

SENIOR MILLAGE ALLOCATION COMMITTEE (SMAC)

Friday, August 4, 2023

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

Marshall County Building, Garden Level Conference Room

315 W. Green Street, Marshall, MI 49068

MINUTES

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

Attending: Tom Hunsdorfer, Tom Tarkiewicz, Diane Peters, Bob Lyng, Isabell Nazar (8:05), Michelle Hill, Jim Powers, Dominic Oo, Chuck Asher, Commissioner Diane Thompson, Shirley Tuggle, and Willie Tabb

Excused: Bobbie Smith

2. Approval of Agenda and July 14, 2023, Minutes

Action: Voice Vote

a) Motion to accept August 4, 2023, Agenda

Motion by Lyng & support by Oo. Voice vote. Motion carried, 12-0, with one excused.

Motion to accept July 14, 2023, Minutes

Motion by Powers & support by Thompson. Voice vote. Motion carried, 12-0, with one excused.

3. Introductions and Citizen's Comments

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

b) **Introductions:** Luann Sommers, Executive Director, Forks Senior Center; Kate Pawlukiewicz, Intake Specialist, Senior Health Partners; Taylor Benthin, Nutrition Programs Manager, Milestone Senior Services; Paulette Porter, Chief Operating Officer, CareWell Services; John Gelletich, Finance, CareWell Services; Greg Allen, Volunteer, Talon's Out Honor Flight; Trisha Franzen, Albion Community Gardens & Professor, Albion College; Cliff Harris, President, Walk the Beat-Albion; Mike King, Interim Executive Director, Milestone Senior Services; Mark Barber, Nutrition Supervisor for Calhoun County, Milestone Senior Services; Mark Vlietstra, Director of Operations, Milestone Senior Services.

c) **Citizen's Comments:**

N/A

4. Special Presentation:

a) **Increasing Funding Needs for the Meals Programs**

Taylor Benthin, Nutrition Programs Manager, Milestone Senior Services; Paulette Porter, Chief Program Officer, CareWell Services; John Gelletich, Finance, CareWell Services.

Taylor Benthin presented a slideshow presenting the finances of the Meals program, the slideshow was emailed to all SMAC members after the meeting.

2023 Home Delivered Meals (HDM) funding and service levels are:

- Total 2023 Funding - \$757,545 (Senior Millage, CareWell Services partnership)
- Total Yearly Meals - 94,693
- Targeted Weekly Meals - 1,821
- Current Average Meals/Week - 1,722

In 2024, there is an estimated Home Delivery Meals funding short fall of \$127,440 or a decrease in 207 meals per week.

2023 Congregate meals funding and service levels are:

- Total 2023 Funding - \$478,258 (Senior Millage, CareWell Services funding partnership)
- Total Yearly Meals - 56,266
- Targeted Weekly Meals - 1,082
- Current Average Meals/Week - 1,211

In 2024, there is an Estimated Congregate funding short fall of \$52,541 or a decrease in 248 meals per week.

The federal American Rescue Plan Act funds for providing additional meals ends in 2024 and food costs have increased putting funding pressure on the meals program.

For 2024 there are no proposed cuts in the Home Delivered Meal program. Milestone Senior Services will be monitoring service levels closely and will strategize what changes will need to be made if any. Currently the program is only serving 1 meal/day up to 7 days/week. If Milestone needs to adjust service levels, then the first step would be removing weekend meals. Weekend meals are only provided to those requesting/needing them.

