

# SENIOR MILLAGE ALLOCATION COMMITTEE (SMAC)

Friday, December 3, 2021

Hybrid Meeting

Garden Level Conference Room, Calhoun County Building, Marshall, MI

8am-9:30am

## MINUTES

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### 1) Call to Order/Roll Call at 8:03am

- a) **Attending:** Commissioner Gary Tompkins (AKA the Grinch), Bob Lyng, Richard Lindsey (left at 9:26am), Commissioner Jake Smith (joined via Zoom from Battle Creek, MI), Dominic Oo, Michelle Hill, Art Kale (arrived at 9:03am), Jill Booth (joined via Zoom from Homer, MI; left at 8:58am), Yvonne Chapman (joined via Zoom from East Leroy, MI), Jim Powers (joined via Zoom from Marshall Township, MI), Willie Tabb (joined via Zoom from Sarna, Georgia)
- b) **Excused:** Diane Peters, Tom Hunsdorfer

### 2) Consent: Approval of Agenda and November 5, 2021 Minutes

- a) Motion to accept agenda and minutes with the addition of New Business item f, Holiday Attire Competition voting – **Lyng & Lindsey: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried 10-0 with three excused.**

### 3) Introductions and Citizen's Comments

- a) **Staff:** Manager Helen Guzzo, Specialist Kate Turner, Administrative Assistant Rebecca de Finta
- b) **Introductions:** Chuck Asher, COO, Community Action; Luann Sommers, Executive Director, Forks Senior Center; Linda Grap, management consultant, Senior Health Partners; Kitty Knoll, Manager, Heritage Commons Senior Enrichment Center; Karla Fales, CEO, CareWell Services; Shirley Tuggle, prospective SMAC member; Abigail Finn, Director of Operations, Milestone Senior Services; Lucy Blair, Communications Manager, Calhoun County
- c) **Citizens' Comments:**
  - i) Luann Sommers: Forks Senior Center is hosting a showing of *The Miracle on 34<sup>th</sup> Street* on December 21st at 2pm at the Bohm Theater in Albion. The cost of admission, popcorn, and a pop are covered. She continues to encourage folks to get vaccinated and get their COVID booster if they have not yet.

### 4) Nomination of a new SMAC Member: Shirley Tuggle, Bedford Township

**Booth & Hill: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 10-0 with three excused.** SMAC's recommendation will go to the Board of Commissioners for approval on December 16, 2021.

#### Calhoun County Senior Services

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

**Vision:** Calhoun County Senior Millage - Funding choices for seniors, age 60 and over, while promoting health, safety, dignity, and independence

## 5) Reports

### a) Update on the Heritage Commons Renovation

CareWell Services CEO Karla Fales shared an update on the renovation of the new Heritage Commons Senior Enrichment Center space. CareWell is working with BC Sound to set up audio and visual throughout the building. At this time, they are anticipating a February 2022 grand opening and the budget is well on target. Karla has been pleased with Puckett Construction and Field Electrical. She invites folks to walk by to peek in the windows and see the recent progress. Karla also shared that CareWell is working on implementing more programming at the Kool Family Community Center. Once Heritage Commons is in its new space, and the Kool Family Center is offering targeted programming for older adults, there will be three senior centers available to Calhoun County seniors. This has renewed conversation about a senior center “passport” to allow older adults to take advantage of programming at any of the three centers.

### b) Budget Report

Manager Helen Guzzo shares that contractual spending is behind. As of October 31<sup>st</sup>, only 17% of contractual funds should be remaining, but in reality 25% of funding is still unspent. Helen expects about \$200,000 to go unspent, which is better than 2020 when \$400,000 that went into fund balance, but is not ideal. COVID restrictions and precautions continue to affect the usage of Senior Millage program spending even with the reallocations and supplemental funding that SMAC has approved in 2021.

### c) Manager’s Report

Manager Helen Guzzo shares that the office has received two requests from younger seniors who are living in campers/RVs in need of minor home repair. Senior Millage will not make repairs to this type of dwelling as it is substandard housing.

Helen; Assistant Administrator Brad Wilcox; and Administrator Kelli Scott met with Donna Mahoney, the executive director of the Calhoun County Medical Care Facility, to discuss the status of Marian Burch Adult Day Care, which has remained closed since March 2020. While Donna would like to open the day center, she is already struggling with staffing the medical care facility. The medical care facility is licensed for 120 beds but has had to close a wing due to staff shortages and currently only has 83 beds. Until the medical care facility can return to normal staffing levels, the day center will remain closed. Senior Millage has a \$90,000/year contract with Marian Burch to provide adult day care services, and that contract runs through December 31, 2023. Does Senior Millage rebid this contract? Reallocate those dollars to a senior companion program? An in-depth conversation will be on SMAC’s February 2022 agenda.

