

**Nonprofit Recovery Grant : Entry # 2298****General Information****Date or application:**

01/05/2024

**Organization Name**

Whiskers, Inc., dba Whiskers Animal Benevolent League

**Organization TIN or EIN:**

22-2487926

**Organization physical address:**

505 Central Ave  
Albany, NY 12206  
United States  
[Map It](#)

**Is the mailing address different from the physical address?**

Yes

**Organization mailing address (if different):**

PO Box 11190  
Albany, NY 12211  
United States  
[Map It](#)

**Contact Information****Primary contact name:**

Laura Conway

**Primary contact title:**

Co-President

**Primary contact phone:**

518-852-0632

**Primary contact email:**[admin@ewhiskers.com](mailto:admin@ewhiskers.com)

**Preferred method of contact:**

Doesn't matter

**Website (if available):**

<https://www.ewhiskers.com>

**Organization Info and Structure:****Please attach to this application proof of your organization's Tax-Exempt Status**

- [501c3-letter.pdf](#)

**Date of establishment:**

08/11/1983

**Give a brief description of your organization. Please include information on the organization's activities or mission statement (150 words or less):**

Whiskers is a 501(c)(3) non-for-profit organization registered with the New York State Charities Registration Bureau. We are a volunteer-run, no-kill cat rescue and shelter. Our mission is to provide abandoned, abused, and stray animals with a place of comfort, safety and health and ultimately find them loving, responsible, permanent homes through adoption.

Whiskers is registered rescue #RR-304 with the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets. We operate a physical shelter in Albany and have a network of foster homes throughout the Capital Region.

In summary, Whiskers is a compassionate community of volunteers, offering hope and a brighter future for every vulnerable animal entrusted to our care.

**Provide the total number of part time employees (if applicable):**

0

**Provide the total number of full-time employees (if applicable):**

0

**Provide the total number of volunteers (if applicable):**

150+

**What is the organization's current annual budget?**

\$306,500

**Have you or the organization ever received any form of COVID-19 relief funds or loans specific to the negative impacts of the Pandemic?**

No

**Describe the purpose of the organization. Include a description of the target population, as well as the goals and objectives of your proposed project and the amount of Albany County residents that are served (250 words or less).**

Whiskers is a cat shelter and rescue located in Albany, NY. Our location positions us to serve Albany County's 318,000+ population as well as the greater Capital Region with a population of more than 1,100,000 people and countless cats. Whiskers receives daily requests via email, phone, social media for help with abandoned, stray, pregnant cats, mom cats with kittens, and motherless kittens. These pleas for help come from every demographic and every corner of Albany County. We never run out of cats that need help; the number of cats and kittens we can rescue is only limited by our resources.

Our proposed project should we be awarded the grant, is to fund Whiskers' 2024 Foster Program for 125 cats and kittens. We will use the money to pay for adoption preparation expenses including, spay/neuter, vaccination, FeLV/FIV testing, microchips and medical attention. Most of the cats in this program are kittens, but the program includes mom-cats and other adults, as well.

Albany County residents are served in several ways: we help them by coming to their aid when they encounter homeless cats and kittens; we provide companionship through adoption; we offer rewarding volunteer opportunities.

**If an award is made, describe how Albany County stakeholders will benefit.**

Rescue: Every life saved by Whiskers reduces the number of suffering animals and helps to reinforce the positive image of Albany by demonstrating its commitment to animal welfare.

Adoption: Animals provide unconditional love and emotional support, combating loneliness and reducing stress. Caring for a pet can lower blood pressure, improve mood, and decrease anxiety. Having a companion animal gives adopters a sense of purpose and responsibility, which can be especially beneficial for people living alone or facing life transitions.

Volunteerism: Whiskers offers rewarding opportunities for community service. It makes our volunteers happy to help save lives. Whiskers' volunteers are a positive force within Albany County's diverse community.

Economy: Adoption has a positive impact on local business. Pet stores, groomers, pet sitters, veterinarians all rely on pets for their livelihoods. And each cat we rescue takes a little bit of pressure off the municipal shelters and, therefore, the local taxpayers.

**Negative Economic Impact:**

**What amount of funding is being requested?**

\$25,000

**Provide the total amount of lost revenue/additional expenses attributable to the COVID-19 Pandemic.**

Whiskers is funded by individual donations, fundraisers, bequests, and an occasional grant from a corporation or a foundation. Whiskers receives no government funding. To estimate the amount of lost revenue/additional expenses attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic, we highlight our annual Spring Gala and compare the revenue it brought us for the years 2019 through 2023.

