

# SENIOR MILLAGE ALLOCATION COMMITTEE (SMAC)

Friday, July 14, 2023

8:00am-9:30am, In-Person

Marshall County Building, Garden Level Conference Room

315 W. Green Street, Marshall, MI 49068

## MINUTES

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### 1. Call to Order/Roll Call at 8:00am

**Attending:** Tom Hunsdorfer, Tom Tarkiewicz, Diane Peters (Left at 9:32), Bob Lyng (Left at 8:50 am), Isabell Nazar (8:02), Michelle Hill, Jim Powers, Dominic Oo, Chuck Asher (8:06), Diane Thompson (Left at 9:30 am)

**Excused:** Bobbie Smith, Shirley Tuggle, Willie Tabb

### 2. Approval of Agenda and June 2, 2023, Minutes

**Action:** Voice Vote

a) Motion to accept July 14, 2023, Agenda: Addition of adding item under New Business to the agenda regarding strategic planning

**Motion by Thompson & support by Lyng. Voice vote. Motion carried, 11-0, with three excused.**

Motion to accept June 2, 2023, Minutes with correction

**Motion by Lyng & support by Hill. Voice vote. Motion carried, 11-0, with three excused.**

### 3. Introductions and Citizen's Comments

a) **Staff:** Manager Helen Guzzo; Specialist Rebecca de Finta; Administrative Assistant Teri Zadigian; Community Development Assistant Director Doug Ferrall; Community Development Director Jen Bomba

b) **Introductions:** Luann Sommers, Executive Director, Forks Senior Center; Anne Clark, Director, Senior Health Partners; Phil Earnshaw, Development Manager, Alzheimer's Association, Michigan Chapter; Nicole Hourani, Program Manager, Alzheimer's Association, Michigan Chapter; Mary Jo Byrne, Executive Director, Fountain Clinic; Mo Marshall, Intake Manager, Fountain Clinic; Rod Auton, Battle Creek Community Foundation & Albion Health Care Alliance; Sicily McLaughlin, Program Manager, Battle Creek Community Foundation.

c) **Citizen's Comments:**

Anne Clark stated Senior Health Partners recently launched Senior Fitness and Fun in Pennfield Township and Convis Township.

### 4. Special Presentation:

a) **Update on the Countywide Transportation Authority**

**Doug Ferrall, Assistant Director, Calhoun County Community Development**

Transit study identified need for a comprehensive county wide transportation network. BC recently passed a resolution supporting a transit authority. There are a significant number of Calhoun County households with no access to a personal vehicle. A comprehensive system would create fare structure, marketing, and ease for riders. A countywide millage would be needed to sustain the transit system with a estimated millage of 1.155. A transit authority must be created by the Calhoun County Board of Commissioners. There will be and opt-in/opt-out period for townships. If an authority was created, a transit manager/consultant would be hired, the level of service determination and budget development would be assessed, community outreach and education would be implemented with a potential vote on a transit millage in August 2024.

b) ***Alzheimer Update & 2023 Alzheimer's Walk, Saturday, Oct. 14, Battle Creek with the kick-off at the Battle Creek Math and Science Center***

**Phil Earnshaw, Development Manager, Alzheimer's Association Michigan Chapter**

**Nicole Hourani, Program Manager, Alzheimer's Association, Michigan Chapter**

FDA approved Leqembi for early-stage Alzheimer's in January 2023. Two additional drugs are currently in clinical trials. \$350 million poured into research last year. Every 65 seconds, someone is diagnosed with Alzheimers. 1 in 3 seniors will be diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Alzheimer's affects women more than men and more African Americans than whites. It costs \$321 Billion to treat and care for people with Alzheimer's in the United States. Currently, there is no cure, and average life span is 7 years once dementia is diagnosed. Early detection is important and educating people is important to make people aware and understand the differences between forgetfulness and Alzheimer's. Alzheimer's Walk will be October 14. Phil shared a story about his mother, whom he lost to early onset Alzheimer's at age 58.

