director at 40 hrs/week, and Valerie assumed the Program Manager position at 24--30 hrs/ week. The transition was successfully executed and will be communicated to all RSVP station supervisors and funders after the recompetition grant has been submitted, and will also be announced to RSVP members at the annual recognition events scheduled on September 30, 2014 in Koochiching County, and on October 16, 2014 in Itasca County.

Prior to January 2014, EC bookkeeping was contracted to an outside accounting firm. To streamline financial procedures and maximize oversight, EC purchased Red Wing Fund Accounting software designed specifically for nonprofits. Jennifer Davis was hired as the agency's in-house bookkeeper and has been utilizing the software program since January 1, 2014. RSVP program funds are tracked separately from other agency funds to ensure that funding is properly allocated. RSVP financial statements are generated and reviewed monthly to ensure that program funds are expended within the budget guidelines.

As a result of EC RSVP's federal compliance review in March 2014, an in-kind donation voucher was created and a procedure to record and track in-kind donations was established to improve the accuracy of financial reporting.

Kristi Kane was hired as EC's Executive Director in December 2009. She is a graduate of St. Cloud State University and has 22 years of business experience. Kristi is an active community member and has strong connections throughout Itasca County. She is experienced in program development, fundraising, grant writing, human resources, marketing, budgeting, management and staff development. Kristi's responsibilities are to oversee the agency's programs; develop, plan and deliver services; supervise and manage agency staff; oversee agency finances; establish, maintain and advance community relations; and implement board policies and decisions. Her vision and leadership skills are incredible assets to growth and vibrancy of the agency as a whole, as well as provide

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invaluable insight to the management of the RSVP project.

Valerie Cromell has been the EC RSVP Director since February 2003, and as of September 1, 2014 now serves as the RSVP Program Manager. She is a graduate of Bemidji State University and has 33 years of business management and supervisory experience, with 28 of those years in nonprofit management. Valerie is experienced in program development, marketing, fundraising, volunteer development and management, grant writing, budgeting, and supervision. As Program Manager, Valerie maintains the extensive Volunteer Reporter database, as well as recruits and develops new volunteers and maintains strong relationships with volunteers and stations. Valerie has lived and worked in Itasca County for most of her life, and is committed to providing a high quality volunteer program that promotes 'healthy volunteering', while meeting critical needs of the project service area. EC RSVP highly values Valerie's eleven years of RSVP management experience and wisdom as the project continues to thrive and grow.

Lisa Randall came on board with EC in November 2012 as Community Development Coordinator, in May 2014 transitioned to RSVP Program Manager, and was named RSVP Director on September 1, 2014. Lisa has 16+ years of business development and management experience including start-up and growth, marketing, budgeting, cash flow planning, administration and operations. She has a diverse work history that developed her skills in sales, recruitment and retention, training and development, and program management. With Valerie Cromell serving in a support role and offering her experience on a daily basis, as RSVP Director, Lisa is responsible for the overall administration, including, the planning, development, maintenance, management and operation of the program. While in college, faculty honored her with the 'Outstanding Student' award when she graduated from Alexandria Technical College, and Lisa has returned to college to pursue a Bachelor's degree from the College of St. Scholastica. Having lived and worked in Itasca County virtually all of her life, she brings a wealth of knowledge of the area, a strong network of contacts, a naturally strategic way of thinking, and a passion for the development of the communities the RSVP project serves.

Kayla Evans joined EC early in 2013, and in her position as Wellness Coordinator, she promotes and offers outreach and education in older adult wellness, and serves as the RSVP Bone Builders Program Assistant. Kayla's passion for healthy living is supported by her bachelor's degree in nutritional science from the University of North Dakota and she holds a certification as a personal trainer.

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This team of leaders has more than 71 years of management experience combined, and has a proven track record of managing successful programs and strong working relationships with each other in the agency, as well as collaborating with countless other organizations.

EC became a self-governing nonprofit in 2001, and has well established policies and procedures that provide sound governance in all areas of management, as evidenced when in 2013 EC was awarded the Charities Review Council Meets All Standards Seal. This seal indicates that EC meets all twenty seven of the Council's rigorous Accountability Standards.

The EC Board of Directors plays an integral part in the administration of the agency, providing guidance to the EC Executive Director, and is comprised of twelve (12) members. Of these, five (5) are retired with backgrounds in nonprofit management, government, engineering, business, and human resources, and are RSVP members. The remaining seven (7) directors are comprised of the CEO of an employment service company; a local CPA who owns an accounting firm, a bank vice president, the owner of an emergency medical transport company, a local attorney, a county public health nurse, and a financial advisor. The board meets every other month and its Governance, Executive and Financial sub-committees meet every month.

The board has six (6) male and six (6) female members with an age range of 37 to 77, and they collectively belong to a wide variety of clubs, organizations, churches, and/or civic groups. Several members sit on boards of other nonprofits, one member is a foundation trustee, and all of them are strong advocates of the agency. EC board members are community leaders and volunteers who understand the importance of volunteerism, and how RSVP members impact their communities while staying healthy and active through volunteer service.

The EC agency employs four (4) full-time, and eight (8) part-time (32 hours or less per week) staff people. Basic agency supplies are available to all staff in a general storage area; RSVP purchases its own program supplies and stores them separately in the RSVP office suite. EC employees must complete an expense voucher for any work-related expenses (under \$500) paid for out-of-pocket. The voucher must itemize the expenses and include original receipts. Approval signatures of the Program Director and proper coding of expenses must be on the voucher before it goes to the ED. A board

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member, preferably the treasurer, must sign off on the ED's expense voucher.

