

SENIOR MILLAGE ALLOCATION COMMITTEE (SMAC)

Friday, June 2, 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, Shirley Tuggle, Michelle Hill, Jim Powers, Dominic Oo (8:01), Chuck Asher, Willie Tabb

Excused: Bobbie Smith, Diane Thompson

2. Approval of Agenda and May 5, 2023, Minutes

Action: Voice Vote

a) Motion to accept June 2, 2023, Agenda

Motion by Powers & support by Lyng. Voice vote. Motion carried, 11-0, with two excused.

Motion to accept May 5, 2023, Minutes

Motion by Asher & support by Lyng. Voice vote. Motion carried, 11-0, with two excused.

3. Introductions and Citizen's Comments

a) **Staff:** Manager, Helen Guzzo; Specialist, Rebecca de Finta; Administrative Assistant, Teri Zadigian; Social Work Intern, McKayla Byrd; and Community Development Director, Jen Bomba.

b) **Introductions:** Deb Withee, Volunteer Coordinator for the Senior Lunch Committee for Eckford & Marengo Townships; Jodi Vanlerberge, Operations Manager, Milestone Senior Services; Ken Ward, Supervisor of Ramps Program, Milestone Senior Services; Mark Barber, Milestone Senior Services; Amber Leverette, Director of Development, Community Actions; Austin Odisher, Energy Auditor/Minor Home Repair Program Support, Community Action, Jeff Short, Assistant Director of Housing/Weatherization; Community Actions; Laura Jones, Community Action; Paulette Porter, Chief Operations Officer, CareWell Services; Luann Sommers, Forks Senior Center; Kate Pawlukiewicz, Intake Specialist, Senior Health Partners.

c) **Citizen's Comments:** None made.

4. Special Presentation:

Programs funded by Calhoun County Senior Millage

McKayla Bryd, Social Work Intern, Calhoun County Senior Services

Bachelors in social work candidate, Western Michigan University

Mckayla discussed the work done by Senior Services staff, the 21 different services funded by Calhoun County Senior Millage through nine non-profit organizations., into contractual funding categories for each, and the funding devoted to each category of spending.

5. Staff Reports:

a) Manager's & Budget Report

Helen Guzzo

Recommendation was made regarding supplemental funding requests. Senior Services can afford about \$200,000 in additional supplemental funding from the fund balance. Senior Fitness & Fun programming expanding with a new Pennfield Township site starting Monday, June 12 at Calvary Baptist Church. Mobile Electronics Collection took place on May 25, the first at-home electronics collection was held for a Battle Creek route for 14 pickups. On June 29, 12 pickups are scheduled for the Marshall area and surrounding townships.

b) May 18 Senior Expo, Kellogg Arena

Rebecca de Finta

Senior Expo served 742 attendees and had over 200 vendors, compared to last year of 396 attendees. Rebecca thanked everyone for volunteering on set up day and day of the expo and acknowledged that senior expo would not be as successful without the work of all the volunteers. Senior Services received input from senior attending and vendors which was generally very positive about the event.

6. New Business

Action: Roll Call/Voice Vote

a) 2023 Joanne Konkle Senior Services Award Recommendations

1. Professional Service: Mary Jo Byrne, Executive Director, Fountain Clinic

Motion by Tarkiewicz & support by Nazar. Voice Vote

2. Volunteer Service: Robert 'Spence' Spencer, Construction Manager, Battle

Motion by Powers & support by Tabb. Voice Vote

b) Mini-Grant Request: *Eckford & Marengo Townships Senior Social - \$3,900*

Le Anne Blight and Deb Withee, Volunteer Coordinators

A short "interest survey" was voluntarily completed by 43 seniors with the top three interests being: social gatherings, guest speakers, and listening to live music. An average of 30 people has attended each lunch and the mini-grant would cover the cost of 26 bi-weekly coffee, donuts/muffins, and lunches. Our goal is to increase the social interaction of rural seniors which will help meet their mental, physical, and social needs.

Motion by Tuggle & support by Lyng. Roll call vote. Motion carried, 11-0, with two excused.

c) Supplemental Funding Requests for contractual spending

1. Milestone Senior Services, *Ramps Program: \$50,000*

Jodi Vanlerberghe, Operations Manager, Milestone Senior Services, Ken Ward, Supervisor of Ramps Program, Milestone Senior Services.

There has been an overwhelming request for ramp building services from our vulnerable and homebound older adults. To date, beginning Jan 1st, 2023, Milestone Senior Services have built 7 ramps, have 9 more in the queue to be built. Milestone Senior Services Ramp program is building an average of 4 to 5 ramps a month, with a continuing streamline of incoming referrals. With the current waitlist, there will be a depletion of funds with clients remaining to be served. Additional funding will allow us to continue to serve through the end of the fiscal year.

Motion by Powers & support by Tuggle. Roll call vote. Motion carried, 11-0, with two excused.

2. Community Action, *Home Heating Assistance Program: \$50,000*

Amber Leverette, Director of Development, Community Action, Laura Jones, Community Actions.

We have assisted 148 seniors this year and we have under \$2,000 direct assistance remaining and intake applications have come in at a high rate. Client's electric, natural gas and deliverable fuels have amplified due to the increasing rates. Food expenses have continued to rise, and clients have lost the extra pandemic food assistance that they have received since 2020. The average assistance amount with Home Heating Assistance funds in 2022 was \$270.98, the average amount of assistance this year to date is \$344.62.

Motion by Hill & support by Oo. Roll call vote. Motion carried, 11-0, with two excused.

3. Community Action, *Minor Home Repair: \$100,000*

Austin Odisher, Energy Auditor/Minor Home Repair Program Support
Jeff Short, Assistant Director of Housing/Weatherization

There is currently a waitlist of 56 seniors waiting for service and we are still receiving emergency calls daily. The additional funding will provide more repairs for clients and allow us to fulfill our obligations to seniors who need were expecting repairs on their homes.

Motion by Tabb & support by Hill. Roll call vote. Motion carried, 11-0, with two excused.

7. SMAC Member comments

Chuck Asher stated: Chuck attended the Brass Band Concert at Kellogg Arena. Upon leaving, was a row of Community Action vans lined up to transport 16 to 20 people back to Albion. It illustrates the need for Calhoun County Wide Transportation.

Tom Hunsdorfer expressed his appreciation to all SMAC members for the heart and thoughtful way to allocate senior millage funds, and all vendors for delivering services, as our hearts are here to serve.

Tom Tarkiewicz questioned the status of the county-wide transit authority. Ms. Bomba responded: The plan to move forward is being considered. Doug Ferrall, Assistance Community Development Director and coordinator of the County's role in the Transit question will attend the next SMAC meeting to update members on the process and take questions.

8. Next SMAC Meeting: Friday, July 14, 2023, 8 am - 9:30 am, Marshall County Building

9. Adjourned at 9:38 am

Respectfully submitted, Teri Zadigian.