



# RENEW HARPERS FERRY FIRE RELIEF FUND

## DISBURSEMENT PROCESS AND GUIDELINES

The Renew Harpers Ferry fire relief fund was established by the Harpers Ferry-Bolivar Historic Town Foundation to aid in the recovery and renewal of our historic business district after a destructive fire swept through early in the morning of July 23, 2015. Donations have been collected through the crowdfunding site <http://www.gofundme.com/renewharpersferry> and through direct contributions to the Foundation designated for the Renew Harpers Ferry fund.

It is the intent of the Foundation that all monies collected will be applied directly to the relief and recovery effort. A dedicated checking account was established at BCT to separate the funds from the Foundation's primary account. Expenses associated with administering the account will be borne by the Foundation.

A three member administrative committee shall be appointed to manage the disbursement of funds based on the guidelines contained herein.

## PROCESS

Disbursements from the fund may be requested by residents, merchants, property owners or employees directly affected by the fire or by those working on their behalf. Requests will also be considered from those endeavoring to maintain a welcoming shopping district during the reconstruction.

1. Those requesting funds must complete an application with the following:

Signature of the applicant

Purpose and description of the expenditure including justification demonstrating the expenditure meets Foundation guidelines

Documentation, invoices and/or expense receipts where applicable (pre-approval is advised)

2. Applications will be reviewed by the administrative committee. All requests must comply with Foundation guidelines.
3. The administrative committee will notify the Foundation of all awards and the Foundation treasurer will issue checks.

## **GUIDELINES**

The principal guideline is that expenditures must directly relate to relief and recovery from the fire.

It will be the responsibility of the administrative committee to ensure that disbursements fall within one of the following four spending categories:

1. Providing relief to individuals suffering hardships caused by the fire and its aftermath
2. Business continuity and renewal for those businesses destroyed by the fire
3. Ensuring a safe, clean and welcoming business district during reconstruction
4. Preserving our historic legacy

## **ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES**

Allowable expenditures include, but are not limited to:

- Providing matching funds for outside grants which further the renewal of the business district.

*Providing relief to individuals suffering personal hardships caused by the fire and its aftermath*

- Essential living expenses (food, medical, rent, gas, utilities) while transitioning to a new job or to supplement unemployment.
- Assistance in temporary lodging for displaced residents.

*Business continuity and renewal for those businesses destroyed by the fire*

- Interest-free consignment loans to rebuild business inventory.
- Expenses of establishing temporary pop-up shops:
  - Tent rental
  - Merchandise display stands
  - Access to utilities (internet, electricity, water)
  - Portable restrooms
  - Site security
  - Signage
  - Promotional advertising

*Ensuring a safe, clean and welcoming business district during reconstruction*

- Attractive perimeter fencing surrounding the affected site during recovery (stabilization, demolition, rebuilding, infrastructure improvements).
- Pedestrian access around affected areas.
- Cosmetic fixes to damaged buildings prior to construction (i.e., shutters rather than pressboard panels in window openings).
- Upbeat signage or murals on damaged buildings. Opportunity to engage kids with public safety education.

*Preserving our historic legacy*

- Acquiring the services of structural engineers, architects, restoration experts and lawyers to advocate for preservation and historically appropriate rebuilding.
- Risk mitigation in new construction (fire suppression systems and fire retardant materials)
- Recovery of architectural features at risk of demolition.

### **NON-ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES**

Sample non-allowable expenditures include, but are not limited to:

- Expenses that do not meet the test of legal, ethical or public perception of appropriateness.
- Expenses without appropriate documentation or available account monies.
- Expenditures of a personal or spousal nature.

### **EXCEPTION ACCOMMODATION**

Exceptions, though rare, may be approved and documented on a case-by-case basis by the full board of the Harpers Ferry-Bolivar Historic Town Foundation.

### **TRANSPARENCY**

As applications are processed, the administrative committee will provide a monthly report to the Foundation summarizing payments made by category and the remaining balance in the fund.

All disbursements are subject to availability of funds.