EC programs and staff share a network server, fax machine, copiers, printers and other office equipment. EC has a contracted service agreement with an outside computer technical assistance firm to provide ongoing technical assistance and support for the agency's computers, software programs, and internet needs.

Job descriptions for all staff positions are on file with clearly defined job duties (see Organizational Chart attachment). Each employee is given an Employee Handbook that details internal agency policies at the time of hire. Travel policies for staff persons and volunteers are clearly defined. Employees are encouraged to discuss any work issues or concerns with management as they occur. The EC Employee Handbook and the EC Policies and Procedures Manual are available for review upon request.

Important ElderCircle Agency Update: EC is very excited to report that it is engaged in a collaboration with the Itasca County Family YMCA and the City of Grand Rapids to enhance wellness and active lifestyle opportunities and to improve overall community health by constructing a new facility known as the Active Living Center (ALC) in Grand Rapids. With the capital campaign fully funded, ground breaking of the \$5 million project took place in June 2014, with completion scheduled for December 2014. The ALC will be located on the campus of the Itasca County Family YMCA, will include facility expansion and many upgrades, new office space for EC, and features designed specifically for residents 55 and older. The ALC will offer access to EC services and RSVP volunteer opportunities, continuing education classes, computer access, creative arts, socializing and fitness, connections with other services, information about health care and age-related programs, and intergenerational programming among diverse age groups. It will be a wellness resource center offering all socio and economic backgrounds a vibrant, alternative-rich, accessible environment where the growing 55+ population has the freedom to choose how they want to age. As construction continues on schedule at the time of this writing, EC will relocate to the new location with increased and improved access to the community at the YMCA early in 2015.

ED Kristi Kane, RSVP Director Lisa Randall, and RSVP Program Manager Valerie Cromell, work in tandem with bookkeeper Jennifer Davis to manage RSVP resources as efficiently and effectively as

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possible, according to federal guidelines, and within federal and state grant application budgets. RSVP local, state and federal grant dollars are tracked separately from other agency funds using accounting software designed specifically for nonprofits, and financial statements are generated monthly for review to ensure that program funds are expended appropriately.

Under the supervision of the ED and a CPA who serves on the Board of Directors, the bookkeeper provides monthly reports to the ED, Board of Directors and each Program Coordinator. With the addition of an in-house bookkeeper in January 2014, financial procedures for the agency as a whole have been streamlined, which includes the development of a detailed tracking and monitoring system of in-kind donations, which is currently underway.

The ED works with each Program Coordinator individually to develop each program's annual budget according to the fiscal year of each individual grant, and grant funds are separately maintained and monitored. The ED carefully reviews each grant award and contract to ensure compliance with all provisions. Each Program Coordinator is responsible for coding expenditures as outlined in the grant proposal.

The EC Board of Directors contracts with an independent auditing firm for an annual audit in compliance with federal regulations. The ED prepares the agency's financial budget each year, which is reviewed and approved at the November Board meeting.

EC's general financial management systems are outlined below:

- * The Board of Directors is responsible for the fiduciary health of the agency by creating financial policies and delegating administration of those policies to the ED. The board reviews operations and activities, makes recommendations and has final say in the employment of the ED.
- * The ED has management responsibility, including financial management. The ED communicates financial outlooks at each regularly scheduled board meeting, based on current accounting reports.
- * Financial duties and responsibilities are separated so that no one employee has sole control over cash receipts, disbursements, payroll, reconciliation of bank accounts, etc.
- * The bookkeeper prepares bills and timesheets, disburses reports, transfers funds as appropriate, and distributes pay stubs to staff in the absence of the ED.
- * The bookkeeper also prepares the payroll, payroll taxes and vendor checks, and reconciles the bank

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statements. Coding of expenses is done by the ED or program staff, and reviewed by the ED.

* After the ED has signed the checks, the bookkeeper stamps each check with the board treasurer signature hand-stamp, and disburses checks for payment, keeping a photocopy of each invoice on file.

The board treasurer hand stamp is kept in a locked desk drawer and is not accessible to the ED.

* Financial policies and procedures are reviewed annually by the board's Finance Committee.

* The integrity of grant funds requires the creation of separate fund accounts for each source of revenue. Use of project codes for each fund ensures that expenses are charged to the appropriate revenue source.

* Two staff people jointly open all incoming mail and log all funds received. Only photocopies of checks for funds received are distributed to Program Directors as appropriate.

* Checks to be deposited are coded and given to the ED for deposit. Incoming checks are recorded on a spreadsheet by the bookkeeper and cross checked with each deposit made to the bank. The ED endorses all checks by rubber stamp.

* Checks and cash are coded and placed in a locked file in the ED's office until they are deposited. After a deposit is made, copies of deposit tickets for each program/grant are made and coded for the bookkeeper.

Having been the RSVP Project sponsor for Itasca and Koochiching Counties since 2003, EC has eleven years of experience with the application, implementation, management, reporting, and compliance requirements with federal grants funds through the Corporation for National Community Service.

In addition, for the past eight (8) years, EC has offered employment opportunities to seniors age 55 and over through the federally funded Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) program, which serves five counties in the Arrowhead region of northern Minnesota. The 2014-15 federal budget for the EC SCSEP program is \$249,735.

Other

N/A

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

N/A