**5. Manager's & Budget Report:**

a) **Strategic Planning**

Helen Guzzo

The date chosen for Strategic Planning was Friday, August 11, our consultant Lance is not available August 11. New staff should be onboard to benefit from strategic planning. SMAC members agreed that September 22 works. A meeting location has not been determined. Helen also discussed a date of Friday, Oct. 27.

b) **Budge Forecast**

County recommendation was 17 – 25% in general fund balance for emergencies, which would be \$700,000. Current plan would be to take the fund balance to \$400,000. In 2023, Senior Millage funded programs have served 4,706 older adults through June 30<sup>th</sup>. In 2022, at the same time, programs had served 4,181 older adults. All Senior Millage contracts are performing well. Currently, Community Action only has funding for emergency repairs due to already obligating their recent supplemental.

The Restaurant Dining Program is also growing at too fast a rate and is straining the Meals program budget for Congregate and Home Delivered Meals. When the program started at the

Copper Kettle, they were serving 90 meals per week and now they are serving over 200 meals per week and over 100 meals per week are being served at Duck Lake. This increase has created budget pressure, CareWell Services and Milestone Senior Services cut the number of meal coupons available a month from 12 to 6 coupons. Milestone Senior Services did not communicate this well with the participants but has now sent a letter to all participants. The Athens Library has stopped being a coupon distribution site. Issuing coupons was taking too much staff time and participants were rude to library staff. The library stopped checking state IDs.

Other cost saving actions taken in the Meals program is that Milestone Senior Services is now limiting the Meals on Wheels program to only one meal per day when they used to offer a frozen or cold meal for dinner if there was a need for this nutrition.

Congregate site meals were created to provide meals and socialization for older adults. Calhoun County has six Congregate meal sites. Four in affordable housing complexes in Battle Creek, Cherry Hill Manor, Bedford Manor, Westbrook Place and Springview Towers. Each of these sites has 30-50 seniors eating a hot lunch Monday through Friday. Two other sites are not as well attended, Clarence Township (Mon, Tues, Wed) and Heritage Commons Senior Enrichment Center (Mon, Tues, Thurs) offer a hot lunch 3 times a week. Congregate meals are not an income-tested program. The Restaurant Dining Program is an option for the Congregate Meal program. Younger seniors don't like to participate because of the institutional feel. All programs have a suggested cost share of \$3. The Restaurant Dining program has gone too large, too quickly and is demanding too much of the meals budget. The funding partnership of CareWell Services, Milestone Senior Services and Calhoun County Senior Millage will be deciding about ending the program because it is not sustainable costing \$120,000 when many upper income seniors are using the program. Because CareWell Services is funding it with Older American Act funds, the program cannot be means tested.

## 6. New Business

**Action:** Roll Call/Voice Vote

### a) **Mini-Grant Request – Encourage BC! Chronic Disease Lunch & Learns: - \$3,893**

**Sicily McLaughlin, Battle Creek Community Foundation, Program Manager**

The objective of our project is two-fold, 1) increasing awareness of high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, and mental health in the Washington Heights Neighborhood of Battle Creek, and 2) develop strong relationships between community organizations and community members who use their services. This will be accomplished through five public sessions providing a healthy meal, open conversation, and health resources to attendees.

**Motion by Asher & support by Nazar. Roll call vote. Motion carried, 9-0, with four members excused.**

### b) **Fountain Clinic Prescription Assistance Supplemental Request - \$25,000**

**Mary Jo Byrne, Executive Director, and Mo Marshall, Intake Manager, Fountain Clinic**

Prescriptions are important to the health of older adults. It was one of the original programs that Senior Millage funded and was much larger before the 2006 Part D Prescription coverage

for Medicare became law. Fountain Clinic has served 47 older adults through June 30<sup>th</sup> with an average cost of \$490.61 per person. The brand-named drugs are costing seniors a large expense even with Medicare coverage. Currently, Fountain Clinic has \$7,000 remaining for prescription assistance.

**Motion by Powers & support by Nazar. Roll call vote. Motion carried, 9-0, with three excused and one absent.**

c) **Strategic Planning moving date from August 11 to September 22**

**Motion by Asher & support by Oo. Voice vote. Motion carried, 7-0, with four excused.**

**7. SMAC Member comments**

Chuck Asher stated he received a call from an individual from West Brook Place who stated they needed help in the middle of the night, the police conducted a well fair check and Mr. Asher later reported that the senior was ok. Mr. Hunsdorfer is reading, Virtue of Aging by Jimmy Carter, which he recommends as a good read.

**8. Next SMAC Meeting: Friday, August 4, 2023, 8 am - 9:30 am, Marshall County Building**

**9. Adjourned at 9:39 am**

Respectfully submitted, Teri Zadigian.