In a few brief paragraphs, please explain:

1. What geographic area is served? (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served) Elmwood Park Zoo hosts roughly 56,000 guests from Chester – with specific trackable attendance from West Chester at 12,800 and Phoenixville at 12,000.

2. What population is served, what has been the impact of COVID-19, and how has your nonprofit responded?

For the past 10 years I have felt a sigh of relief as I pulled into the zoo. Far too often our days are filled with chaos and concrete; but when here, the pressing feelings of anxiety and angst melt away. There is nothing more magical than the sound of pinging phones and honking horns giving way to the majestic calls of a bald eagle or seeing towering traffic lights change into giant giraffe. Elmwood Park Zoo really is a magical place, however, now – during a time when the community needs the zoo the most – our gates are closed and our paths are empty.

The zoo is silent.

The mandatory closure has and will continue to significantly impact the zoo. We are missing out on $18,000 A DAY in lost revenue -- roughly $7,000 in admission; $4,000 in concessions; and $7,500 in education bookings, field trip reservations, and event scheduling. In total, COVID 19's March
financial impact reached $500,000, with that number projected to grow exponentially each month following.

And different than other non profits affected, Elmwood Park Zoo is a life-sustaining operation with 400 animals depending on the care from their keepers and the support from the community.

Vet procedures, diet needs, enrichment items, training schedules, and exhibit maintenance must and will continue, meaning the zoo’s expenses will continue as well. Pairing the loss of revenue with the continued operational expenses, the zoo is facing an uphill battle. A donation from The Chester County Community Foundation will make a difference.

However, despite these challenges, the zoo has continued to do what it does best: educate and engage with its community! EPZoo2U (www.elmwoodparkzoo.org/epzoo2u/) is a FREE online learning hub, providing live animal programming, story times with the keepers, educational activities and more for children and parents to utilize during a time when home has become school. Since its launch, over 200,000 students have viewed and engaged with our educators.

Thank you for your consideration to aid Elmwood Park Zoo as we continue to educate and engage, care for its near 400 animal collection, and strive to ensure we are ready to reopen our gates and welcome back our nearly 700,000 visitors a year!

3. How much funding is sought? How does this compare to your annual operating budget? What will the funding be used for? What is the expected timeframe for use of funds?

Elmwood Park Zoo respectfully requests a $5,000 donation to support the zoo’s general operations during its closure i.e. the daily vet, diet, enrichment, husbandry, maintenance and general facility care of our 400 animals and 16 acres. As the zoo is a life sustaining operation, we appreciate and support that can be awarded.

Please email grants@chescocf.org. This Brief COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request Copy of annual operating budget or most recent audit 501c3 determination letter

Request letters will be posted on the Community Foundation’s website, in order to share with fund advisors, donors, grant panelists, and other funding sources. Grants will be processed a few times monthly. We estimate mini-grants will range from $500 to $5000.

Please direct general questions & inquiries about the Rapid Response Mini-Grants to grants@chescocf.org. Beth, Steph, Cierra or Kevin will answer you.