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**d) MMAP Update**

Specialist Kate Turner shared that over 270 people have been counseled from October 15 through the end of November, with a total savings well over \$200,000. Administrative Assistant Rebecca de Finta has been a certified counselor since the end of October, and Social Work Intern Julia Brandt has been certified since the middle of November. Staff have spent time counseling at the Forks Senior Center, Clarence Township Hall, Homer Public Library, and Marshall House.

**6) New Business**

**a) Approve the 2022 SMAC Annual Meeting Schedule**

**Lindsey & Lyng: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 10-0 with three excused.**

**b) Mini-Grant Request: Marshall Lion's Club Dial-A-Ride Partnership - \$1,600**

Senior Millage has been funding this request since 2015, which provides free rides on Wednesdays to older adults on Marshall's Dial-a-Ride transportation service. **Lindsey & Hill: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 10-0 with three excused.**

**c) Adding Bed Bug Prep for Renters to the Bed Bug Remediation Min. Service Standard**

Currently the Bed Bug Remediation program only allows for service to be provided to low-income homeowners. The Senior Millage office has received a number of requests to help renters who are too frail or disorganized to do the prep work necessary to have a successful treatment done. Four rental preps have been authorized out of the Senior Millage administrative budget, averaging around \$500-600 per rental unit with an additional \$70 for mattress and box spring wrapping. Senior Millage received a recommendation from Adult Protective Services for Sam Kwei of Woodbridge Services, and Milestone Senior Services completed a background check. Sam has done an exceptional job and has been added as a vendor with Milestone to do prep work going forward. Approval of the additional language allowing for prep work to be done on rental units will allow Milestone to bill for Sam's services. **Lindsey & Powers: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 9-0 with three excused.**

**d) Contract Amendment for Senior Transportation to increase the per ride compensation to \$22 in 2022 and 2023 to increase the rate of pay for drivers**

Chief Operating Officer Chuck Asher shared that while the transportation program has remained open throughout the pandemic, the pandemic has had an immediate and lasting impact on the program. Pre-COVID the program was averaging 2,500 rides a month but fell to just 500 rides a month in 2020 and 2021. Most of this decrease was due to seniors staying home and staying safe, causing the demand to drop dramatically. Community Action also reduced the numbers of riders on each vehicle at one time to allow for social distancing and required additional downtime to perform enhanced cleaning in-between rides.

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Now demand for rides has returned to pre-COVID levels, but Community Action does not have the staff capacity to accommodate all ride requests. Prior to the pandemic, Community Action had 17 part-time and substitute drivers, now they have just seven part-time drivers. Due to this, the current wait time to get a ride is three weeks. Community Action has advertised constantly for new drivers but have had no luck. Either applicants don't show up to their interview or then do not show for their first day of work. Chuck would like to see Community Action partner with BC Go to accommodate ride requests but is unable to do so at this time due to lack of staffing.

By increasing the hourly wage for drivers, Community Action hopes to recruit new drivers while also retaining the drivers they currently have. While this increase will not change the contract amount, it does amend the unit rate so will need to go to the Board of Commissioners for final approval. **Lyng & Lindsey. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 10-0 with three excused.**

**e) Increasing the income limit to 250% of poverty for 2022 to help rebuild senior served and revising all the relevant Min. Service standards for programs that are income tested**

Manager Helen Guzzo recommends increasing income limits for calendar year 2022. Senior Millage does need to have income limits in place, so programs serve those most in need and do not develop waitlists but has unspent dollars from 2020 and 2021 that could be used to fund supplementals if programs experience a surge in request for services. In the fall of 2022 SMAC will review numbers served to determine whether the one-year increase is sustainable going forward or not. **Hill & Oo: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 9-0 with four excused.**

**f) Farewell to Art Kale**

SMAC and the Office of Senior Services thanked Art for his over eleven years of service on the committee with a County hockey puck and a heartfelt round of applause.

**g) 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Holiday Attire Competition**

Commissioner Gary Tompkins won this year's fruitcake gift basket with a 4-3 victory over defending champion Michelle Hill. Congratulations Gary!

**7) Next SMAC Meeting: Friday, February 4, 2022, 8am-9:30am**

Location and format TBD.

**8) Adjourned at 9:40am**

Respectfully submitted, Kate Turner

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