

Senior Millage Allocation Committee

Virtual Meeting by Zoom

Friday, March 5, 2021 8:00am – 9:30am

MINUTES

1. Call to Order/Roll Call at 8am

- a. **Attending:** Michelle Hill (Emmett Township, MI), Commissioner Gary Tompkins (Homer Township, MI), Diane Peters (City of Marshall, MI), Willie Tabb (Davenport, FL; left at 9:05am), Commissioner Jake Smith (City of Battle Creek, MI), Bob Lyng (Marshall Township, MI), Jim Powers (Marshall Township, MI), Tom Hunsdorfer (City of Albion, MI), Art Kale (Village of Homer, MI), Richard Lindsey (Marshall Township, MI), Jill Booth (Otsego County, MI; left at 9am)
- b. **Excused:** Yvonne Chapman
- c. **One open SMAC position with the resignation of Teresa Schell, effective April 8, 2021.**

2. Approval of Agenda

- a. Motion to accept agenda – **Booth & Lindsey: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 11-0 with one excused.**

3. Approval of the February 5, 2021 Minutes

- a. Motion to accept minutes – **Lyng & Tabb: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 11-0 with one excused.**

4. Introductions and Citizen's Comments

- a. **Staff:** Manager Helen Guzzo (Battle Creek, MI), Specialist Kate Turner (Marshall, MI), Intern Emily Batch (Battle Creek, MI)
- b. **Introductions:** Kitty Knoll, Coordinator, Heritage Commons; Chuck Asher, Chief Operations Officer, Community Action; Luann Sommers, Executive Director, Forks Senior Center; Laura Ferrara, CEO, Senior Care Partners PACE; Susan VanderWeide, Program Manager, Senior Health Partners

5. Reports

a. Senior Services Annual Report

Specialist Kate Turner presented the 2020 Annual Report. In 2020, Senior Millage programs served 5,449 older adults, roughly 1,100 less than served in 2019. Senior Millage spent \$2.9 million in 2020, and due to decreased service because of COVID-19, approximately \$400,000 of unspent 2020 dollars was deposited into the Senior Millage fund balance. The Annual Report can be found on the Senior Services webpage.

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

b. Reducing Social Isolation Report

SMAC member Tom Hunsdorfer presented the work done by the Social Isolation subcommittee and the proposed action plan. Upon the hiring of a full-time administrative assistant, specialist Kate Turner will take on duties like those of an outreach coordinator to launch a Senior Ambassador program. The Social Isolation Report can be found on the Senior Services webpage.

c. Budget & Manager's Reports

Manager Helen Guzzo briefly explained the SMAC bylaws need updating to reflect that the chair's position is a two-year term, along with the vice chair. Guzzo will be meeting with SMAC members Richard Lindsey and Willie Tabb, and Calhoun County Corporate Counsel Jim Dyer to update these soon.

At the April SMAC meeting, two subcommittees will need to be formed: one to review the second round of Senior Strategic Projects, and another to select the awardee(s) of the Joanne Konkle Leadership Award. Please consider whether you would like to serve in one these groups. More information can be found in the Manager's Report.

d. Heritage Commons Senior Center Steering Committee

SMAC member Diane Peters shared that plans for a permanent location are continuing, and the committee is working to figure out the costs for current plans.

6. New Business

a. Election of SMAC Chair and Vice Chair

Motion to continue with current officers, Chairperson Commissioner Gary Tompkins and Vice Chair Jill Booth for another two-year term expiring March 2022. **Lindsey & Powers: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 10-0 with two excused. Please note: [Vice Chair Jill Booth had to leave the meeting early but accepted the nomination via email after the meeting.](#)**

b. Approve Social Isolation Strategic Plan

Tabb & Smith: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 10-0 with two excused.

c. Community Action Transportation Request for temporary price increase to \$19.00

Chuck Asher, Chief Operations Officer, Community Action

COO Chuck Asher shared that the impact of the pandemic on transportation cannot be understated. Community Action lost half their driving staff overnight, as they were seniors themselves and needed to shelter in place. Ridership is also way down, as seniors are hesitant to venture out and many destinations (e.g. senior centers) remain closed. In 2019, 30,674 rides were provided, while 2020 saw only 12,747 rides. In efforts to control costs, Community Action has placed eight vehicles out of service, reduced insurance costs (saved \$15,000), reduced cell phone and table costs (saving \$70-80/month), reduced driver hours as needed, and have

reassigned full time staff to work in other programs. MDOT doubled their unit rate last year from \$4.07 per ride to \$8.14 per ride, so a rate increase from Senior Millage was not needed to finish the year and provided other supplemental funding to cover 2020 deficits.

Due to COVID, the transportation program had additional costs to purchase disinfectant machines, plexiglass to enclose their drivers, and PPE. Federal funding is currently up in the air, but MDOT has not mentioned to Community Action to expect anything. Should the newest stimulus package include transportation funding, Community Action would revisit their financials and see if the increased unit rate from Senior Millage was still needed. Transportation is managed as a break-even program; Community Action is not trying to make a profit.

Last year SMAC approved the transportation program using \$20,000 of unspent 2020 dollars to launch a marketing campaign to increase ridership, but this project was put on hold after the surge in COVID rates last fall. Community Action is now hoping to begin the campaign in April 2021. Asher spoke briefly about the continued efforts to launch countywide transportation services for all ages, and the new BC Go service, which is an app-based ride platform, really aimed at those who do not qualify for existing services. BC Go is administered by the City of Battle Creek and is a fare-based system.

Kale & Smith: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 8-0 with three excused and Commissioner Gary Tompkins recusing himself.

d. **Approve moving Strategic Planning from Aug. 27 to Aug. 20/Revision to the meeting calendar**
Lyng & Powers: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried 9-0 with three excused.

e. **Recommend SMAC Members for renewal to the Calhoun County Board of Commission**
Art Kale, Bob Lyng, Jim Powers, Willie Tabb

These nominations to remain on SMAC for an additional three-year term will be on the Board of Commission agenda on March 18.

Lindsey & Hunsdorfer: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried 9-0 with three excused.

7. Next SMAC Meeting: Friday, April 2, 2021, 8am-9:30am

8. Upcoming Events:

a. **Albion Senior Housing SMAC Community Conversation, Fri., 3/12 at 8am**

b. **Issuing of Senior Strategic Projects RFP, March 15, 2021**

c. **Thurs., March 25, 8:30am, Calhoun Professionals in Aging Network,**
***Legal Aspects of Advanced Planning* with estate planning attorney, Diane Peters**

d. **Due Date for the 2021 Joanne Konkle Leadership in Senior Services Award, April 2, 2021**

9. Adjournment at 9:37am

Respectfully submitted, Kate Turner