Grant Report Narrative:

Project Description: The request was made to support a bulk food purchase to ensure the availability of nutritious food during the COVID-19 pandemic. TLS operates three single room occupancy transitional housing projects for homeless men and women with a total of 45 beds. The program does not supply meals other than on an emergency basis for new admissions, or for holiday gatherings. Residents typically receive SNAP benefits and visit food pantries when they are low on resources. Residents lack resources to travel throughout the town if the store they typically visit is low on provisions, nor can they meet rising costs. During the initial phase of the pandemic there were also rumors about the ability of food pantries to stay open, and that they may be overwhelmed by new customers. Finally, many of the homeless people TLS serves are at high risk for COVID infection because of pre-existing chronic health conditions. Given all of these considerations, TLS acted to protect the food security for homeless residents by ensuring the availability of basic food at each location. Discussion with the residents resulted in a consensus that the award funds would best be spent on frozen chicken, ground beef, and rice. It will be stored and distributed to supplement food stocks as access or available supply becomes an issue.

Project Outcomes: The funds were utilized to purchase 160 lbs. of frozen chicken, 80 lbs. of frozen ground beef, and 50 lbs. of rice which will be available for 45 residents. The purchase will be utilized to supplement residents in times of need based on COVID related circumstances and is being discussed as a resource for group meals in each house on perhaps a weekly basis to promote sharing of news, resources and information during the pandemic while respecting social distancing. The award has also served to alleviate the stress of both residents and staff around the availability of sufficient food during this crisis.

Grant Stewardship: The grant award was posted on the TLS Facebook page and shared a number of times, as well as the agency website. The information is also being shared via email with the members of the St. Lawrence County Community Services Board.