In February of 2020 we announced the Spring Gala would be held on April 23rd. We had paid our non-refundable deposit of \$300 to the Italian American Community Center in Albany. Most of the revenue from this event comes up front from the underwriters and \$12,175 had already been donated to us when we were forced to cancel the event to comply with the governor's orders related to public gatherings. Again in 2021 the pandemic kept us from having this in-person event. The year before the COVID-19 disaster, we netted \$17,452 from the Spring Gala. In 2022 we were able to have this event and we netted \$28,390; in 2023 we netted \$30,445. Using linear interpolation based on the actual revenue from 2019, 2022 and 2023, we estimate the expected revenue for 2020 and 2021 would have been \$21,098 and \$24,744 respectively. Since we had partial income from 2020 sponsors, the total revenue lost for missing these two events was:  $21,098 - (12,175 - 300) + 24,744 = \$33,967$ . Or to use an alternative method of estimating the lost revenue, if 2020 and 2021 would have resulted in the average of the three other years, they would have netted \$25,429 each and the calculation would be:  $25,429 - (12,175 - 300) + 25,429 = \$38,983$ .

Our estimated lost revenue for not being able to have our 2020 and 2021 Spring Gala fundraisers is between \$33,967 and \$38,983.

**Sustainable Operating Model: Describe how your organization adapted its operations to respond to (a) the immediate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and (b) any long-term trends brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Adapting to Immediate Impacts:

- Safety First: Keeping volunteers safe became paramount. We provided masks, encouraged staggered shifts, and adopted stricter sanitation protocols at the shelter.
- Virtual Pivot: Recognizing the limitations of in-person gatherings, we launched a month-long virtual auction using eBay.
- Creative Fundraising: To offset lost revenue, we got creative, selling homemade cat-themed facemasks online.

Addressing Long-Term Trends:

- Increased Need: The pandemic triggered a disturbing lack of access to veterinary services, particularly spay/neutering. Homeless cats needed Whiskers more than ever; the number of cats we took in during 2021 was up 50% from 2020.
- Adoption Surge: Fortunately, despite the challenges, we saw a record number of adoptions in both 2021 and 2022, highlighting the community's strong support for animal welfare.
- Risk Reduction/Diversity: Embracing the convenience and efficiency, we've retained virtual meetings and diversified our fundraising efforts, including email appeals, social media campaigns, eBay sales, and grant applications.

These adaptations have yielded substantial benefits:

- Enhanced resilience: Navigating the immediate hurdles, we maintained essential services and ensured animal welfare.
- Expanded reach: Virtual initiatives attracted new supporters and adopters, broadening our impact.
- Sustainable practices: Diversified revenue streams and operational efficiency promote long-term financial stability.

**If an award is made, describe how the funds will help the organization to recover from the negative economic impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and to sustain long-term operations in Albany County.**

As mentioned previously, we are still catching up with what we observed as a decrease in cats getting spayed/neutered during the pandemic and an increase in the local cat population since the pandemic. There are stray cats all over Albany County, especially in its cities where you'll find them on every street. It is part of Whiskers' mission to help get these cats off the streets, spayed/neutered, and into loving homes. If we are awarded funds, we will use the money to make an even bigger difference.

**Does the organization possess a financial management system that provides records that can identify the sources and application of ARPA funds if an award is made? Please explain below:**

We utilize QuickBooks, a well-established financial management software, to track and manage our finances. Its features include:

- Chart of accounts: We can set up a dedicated chart of accounts specifically for ARPA funds, ensuring clear separation and tracking.
- Transaction recording: Transactions related to ARPA funds will be recorded with detailed descriptions and source identifiers.
- Reporting capabilities: QuickBooks generates comprehensive reports that categorize and summarize financial activity, allowing us to monitor ARPA fund usage with ease.

Whiskers is committed to:

- Ensuring responsible and transparent management of ARPA funds.
- Providing accurate and verifiable records for grant compliance purposes.
- Demonstrating our commitment to financial accountability and ethical practices.

**Please explain how the negative impact associated with the COVID-19 pandemic led to revenue loss:**

Direct Loss of Income:

- Cancelled Events: The most significant blow was the cancellation of the Spring Gala, our primary annual fundraiser, in 2020 and 2021. This resulted in a direct loss of revenue between \$33,967 and \$38,983. (Details provided in previous answer)
- Limited Fundraising Opportunities: Social distancing measures and event restrictions hampered traditional fundraising activities like charity dinners, yard sales, and community outreach events, leading to a dip in donations generated through these channels.

Indirect Revenue Impacts:

- Economic Downturn: The pandemic caused a widespread economic downturn, leading to increased financial hardship for individuals and families. This resulted in decreased disposable income and consequently, lower donation amounts from existing supporters.
- Shifting Priorities: With the pandemic causing widespread personal and financial challenges, the priorities of potential donors may have shifted. This could have led to reduced overall charitable giving or a decrease in donations specifically directed towards animal welfare organizations.
- Increased Expenses: The pandemic also brought about additional expenses for Kitties, such as:
  - o Enhanced hygiene and safety protocols at the shelter.
  - o Personal protective equipment for volunteers.
- Increased Prices: Supply chain disruptions and pandemic-related inflation caused us to pay higher prices for our shelters' basic necessities.