The Restaurant Dining Program is an optional program that is part of the Congregate Dining Program. The Older American Act Programs are not income tested. Therefore, any adult 60+ in Calhoun County can participate in Restaurant Dining Program. Having no income limit means that any older adult, age 60 and over, can qualify for 6 meal coupons per month, worth \$8.50 each. Growth in the program is costing too much. This impact is the cause for the hard decision to eliminate the Restaurant Dining Program starting 10/1/2023. Milestone Senior Services must decrease Congregate service levels by 248 meals/week. The Copper Kettle turns in an average of 250 Coupons/week and The Duck Lake Tavern turns in an average of 150 Coupons/week. By eliminating this program, Milestone Senior Services will not have to make any changes to the traditional dining centers (Bedford Manor, Cherry Hill Manor, Westbrook Place, Springview Towers, Clarence Township Hall, and Heritage Commons). Most of the congregate meal sites

are in affordable housing complexes where low-income seniors rely on the hot lunch five days a week for proper nutrition.

5. Manager’s & Budget Report:

a) **Strategic Planning**

Helen Guzzo

Strategic planning meeting was originally scheduled for August 11th, but the consultant was not available. The meeting was rescheduled for September 22th but this date is now postponed. (Please note that due to the resignation of the Senior Services Manager effective August 24, Strategic Planning has been postponed until a new Manager is hired.)

b) **Budget Forecast**

A subcommittee was formed to discuss the proper amounts for the upcoming Request for Proposals for contractual spending. The following SMAC members volunteered: Will Tabb, Jim Powers, Diane Thompson, Bob Lyng, Chuck Asher, and Tom Tarkiewicz.

c) **Tekonsha Health & Safety Senior Fair, Thursday, October 12**

Rebecca de Finta

Planning is ongoing. Looking into having a historic tractor display. Sherriff’s Posse will be there.

6. New Business

Action: Roll Call/Voice Vote

a) **2024 Budget Recommendation**

The County will send out its budget directive on August 11 and the budgets will be due before the SMAC September 8th meeting. The most important decision points are what amounts to offer for the contractual funding Request for Proposals (RFP), and whether Senior Millage wants to have a fifth round of Senior Strategic projects targeted on helping older adults understand and use technology.

b) **2023 Contractual Spending Request for Proposals (RFP) funding levels**

The Senior Services Manager has proposed the following amounts:

	FUNDED SERVICE: Current Vendor (2023 Contract Amount)	2023 Funding Level	RFP Recommended Amount	# of Years
1	ADULT DAY CARE: Marian Burch	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	3
2	COMMUNITY CARE OPTIONS: Senior Health Partners	\$ 400,000	\$ 400,000	3
3	GUARDIANSHIP/PAYEE: Guardian	\$ 80,000	\$ 85,000	3
4	HANDY HELPER: Milestone Sr. Svs.	\$ 40,000	\$ 60,000	3
5	LEGAL ASSISTANCE: Legal Svs.	\$ 40,000	\$ 45,000	3
6	MEALS: CareWell	\$ 482,000	\$ 532,000	3
7	MINOR HOME REPAIR: Community Action (\$150,000)	\$ 425,000	\$ 350,000	3
8	PERS: CareWell (\$70,288)	\$ 133,288	\$ 140,000	3
9	PRESCRIPTION: Fountain Clinic (\$30,000)	\$ 55,000	\$ 50,000	3
10	RAMPS: Milestone Senior Services (\$30,000)	\$ 80,000	\$ 80,000	3
11	BENEFITS COUNSELING: CareWell	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	2
12	HEARING: CareWell (\$60,000)	\$ 212,000	\$ 150,000	2
13	HOME HEATING ASSISTANCE: Community Action (\$90,000)	\$ 140,000	\$ 140,000	2
14	VISION: CareWell	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	2
	Total Amount of Spending	\$ 2,242,288	\$ 2,187,000	

c) **Mini-Grant Request - Talon's Out Honor Flight 2023: \$5,000**

Greg Allen, Volunteer, Talon's Out Honor Flight

All our Veterans are seniors, their dedication never faltered, and neither shall ours. Throughout its existence, Talon's Out Honor Flight has honored over 1,300 veterans with one last mission to visit the war memorials in Washington, D.C. Talon's honor flight is 100% volunteered and 98 cents of each dollar raised is spent on veterans. Calhoun County Senior Service mini-grant will be utilized for 10 Calhoun County veterans flight expense for one last mission to Washington DC.

