

# SENIOR MILLAGE ALLOCATION COMMITTEE (SMAC)

Friday, July 1, 2022

8am-9:30am In-Person

Garden Level Conference Rom

Marshall County Building, 315 W Green Street, Marshall, MI 4968

## Minutes

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### 1. Call to Order/Roll Call

- a) **Attending:** Commissioner Gary Tompkins, Tom Hunsdorfer, Bobbie Smith, Willie Tabb, Michelle Hill, Shirley Tuggle, Pam Lasley, Bob Lyng, Diane Peters, Dominic Oo, Jim Powers
- b) **Absent:** Commissioner Jake Smith, with one vacant position that will be filled by Tom Tarkiewicz at the 7/21/2022 Board of Commission meeting

### 2. Consent: Approval of Agenda and June 10, 2022, Minutes      Action: Voice Vote

- a) Motion to accept agenda and minutes  
**Lyng & Tabb: Motion & Second. Voice vote. Motion Carried 11-0, with one absent.**

### 3. Introductions and Citizen's Comments

- a. **Introductions:** Becky Squires, Member & Volunteer; St. Thomas Episcopal Church; Bill Sheldon, Facilities Operations Director, Calhoun County Medical Care Facility; Luann Sommers, Director, Forks Senior Center; Jeff Short, Assistant Director of Housing, Community Action; Paulette Porter, Chief Program Officer, CareWell Services Southwest; Anne Clark, Program Manager, Senior Health Partners; Greg Allen, Core Volunteer, Talons Out Honors Flight; Aaron Edlefson, Director, Calhoun County Veterans Affairs; Sofia Honkanen, Marketing and Special Projects Coordinator, Neighborhoods, Inc.; Tom Tarkiewicz, SMAC member starting August 5, Marshall; Deb Withee, Senior Ambassador, Marengo Township; Jen Bomba, Community Development Director; Michael Armitage, Director, 911 Consolidated Dispatch

#### b. Citizens Comments:

- 1. Greg Allen: Cornwell's Talons Out Fundraising Event July 30<sup>th</sup>, they will donate 10% of the all-day sales. The event starts at 4:00 pm, the fly over is at 7:00 pm.
- 2. Luann Sommers: Forks Senior Center attended the Health & Safety Expo on June 25<sup>th</sup>. They handed out information bags that included Senior Millage brochures and senior resources.

### 4. Special Presentation:

#### a. Update on Veteran Affairs & the Veterans Millage

Calhoun County Veterans Affairs Director Aaron Edlefson shared information about the .10 mills renewal on the ballot August 2. The millage first passed in 2012 and generated about \$330,000 in the first year. In 2022, the Millage provides annual funding of about \$390,000. Veterans Affairs receives additional funding that brings their total budget to approximately \$600,000. Staff assist veterans in assessing federal, state, and local benefits. The majority of

staff time is spent filing claims with the federal Veterans Affairs administration, disability compensation, pension, death pension and dependency compensation. At the State level, there is the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund which is an emergency relief program. Locally, they work with municipalities to help 100% disabled veterans apply for property tax relief. Finally, the main impact of the Veterans Millage dollars is their committee-run emergency funds program. This program has provided \$430,000 in emergency assistance over the past five years to keep veterans and their families in their homes, paying for utilities, home repairs, purchased tools for them to work, car repairs, and car payments, etc. Calhoun County Veterans Affairs also offers a burial benefit for veterans and their spouses – including peacetime veterans – and scholarships at both Kellogg Community College and Western Michigan University.

**b. Renewal of the Calhoun County Medical Care Facility Millage**

Calhoun County Medical Care Facility Facilities (CCMCF) Operations Director Bill Sheldon shared information about the .2482 mills renewal on the ballot August 2. The Medical Care Facility is a County-owned 5-star facility, funded primarily by Medicare/Medicaid, but the millage is very important to them and generates around \$1 million a year. This amount covers the budgets for the laundry and housekeeping departments.

CCMCF is licensed for 120 beds but are currently operating at 82 beds due to staffing shortages. They have just started a new Certified Nurses Assistance education program to help get new staff licensed. They have seen some staffing gains in the last month and hope this continues. CCMCF also runs the Marian Burch Adult Daycare Center that has been closed since March 2020 due to COVID but continues to be closed strictly due to staffing issues. The long-term care facility is the priority for staffing. They are hopeful that with the continued staffing gains they can begin opening the daycare on a small scale.

**c. 911 Millage Request**

911 Consolidated Dispatch Director Michael Armitage shared that a new .98 mills proposal is on the ballot August 2. In 2010, 911 was consolidated county-wide to one center in the Marshall County Building where they answer all the 911 calls that originate from Calhoun County. They dispatch nineteen fire departments, six law enforcement agencies, and directly dispatch one EMS but also take the calls for Albion Community Ambulance and Lifecare EMS. Originally Dispatch was intended to be funded for five years on contributions from general funds of municipalities and in the absence of other funding they continue to bill them. \$2.5 million of their budget is currently being billed to townships and other municipalities. There has been a strain on this funding source and even so, they have been able to maintain operations through that process but there is a need for capital improvement projects. If approved, millage would provide operational funding, additional funding for capital improvements projects with the largest being improvements to the public radio system. They are currently using very dated technology especially on the fire side. There are many times they cannot communicate or have difficulty communicating with fire and law enforcement. They are having to rely on personal cell phones. In some

townships, police cannot use their portable, or body radios, they must use car radios to relay information. There would still be contributions from municipalities, however, it would reduce contributions down to \$715,000 with the millage. They have been on the ballot twice for surcharges on cell phones and these millage proposals did not pass. They could not find a plan that would completely eliminate contributions and be able to accomplish their plan. Asking for a new millage was a result of an intensive and thorough strategic plan. The \$0.60 surcharge on cell phones will remain if this millage request passes.

