

Senior Millage Allocation Committee

Friday, May 1, 2020 8:00 am

Virtual Meeting held by Zoom

MINUTES

1. **SMAC meeting called to order by Chairperson Gary Tompkins at 8am. Roll called.**
 - **Attending:** Richard Lindsey, Gary Tompkins, Rochelle Hatcher, Tom Hunsdorfer, Yvonne Chapman, Robert Lyng, Art Kale, Jill Booth, Willie Tabb, Diane Peters, Teresa Schell (left at 9am), Michelle Hill (arrived at 8:15am), Jim Powers (arrived at 8:15am)
2. **Approval of Agenda**
 - Motion to accept agenda – Lindsey & Lyng: Motion, Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 11-0 with two absent.
3. **Approval of the minutes of the March 6, 2020 SMAC meeting**
 - **Note: The April 3, 2020 meeting was canceled in response to the National COVID-19 Emergency. The March 20, 2020 Strategic Planning session was also canceled.**
 - Motion to accept minutes – Lindsey & Booth: Motion, Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 11-0 with two absent.
4. **Introductions and Citizen’s Comments**
 - Introductions: Robert Phillips, Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity; Jen Bomba, Director, Calhoun County Community Development; Summer Sunnock, South Michigan Food Bank; Tammi Morgan, South Michigan Food Bank; Mary Frisby, Director, Marian Burch Adult Day Care; Debra Gibbs, Attorney, Legal Services of South Central Michigan; Daniel Jones, Executive Director, Haven of Rest; Jim Dyer, Calhoun County Corporate Counsel; Chuck Asher, Chief Operating Officer, Community Action; Jeff Short, Housing Director, Community Action; Linda Grap, Director, Senior Health Partners; Dan Pontius, Senior Services of Southwest Michigan; Luann Sommers, Executive Director, Forks Senior Center; Trisha Franzen, Albion Community Gardens; Kitty Knoll, Coordinator, Heritage Commons Senior Enrichment Center; Lucy Blair, Calhoun County Communications Manager; Doug Ferrall, Calhoun County Parks & Recreation Manager.
5. **SMAC Member Round Robin Check-In**
6. **Reports**
 - a. **Budget Report - April 2020**

Manager Helen Guzzo reported she is concerned about spending amidst COVID-19, as some programs may see increased demand while many others see a decrease. Manager Guzzo also asks SMAC to keep in mind the Board of Commissioners approved \$60,000 to be allocated for mini-grants in the 2020 budget, and prior to today’s meeting, SMAC has \$44,750 left to spend, with \$19,500 being asked for later in the meeting.

Calhoun County Senior Services Mission:

Enhance, promote, and ensure the availability of needed quality services for Calhoun County seniors through the effective and efficient allocation of County Senior Millage resources.

b. **Manager's Report** – please see Manager Helen Guzzo's report detailing work done over the past two months.

c. **Rescheduling Strategic Planning – Friday, August 28, 9am-3pm?**

Manager Helen Guzzo will send out an email to get feedback on this date, and mentioned Strategic Planning may be virtual if in-person gatherings are still not allowed. If we are able to meet in person, we would do so at the Miller Manor as originally planned. August 28 falls after the millage renewal vote, and before 2021 budgets are due one week later. Please check your calendars to see if this date may work, and respond to Helen's email once sent.

d. **Renew for Seniors Campaign**

Brief update given by co-chair Richard Lindsey, and treasurer Diane Peters. The ballot initiative has not met due to COVID-19, and things are on hold for the moment. The bank account stands at \$1,275. The Senior Millage will be up for renewal on August 4, 2020.

7. **New Business**

a. **Community Action Minor Home Repair Supplemental Request - \$54,000**

Chuck Asher and Jeff Short explained the reason for this supplemental request is because emergency repairs are becoming a large part of the program. 153 jobs, including 54 emergencies, were completed in 2019 between the regular program contract and the supplemental. The program started 2020 with 28 intakes, had the jobs bid out, and contracts signed. Two things have happened since then: COVID-19 has put a stop to non-emergency repairs, and emergency repairs have bumped out the original 28 people who were told they would get their repairs done. Asher mentioned a conversation will need to be had in the future to discuss the current funding and operation of the program, as Community Action cannot continue to come back year after year for supplemental funding. **Hunsdorfer & Lyng, Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried 13-0.** Manager Helen Guzzo explained that because the supplemental is for over \$20,000, the request will go to the Board of Commissioners for approval at the May 21st meeting.

