

SENIOR MILLAGE ALLOCATION COMMITTEE (SMAC)

Friday, March 4, 2022

8am-10:00am In-Person

Garden Level Conference Room, Marshall County Bldg., 315 W Green Street, Marshall

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call** at 8:02 am
 - a) **Attending:** Commissioner Gary Tompkins, Tom Hunsdorfer, Jake Smith, Yvonne Chapman, Dominic Oo, Jim Powers, Diane Peters, Richard Lindsey (left 9:48), Bob Lyng, Michelle Hill, Shirley Tuggle
 - b) **Excused:** Jill Booth (joined via Zoom as a member of the Public), Willie Tabb (joined via Zoom as a member of the public)
2. **Consent: Approval of Agenda and December 3, 2021 Minutes**
 - a) Motion to accept agenda and minutes with revision to remove Deb Withee from agenda – **Lindsey & Lyng: Motion & Second. Voice vote. Motion Carried**
3. **Introductions and Citizen's Comments**
 - a) **Staff:** Manager Helen Guzzo, Specialist Kate Turner, Administrative Assistant Rebecca de Finta
 - b) **Introductions:** Luann Sommers, Executive Director, Forks Senior Center; Ron Monte, SMAC applicant; Bobbie Smith, SMAC applicant; Vickie Laupp, SMAC applicant; Pam Lasley, SMAC applicant; Paulette Porter, Chief Program Officer, CareWell Services; Kitty Knoll, Manager, Heritage Commons; Anne Clark, Manager, Senior Health Partners; Jodi Vanlerberghe, Operations Manager, Milestone Senior Services; Trisha Franzen, Board Member, Albion Community Gardens; Isabelle Nazer, Homer; Lucy Blair, Communications Director, Calhoun County; Jeff Short, Assistant Director of Housing, Community Action; Marie Ames, Events Chairperson, Lee Township; Chuck Asher, Chief Operating Officer, Community Action; Lynn Meikle, Communications Coordinator, Calhoun County; Jen Bomba, Director, Calhoun County Community Development
 - c) **Citizens comments:** N/A
4. **SMAC Interviews for a new member/Vote on Recommendation to the Board of Commission**

Each candidate had the opportunity to introduce themselves and take questions.

 - a. **Vickie Laupp, Marshall, MI**
 - b. ~~Deb Withee, Marshall, MI~~
 - c. **Pamela Lasley, Springfield, MI**
 - d. **Ron Monte, Battle Creek, MI**
 - e. **Bobbie Smith, Battle Creek**

Nomination of a new SMAC member: Bobbie Smith, City of Battle Creek. **Lindsey & Lyng: Motion & Second. Roll Call Vote taken. Motion carried, 11-0 with two excused.** Recommendation will go to BOC for approval on March 17, 2022.

5. Reports

a. 2021 Annual Report Presentation

Kate Turner

Senior Millage-funded programs served 5,732 Calhoun County residents, age 60 and over, in 2021, which was an improvement over the number served in 2020. Despite careful reallocating of dollars from underspent programs, a deposit of almost \$200,000 was made to the fund balance. Senior Services and SMAC has been trying to spend down the Fund Balance with Strategic Projects and supplemental funding to existing contracts.

A highlight of 2021 was Milestone Senior Services launching a senior dining restaurant program in Athens at the Copper Kettle. This innovative program allows any Calhoun County resident, age 60 and over, pick up 12 free tickets monthly at the Athens Library for use at breakfast, lunch, or dinner at the Copper Kettle. Milestone plans to expand the program in 2022, hopefully to the Duck Lake Tavern and the Tekonsha Café.

SMAC awarded 16 mini-grants 20 in 2021, and discussion was made about not requiring demographic information from mini-grant awardees, so numbers served by this funding are not recorded in demographics. How can Senior Millage capture the number of seniors served by these small grants without asking for burdensome paperwork that smaller entities may struggle to complete?

