



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF  
**ADAM J. BELLO**  
MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**For Immediate Release**  
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**COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO ANNOUNCES FINDINGS OF  
INDEPENDENT FORENSIC REVIEW  
OF COMMUNITY RESOURCE COLLABORATIVE**

*Review uncovered comingling of multiple funds and inadequate tracking of ARPA grant money intended for distribution to Neighborhood Collaborative Project*

**ROCHESTER, NY** — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello today announced the findings of an independent forensic review of the Community Resource Collaborative (CRC), the fiscal agent chosen by the Neighborhood Collaborative Project (NCP) for grant funding under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

CRC's role was to review invoices submitted by NCP partners, ensure those activities complied with the strict federal requirements of ARPA, submit those invoices to the County, and then disburse those funds to those agencies.

A forensic review conducted by EFPR Group concluded that CRC received \$1,067,971.67 in reimbursement from the County for distribution to NCP partners. Those partners properly received \$750,514.65 in reimbursement but are still owed \$243,907.02. At this time, CRC is likely insolvent and does not have the money to pay back its outstanding obligations

The review found that CRC comingled multiple funding streams in the same bank accounts — money from the ARPA grant along with funds from nearly \$1 million in other grants, as well as loans and lines of credit. CRC did not properly track which funds came from the appropriate source. In addition, CRC overpaid itself \$23,779 in administrative fees it was not entitled to.

The first indication the county had that CRC wasn't properly reimbursing NCP partners came in an email at 7:11 p.m. on February 6, 2024. The CEO of CRC notified the County that the organization had launched an internal investigation into "mismanagement of funds and negligence regarding the agency's financials." A follow-up letter from C3 Consultancy Services, a member agency of the NCP, asked the county to cease all payments.

The County reached out to EFPR Group that night and engaged them to determine what happened. EFPR started their work the next day. The forensic review was to provide an accounting of the ARPA funds disbursed to CRC that were not reimbursed to Neighborhood Collaborative Project, and to assess whether any ARPA funds were potentially misappropriated and/or misused. EFPR's forensic review was completed yesterday afternoon

The Republican and Democratic legislative Caucuses have been briefed on this forensic review and it has been shared with federal and state law enforcement partners, including the U.S. Attorney's Office, the FBI, the U.S. Department of Treasury, and the Attorney General.

County staff worked this week to answer questions from legislators about CRC, and the response included more than 4,000 pages of documents. All of this supporting documentation along with the forensic review are available to the public online at:

<https://www.monroecounty.gov/arpa-files-2024-03>

“The Neighborhood Collaborative is a project that will be transformative for the neighborhoods it serves. We still believe in that project. But the county, the people who were to be served by NCP and the NCP partners were all victimized by CRC’s financial mismanagement,” **said County Executive Adam Bello**. “Because of that, it’s important that we get NCP back up and running. There’s too much at stake for the organizations involved and the people they serve.”

In 2021, the federal government made \$144 million in American Rescue Plan Act dollars available to Monroe County. The County sought community input on how that money should be invested. Through that process, the County identified key focus areas and designed requests for proposals to solicit projects that would be transformative, engaged in strong collaborations and served communities and neighborhoods that have been historically underserved and underrepresented and that were most negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Neighborhood Collaborative Project was one of the proposals that met this criteria. It aimed to improve the quality of life for residents by engaging a collaboration of existing organizations to bring access to health and human services directly to where people need them the most.

Those groups include SWAN at Montgomery Center; Cameron Community Ministries; Father Tracy Advocacy Center; Beyond the Sanctuary; Barakah Muslim Charities; The Peoples’ Pantry; Lyell Avenue Business Association; Action for a Better Community; Baden Street Counseling and Support Center; MC Collaborative; On the Ground Research; and C3 Consultancy Services.

As part of its grant proposal, the NCP chose Community Resource Collaborative (CRC) to act as their fiscal agent. NCP’s application received one of the highest scores on the review of ARPA-related applications because it met the stated goals with an innovative and collaborative approach that would serve the people and neighborhoods we were seeking to impact.

The County has issued a request for qualifications to find a new fiscal agent for the project. The deadline for responding to that was March 15 and we are currently reviewing those applications. We are doing everything in our power to support these organizations and bring this funding back online and NCP back to the community, because the work being done through NCP is changing lives.

Throughout 2021 and 2022, the Monroe County Legislature was provided significant opportunity to participate in our community stakeholder meetings, briefings and presentations.

Staff answered numerous legislator questions about our process and applications. And legislators were given multiple opportunities to review all of the ARPA documentation – score sheets and applications. Six of 29 legislators scheduled appointments to review these documents. In December 2022, the legislature unanimously approved a resolution authorizing the administration to move forward with entering into ARPA grant contracts.

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