b. **Letter to President Trump about COVID-19 response.**

Tom Hunsdorfer drafted a letter to President Trump to encourage national leaders to dig deeper into the COVID-19 issue, and to be prepared for possible second wave. With seniors being particularly vulnerable, Hunsdorfer feels it is important for SMAC to make a symbolic act on behalf of the seniors they represent. Richard Lindsey & Jill Booth view this letter as outside the scope of SMAC, as SMAC's purpose is to allocate funding; they would like to see this letter come from the Board of Commissioners. Diane Peters asked for Jim Dyer's legal opinion. Dyer stated SMAC has no authority to issue this sort of letter, that authority is reserved only for the Board of Commissioners. Art Kale suggests submitting the letter to the Board of Commissioners, recommending they sign and send the letter to President Trump and the County's federal representatives. Chairperson Gary Tompkins will present the letter to Board of Commission Chair Steve Frisbie. **Lindsey & Powers motion to send the letter to the Board of Commissioners. Kale suggests sending this to governor and state reps, Lindsey supports adding this to his original motion.** Hunsdorfer suggests that making such statements could be topic of discussion at strategic planning. **Lindsey & Powers. Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 13-0.**

c. **Affirm Mini-Grant to City of Albion Senior Fresh Food Distribution - \$5,000**

The mini-grant was approved by Kelli Scott, Calhoun County Controller/Administrator on March 17, 2020 in response to an emergency request at the start of the COVID-19 as part of the community response in Albion/Homer. Art Kale commends Albion Mayor Atchison on reaching out to Homer to join in on this important effort and credits the county with a quick and

appropriate response. Richard Lindsey also commends the quick action on the County's part.
Lindsey & Kale. Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 12-0, with one excused.

d. Mini-Grant: Haven of Rest Meals Program - \$5,000

Executive Director Daniel Jones explained seniors make up 10% of the total meals program at the Haven, and at \$1.26 per meal, it costs roughly \$11,000 to feed their senior population. This mini grant will help to stabilize meals funding. Richard Lindsey is concerned about separation of church and state, as Haven of Rest is a Christian-based ministry. Jones explains that while the Haven is a Christian-based organization, the Haven does receive federal and state dollars and does not force any participants to partake in any religious activities. Participants are welcome to practice whatever religion they choose, and the Haven will help participants to obtain whatever religious items they may request. **Hunsdorfer & Hill. Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 12-0, with one excused.**

e. Mini-Grant: Alano Club Automatic Door - \$4,500

Daniel Jones, who also serves on the Alano Club Board of Directors, spoke about the need for an accessible entryway. Because of the anonymous nature of the Alano Club, he is unable to provide specific data on how many seniors use the building, but speaking from experience, there are quite a few seniors recovering from various addictions. Diane Peters asks if any estimates have been received. Jones replies they've received two estimates, and this one is the lower one. Jim Powers asks about services offered in other places of the county. Jones replies the Alano Club supports groups outside Battle Creek by providing a moderator and facilitator training. **Powers & Tabb. Motion & Second. Roll call taken. Motion carried, 12-0, with one excused.**

f. Mini-Grant: Albion Community Gardens - \$5,000

Trisha Franzen, Board Member, Albion Community Gardens spoke about the great benefit it was to have a gardening assistant last year. Having a staff person was a tremendous help in harvesting produce and then distributing that produce to seniors in Albion and Homer. When appropriate, small boxes of produce were also added to Meals on Wheels. Commissioner Gary Tompkins has seen this program in action and has seen the amazing impact it has had on seniors in his district. Tom Hunsdorfer shared Meals on Wheels clients are thrilled to receive a small box of fresh produce with their hot meal. **Booth & Lindsey. Motion & Second. Roll call taken. Motion passes, 11-0, with Willie Tabb abstaining, and one excused.**

g. Mini-Grant: South Michigan Food Bank, Senior Fresh Food Distribution - \$5,000

Summer Sunnock and Tammi Morgan from the South Michigan Food Bank explained the Food Bank has seen a 43% increase in people using their food distribution and food pantry sites since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis. There is currently no fresh food distribution in the Marshall area, and this new distribution will be held on the first Wednesday of the month, starting in June, which will coincide with free Dial-a-Ride, and the Marshall United Methodist Church's free monthly community dinner. Pastor Melany Chalker of MUMC explains the food distribution fit perfectly into efforts the church is already making to positively impact the Marshall community. Lindsey explains MUMC is the first organization to step up on this important issue. **Lindsey & Hill. Motion & Second. Roll call taken. Motion carried, 12-0, with one absent.**

8. Next SMAC Meeting: Friday, June 5, 2020, 8am. Will most likely be virtually Zoom.

9. Adjournment at 9:37am.

Respectfully submitted, Kate Turner