**(Optional) Use the below space, or attached supplemental files, to provide any additional information that you believe will support the organization's request:**

Attached is State of New York Legislative Resolution Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of Whiskers Animal Benevolent League of Albany, New York. We want you appreciate our long history serving our community.

**Optional file upload**

- [Resolution\\_rotated.pdf](#)

## Tax Information

Please upload Federal tax returns for tax year 2019

- [WHISKERS-INC-2019-TAX-EXEMPT-TAX-RETURNS-CLIENT-COPY.pdf](#)

Please upload Federal tax returns for tax year 2020

- [Whiskers\\_Inc\\_-\\_2020\\_Federal\\_Form\\_990.pdf](#)

Please upload Federal tax returns for tax year 2021

- [Whiskers\\_Inc\\_-\\_2021\\_Federal\\_Form\\_990\\_-\\_signed.pdf](#)

Please upload Federal tax returns for tax year 2022

- [Whiskers\\_Inc\\_-\\_2022\\_Federal\\_Form\\_990\\_-\\_signed.pdf](#)

Please upload IRS Form W-9

- [whiskers\\_w9.pdf](#)

## Risk Assessment

Has the organization adopted and/or implemented policies relating to: records retention, conflict of interest, code of ethics, and/or nondiscrimination policies

Yes

If you selected "Yes" above, please specify:

Whiskers Board of Directors has adopted document retention, conflict of interest, anti-nepotism, sexual harassment and diversity policies.

Is the organization properly insured?

Yes

If you selected "Yes" above, please specify the types of insurance held and the limits:

1. Commercial Package Location 505 Central Ave, Albany NY 12206  
01) \$247,369 - Building / Special Form / 80% Coins / \$1,000 Ded.

- 02) \$ 26,732 - Contents & Stock / Special Form / 80% Coins / \$1,000 Ded
- 03) Included - Equipment Breakdown / \$1,000 Ded
- 04) Actual Loss - Business Income & Extra Expense
- 05) \$1,000,000 - Hired and Non-Owned Auto Liability
- 06) \$1,000,000 - General Liability-Each Occurrence
- 07) \$2,000,000 - General Liability - Aggregate

## 2. Directors & Officers Liability

- 01) \$1,000,000 - Directors & Officers – Per Claim & Aggregate
- 02) \$100,000 - Data Privacy Event
- 03) \$1,000,000 - Employment Practices – Per Claim & Aggregate / \$2,500 Retention
- 04) \$100,000 - Wage & Hour Defense / Workplace Violence

### Does the organization have a financial management system?

Yes

### If you selected "Yes" above, please specify

QuickBooks (see previous question/answer)

### Has there been any change in your organization's key staffing positions in the last 2 years?

Yes

### If you selected "Yes" above, please specify


3/27/2022 Treasurer, Brianne Peck resigned (stayed on as a volunteer)  
 4/27/2022 Treasurer, Barbara McConkey elected  
 9/12/2023 Vice President, Carol Bessette retired (stayed on as a volunteer)  
 9/16/2023 President, Carol Hall passed away  
 12/6/2023 Directors Laura Conway and Gretchen Zegger elected as Co-Presidents; Secretary Sandra Sidoti elected as Vice President  
 12/25/2023 Treasurer, Barbara McConkey resigned pending replacement (staying on as volunteer)

### Has the organization previously done work for the Federal government (i.e. Is the entity experienced in managing Federal funds)?

No

### Certifications:

#### Acknowledgment 1

 I have read and understand the U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Guidance for State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (see link below)  
 U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Guidance for State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds:  
<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-Compliance-and-Reporting-Guidance.pdf>

**Acknowledgment 2**

✓ Should the County allocate ARPA Funds, I am able to and pledge to adhere to ALL Compliance and Reporting Requirements of the U.S. Treasury as it relates to any State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

**Acknowledgment 3**

✓ I understand the County will contact me if/when additional information is needed and that information will be promptly provided to the County to support reporting requirements

**Acknowledgment 4**

✓ If for any reason I am unable to comply with the U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Requirements I will immediately notify the County in writing by email or letter

**Acknowledgment 5**

✓ All information submitted in this application is true and accurate

**Electronic Signature Agreement**

✓ I agree

By checking the "I agree" box, you agree and acknowledge that 1) your application will not be signed in the sense of a traditional paper document, 2) by signing in this alternate manner, you authorize your electronic signature to be valid and binding upon you to the same force and effect as a handwritten signature, and 3) you may still be required to provide a traditional signature at a later date.

**Type name**

Laura Conway

**Notes****Admin Notification (ID: 655253b8f18ee)**

added January 5, 2024 at 3:05 pm

WordPress successfully passed the notification email to the sending server.