Other highlights from 2021 include staff time spent assisting with the mass vaccination effort, hosting social work interns from Western Michigan University, launching the Senior Ambassador volunteer program, awarding the Joanne Konkle award to Linda Grap, and welcoming new administrative assistant Rebecca de Finta.

Looking forward to 2022, a big emphasis was placed on finding concrete solutions to serving more men with Senior Millage-funded programs. A subcommittee may be formed at a later date. Senior Millage staff will also be keeping a close eye on the number of seniors served and program spending with the increase in income limit for income-tested programs in 2022. SMAC will consider this data in late fall to determine whether the increased income limit can continue or needs to be reconsidered.

b. Budget Report – 2021 Final Report & 2022

Helen Guzzo

In 2021 the Miscellaneous Operating expense was over budget due to the number of Merry Mile passes given out. 339 coupons were redeemed in 2021, compared to only 181 in 2020. The budget for 2022 year was presented. Spending is on track as of January 31st.

c. Manager's Report

Helen Guzzo

The Senior Strategic Projects RFP is coming up and will start with a Letter of Intent as opposed to the full RFP. A subcommittee will be selected later in the meeting. The subcommittee will review the Letters of Intent, and then downlist the proposals. The applicants who are selected to move on to the next round of consideration will then be asked to complete the entire RFP and make a presentation to the subcommittee.

Manager Helen Guzzo recommends SMAC approve Community Action's supplemental request of \$200,000 for the Minor Home Repair program. This funding would come out of the fund balance, most of which would consist of unspent dollars in 2021.

Helen also shared that in 2021, Senior Millage received the most Personal Property Tax Reimbursement ever, which caused the fund balance to increase. County Finance has shared that the Firekeeper's payment in lieu of taxes is expected to be quite large in 2022 as well. Helen is expecting lots of supplemental requests this year due to the increase in income limit for income-tested programs, and due Personal Property Tax, Firekeeper's, and unspent 2020 and 2021 contractual program dollars, SMAC will have the flexibility to grant supplemental funding.

Helen's goal for Senior Millage 2022 and beyond is to serve 7,000 Calhoun County older adults, age 60 and over, and serve at least 10% of the senior population in each township.

6. New Business

a. City of Marshall Mini-Grant, Albion Marshall Connector - \$3,500

The Albion-Marshall Connector was added to the existing Dial-a-Ride transit system when Sheldon Memorial Hospital in Albion closed. The service operates with a deficit, which is covered by several community organizations that are committed to continuing to offer this much needed transportation service. **Peters & Lindsey: Motion & Second. Roll call vote. Motion carried. 11-0 with two excused.**

b. Lee Township Mini-Grant, Tuesday Senior Socials - \$2,500

The Lee Township Tuesday Senior Social continues to be a huge success, offering an opportunity to socialize in a very rural part of Calhoun County. 20-24 seniors attend in the winter, and that number rises to 35 or more in the summer. Event Coordinator Marie Ames shares that of her attendees, the split is 50/50 between men and women. She also shared that roughly half are widowed. The requested funding will go towards food and supply costs (i.e., napkins, paper plates). **Lyng & Chapman: Motion & Second. Roll call vote. Motion carried. 11-0 with two excused.**

c. Albion Community Gardens Mini-Grant, Garden Helper - \$5,000

Albion Community Gardens is another grassroots effort to be celebrated. This interracial, intergenerational program has seen huge success in the Albion area. In 2020 they were awarded funding from Senior Strategic Projects, which allowed them to double the size of the garden, purchase a bigger rototiller, and add additional irrigation lines. The mini-grant funding they are requesting helps to pay a gardening assistant to perform regular maintenance on the gardens. All the produce that comes from the gardens are donated, and some is sent out on Meals on Wheels routes. **Tuggle & Hunsdorfer: Motion & Second. Roll call vote. Motion carried. 11-0 with two excused.**