## 5. Reports

### a. Budget & Managers Report

Manager Helen Guzzo shared that the fund balance will allow us to fund the very large supplementals that are being considered today. Due to COVID, fund balance far exceeds the County's policy, and SMAC has to strategically spend it down. Senior Strategic Projects has been one tool to creatively use Fund Balance dollars, but it takes projects a long time to spend the funds. In 2021, Senior Millage returned \$200,000 from unspent contractual funds to fund balance and in 2020, \$400,000 was returned to fund balance. \$200,000 was already granted to Minor Home Repair in March 2022 and SMAC now has supplemental requests to obligate an additional \$440,000.

### b. Senior Ambassadors & Centenarian Project

Specialist Kate Turner shared that next month will mark the Senior Ambassador Program's one year anniversary. The group started with seven or eight members and has now grown to fifteen Ambassadors that meet regularly. The goal is to have one person from each municipality. Senior Millage programs have seen a huge increase in demand, which staff thinks is due to the Senior Ambassadors getting the word out about programming. Twelve of the twenty-four centenarians that were interviewed last year are still living, and in addition to the fifteen new centenarians who were identified, all twenty-seven will be celebrated at an open house on Friday, July 15 from 2-4pm at the Marshall United Methodist Church.

## 6. New Business

### a. Joanne Konkle Professional and Volunteer Leadership Awards 2022

**Nominees: For a volunteer: Cathie Davids, age 93, Volunteer, Meals on Wheels. For a professional: Chuck Asher, Deputy Director, Community Action**

The 2022 Joanne Konkle awardees will be given their awards at a reception just before the August 4 Board of Commission meeting at 6pm in the Law Library. **Peters & Lasley: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried. 11-0 with one absent.**

### b. Minor Home Repair Supplemental, Community Action - \$225,000

CA has been serving seniors for over 50 yrs. Their current programs are Senior Transportation, Minor Home Repair, and Senior Home Heating Assistance. Health and housing concerns often interrelated so seniors are more likely to remain in their home if they are in a safe and healthy living environment. Community Action's original allocation

was \$150,000 but that was obligated by the end of February, serving 37 clients with an average cost of \$3,200 per job. In March, a supplemental of \$200,000 was awarded, and 32 seniors have been served so far. Some funds are remaining, but most of the dollars are already obligated, or being held onto for emergencies (i.e., no water or heat). 41 seniors are currently on the waitlist which have all gone through intake, bids have been identified, and Community Action are just waiting on the supplemental funding. With this additional supplemental, Community Action estimates they will be able to assist 50-60 seniors.

**Hunsdorfer & Tabb: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 11-0 with one absent.**

**c. ~~Hearing Program~~ PERS Supplemental, CareWell Services - \$63,000 for 2022 & 2023**

Please note the amounts for the PERS and Hearing Supplemental requests were incorrect on the agenda. CareWell Services Chief Program Officer, Paulette Porter shared that CareWell has had an increase in requests due to their ramped-up outreach. Currently almost 500 people are receiving PERS. Two years of funding is requested to augment the original three-year contract of \$70,288. **Lyng & Tuggle: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 11-0 with one absent.**

**d. ~~Personal Emergency Response System (PERS)~~ Hearing Supplemental, CareWell Services - \$152,000 for 2022 & 2023**

Please note the correction to the amount listed on the agenda. CareWell Services Chief Program Officer Paulette Porter shared that increased outreach and supporting Oaklawn Audiology providing hearing services in Albion at the Cram building has results in increased use and increased cost. **Lasley & Peters: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 11-0 with one absent.**

**e. Mini-Grant Request: Talons Out Honor Flight - \$5,000**

**Peters & Lyng: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 11-0 with one absent.**

**f. Mini-Grant Request: Eckford Township, Senior Socials - \$3,900**

**B. Smith & Tabb: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 11-0 with one absent.**

**g. Mini-Grant Request: Bedford Township, Coffee & Conversations - \$3,840**

**Powers & Lyng: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 11-0 with one absent.**

**h. Mini-Grant Request: Battle Creek Community Foundation, St. Thomas Breakfast Program - \$5,000**

**B. Smith & Oo: Motion & Second. Roll call vote taken. Motion carried, 11-0 with one absent.**

**i. Mini-Grant Request: Neighborhoods, Inc., Homelessness Among Older Adults Study - \$5,000**

Helen recommends tabling this request until August so that more discussion about the design of the study can take place. **Peters & Tuggle: Motion & Second. Roll call vote.**

**Motion carried. 11-0 with one absent.**

**7. Next SMAC Meeting: Friday, August 5, 2022, 8am-9:30am, Marshall County Building**

**8. Adjourned at 9:57 am**

Respectfully submitted, Rebecca de Finta