Motion by Powers & support by Peters. Voice vote. Motion carried, 12-0, with one excused.

d) **Mini-Grant Request – Albion Community Gardens: \$5,000**

Trisha Franzen, Albion Community Gardens & Professor, Albion College

For the first time, all the individual plots available for the community have been claimed and are full of beautiful vegetables. The additional fencing is keeping out the rabbits and groundhogs, and the crops are all much more secure than they have ever been. The hoop house has allowed the garden to grow some crops all winter. This last week, in conjunction with our partners, for the first time we were able to ensure that everyone who came for the Albion Community Table food distribution had a choice of fresh produce. Last year, Albion Community Gardens produced over 3,000 pounds of vegetables and fruit.

The mini grant pays for a garden assistant to make sure crops are harvested and distributed to the community. We have found someone who has been volunteering at the garden and who needs a part-time job over the next six months and who knows how to garden. This will take us through the hectic end of the season harvests and cleanups, while also working with a few of the volunteers to grow in the hoop house through the winter months. The mini grant will allow the Albion Community Gardens to have a garden assistant for 10 to 15 hours over the next six months to provide people in need in Albion to have fresh vegetables over the winter months.

Since the Albion Community Garden provides fresh food and opportunity for growing food to people of all ages, SMAC members had questions about if Senior Millage should be funding this activity. An opinion from the County's corporate counsel was requested.

Motion to table until next meeting with legal counsel present made by Peters & supported by Thompson. Voice vote. Motion carried, 7-5, with one excused.

e) **Mini-Grant Request – Walk the Beat Albion Music Series: \$5,000**

Cliff Harris, President, Walk the Beat-Albion

Walk the Beat Albion began with a small street music festival in October 2016. After attending the founding event in Grand Haven, Michigan in August 2015, Dr. Karen Erlandson and Clifford Harris organized an event at five venues along Superior Street. This served to convince a small group of supporters that a full-scale event could work, and the organization grew from just an annual Street Festival to a year-round effort to support musicians and support the budding music scene that is re-growing in Albion. The first full-scale Street Festival was held in October

2017, supported by a combination of sponsors including Albion College and many businesses and organizations throughout Albion. WTBA 2017 featured 23 venues, 46 bands, and thousands of dollars in prizes for musicians and attendees. The associated Raffle raised enough money to warrant establishing a 501c3 non-profit in the spring of 2018, which has been recognized by the IRS. Slowly our system of education and event sponsorship evolved until we now find ourselves leading a collaborative effort to grow and support the development of musicians and the music scene in Albion. Our festivals in 2018 and 2019 were very successful, but in 2020 we substituted a summer concert series because it fit the health guidelines established by the State of Michigan. It was at this series that we noticed the attendance of senior citizens, and we hope to strengthen our support for this population this summer. This same summer series continued in 2021 and 2022. This year we are trying a new, more traditional format for our August 26 Music Festival. Seven bands will perform from noon to 7pm that day. We are asking for your support as we encourage and enable as many local senior citizens as possible to attend. We hope we have shown our commitment to serving the needs of the Calhoun County seniors.

SMAC members questioned if Senior Millage should fund a music festival targeting serving people of all ages.

Motion to table until next meeting with legal counsel presented made by Lyng & supported by Tarkiewicz. Voice vote. Motion carried, 8-4, with one excused.

(Please note that since the music festival was scheduled for August 26, that by tabling this proposal, SMAC effectively said no to funding this mini grant.)

7. SMAC Member comments:

Member Hill asked: the mini-grant requests that were tabled, would be on next month's agenda. Ms. Guzzo stated: if the event took place prior to meeting, the mini-grant request would not be on the agenda. The Albion Community Gardens proposal will be on the agenda for funding.

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

9. Adjourned at 9:49 am

Respectfully submitted, Teri Zadigian