d. Adding replacing mailboxes to the Handy Helper Min. Service Standard

Handy Helper is an income-tested program that performs simple maintenance on seniors' homes such as fixing broken locks, installing smoke detectors, and more. Both Commissioner Jake Smith and Commissioner Gary Tompkins have been asked by older constituents to help them replace their mailboxes when they have been damaged by snowplows. If a mailbox or post is damaged by county snowplows, the road department will provide a replacement box/post at no charge, but the resident must install it themselves, which presents a barrier to older adults. Adding mailbox and post replacement to the Handy Helper minimum service standard is a natural addition to the existing program, and one that Milestone is happy to accommodate. **Powers & Lyng: Motion & Second. Roll call vote. Motion carried. 11-0, with two excused.**

e. Increasing program limits in the Sr. Minor Home Repair Program for mechanical repairs (furnaces and water heaters) up to \$5,000 and water and sewer repairs up to \$7,000 from the current program limit of up to \$3,500 for all types of repairs

The costs associated with furnace replacements have increased, which often times include upgrades and duct work improvements. Each contractor regularly updates their pricing for services in order to be able to assist seniors in need in a timely manner. Minor Home Repair staff also price out projects before asking a contractor to come in, so they have an idea of what the project should cost to avoid paying more than necessary. Assistant Housing Director Jeff Short shared that Community Action currently has four HVAC contractors, two well contractors and Roto-rooter on file, and Community Action rotates between available contractors to ensure equal distribution among vendors. **Lyng & Oo: Motion & Second. Roll call vote. Motion carried. 10-0, with three excused.**

f. Community Action, Sr. Minor Home Repair, Supplemental Request \$200,000

Assistant Housing Director Jeff Short shares that the Minor Home Repair program has already completed twenty-four jobs, and receives emergency calls for no heat or plumbing almost daily. Manager Helen Guzzo explains that the funding for this supplemental will come from the upsent funds in 2021. **Hunsdorfer & Smith: Motion & Second. Roll call vote. 10-0, with three excused.** SMAC's recommendation will go before the Board of Commissioners at their March 17, 2022, meeting.

g. Reappointment of SMAC Members, Richard Lindsey and Michelle Hill for another 3 yr. term

Lyng & Oo: Motion & Second. Roll call vote. 8-0, with five excused. SMAC's recommendation will go before the Board of Commissioners for approval at their March 17, 2022, meeting.

h. Senior Strategic Projects RFP and Budget – Up to \$400,000 availability

Powers & Hunsdorfer moved to make up to \$500,000 available in Senior Strategic Project funding: **Motion & Second. Roll call vote. 9-0, with four excused.**

i. Form a Senior Strategic Projects Review Subcommittee – 4 SMAC members

There is a need for volunteers, especially those who have not done so yet. A handout was passed around showing the former subcommittee members of the last two rounds of Senior Strategic Project funding and several years of contractual funding. Bob Lyng, Diane Peters, Jim Powers, Tom Hunsdorfer & Shirley Tuggle expressed interest in volunteering for this committee. **Tuggle & Hill: Motion & Second. Roll call vote. 9-0, with four excused.**

RFP Review Subcommittee Members		
2018 Contractual		2019 Contractual
Rod Auton		Yvonne Chapman
Tom Hunsdorfer		Tom Hunsdorfer
Vic Potter		Jim Powers
Jim Powers		Gary Tompkins
2020 Contractual		2020 Senior Strategic Projects
Jill Booth		Yvonne Chapman
Michelle Hill		Tom Hunsdorfer
Art Kale		Diane Peters
Jim Powers		Gary Tompkins
2021 Contractual		2021 Senior Strategic Projects
Tom Hunsdorfer		Yvonne Chapman
Bob Lyng		Bob Lyng
Jim Powers		Jim Powers
Dominic Oo		Gary Tompkins

7. Upcoming:

a. Next SMAC Meeting: Friday, April 1, 2022, 8am-9:30am

A discussion about an alternative meeting location took place with the Burma Center in Battle Creek as a possibility. Helen will confirm the location later this month.

b. Calhoun Professionals in Aging, Thurs., March 24 by zoom, 8:30-9:45

8. Adjourned 10:07 am

Respectfully submitted, Rebecca de Finta