



Mission: *To increase the number of families and individuals who are financially stable*

Date: Friday, 11/13/2020
Time: 9:00 – 10:30 am

Location: Zoom
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84448067751?pwd=M3daczloeVgxWDdQVDFGdlE3SGk4QT09>

Phone: 1 (301) 715 8592
Meeting ID: 844 4806 7751
Password: 461266

Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome / Introductions

In Attendance: Madeline DeMarco, Clint Brugger, Liz Fuss, Tami Farnum, Julie Laughlin, Connie Carroll, Misty Shulters, Frank Nagle, Todd Ritzler, De'Angelo Boone

Welcome, Frank Nagle! We're trying to grow our group, so it's wonderful to see a fresh face!

II. Review Agenda & Minutes

Motion to approve the Agenda and previous meeting minutes moved by Julie Laughlin, supported by Connie Carroll, and approved by consensus.

III. Treasurer's Report

No changes. Our final balance is \$5,671.43.

A. Rent Smart Stipend

In the past, part of our funds has been used to pay for a \$50 stipend for families that successfully completed the Rent Smart. This money went directly to landlords to help participants with rent payments. We moved away from doing this when MSU Extension stopped offering Rent Smart to Lenawee County residents. Community Action Agency (CAA) is bringing the Rent Smart classes back though, and would like to resume offering the stipend as well. We discussed changing the process slightly to give the stipend directly to participants instead of landlords as extra incentive to participate.

Motion to allocate \$50 per family that successfully completes Rent Smart (money will go directly to the participant, not the landlord) moved by Connie Carroll, supported by Misty Shulters, and approved by consensus.

The first class will be offered on 12/3/2020. Registration is open and a flyer will be sent out with the meeting minutes.

Connie will mention this new program on the radio on Saturday (11/14) morning. Clint will share the information with Elizabeth Salerno for participants in the eviction diversion program.

IV. Activities –

A. Advocate for and Organize around the decriminalization of poverty in Lenawee County

1. Expungement Fairs

On Hold due to COVID

New Clean Slate legislation were signed into law on October 12th. This legislation provides many more opportunities for expungement, some of which will happen automatically depending on the charges. Misdemeanors will now be expunged 7-years after sentencing, and felonies will be expunged 10-years after sentencing or when they're released from incarceration (whichever comes later). The legislation also enables up to 2-felonies and 4-misdemeanors per person to be automatically expunged. Certain crimes are not eligible for this change, including violent crimes, "crimes of dishonesty", and crimes punishable by more than 10-years in prison. This change will increase the number of individuals who can qualify for expungement which will lead to better employment opportunities.

MIWorks! Is exploring virtual options for providing the community with information about expungement. There is also the potential for some funding to assist people with the expungement process.

2. Homelessness & the City of Adrian's New Park Ordinance

The Human Relations Commission is having many conversations about how to best proceed. They have broken-up into different groups to discuss different aspects of this issue, and De'Angelo has already met with Share the Warmth and the men's shelter. The commission's primary goal is to figure out next steps, recruit new partners, and put together a plan to present to the City Commission, recruit new partners. They are especially looking at alternatives to shelters and other innovative ideas. LFSC group is willing to partner with the commission in whatever capacity we can.

3. Bail Reform

On Hold due to COVID

B. End systems perpetuating "poverty taxes" in Lenawee County and build financial resilience among community members.

1. Blight Action Committee

The Blight Action Committee met last month with some community residents present. They are currently evaluating other cities' approaches to see what has worked and what didn't, as well as which approaches might work best in our community. There was also

discussion about related economic development programs such as matching-grants to assist cities with clearing-up blight. Todd will chat with Tim Lake, involved in economic development for Monroe County, to learn more about this subject.

The committee is working with a resident currently going through the legal system regarding blight with hopes of getting the case dismissed.

Additionally, the committee is working with the Resident Coalition and Habitat for Humanity to develop a community-driven trash day. As part of this initiative, residents would each donate \$10 to help reserve 2 large dumpsters to be used for neighborhood clean-ups.

2. End high-interest pay day loans

De'Angelo is excited to continue exploring this goal. Connie will invite Dale Zorn or his representative to a meeting in early 2021.

3. Establish a local micro-loan program

On Hold due to COVID

4. Increase the number of participants for existing Financial Education Programs

Please share the programs and events discussed at these meetings with your organizations and other contacts! Keep sending your flyers and information to Madeline to send to the rest of the group.

5. Mini IDA Committee

One class is finishing today (11/13), and another will be finishing on 11/25. Another Getting Ahead class will be offered in February. A brief explanation of IDAs was given by Julie.

6. VITA

VITA is desperately seeking volunteers. There is currently an awareness campaign and flyer going around, as well as an AmeriCorps member trying to make connections with local employers. To maximize safety, additional PPE and Plexiglass shields have been ordered, and most appointments will be done via drop-offs in Lenawee County. Even volunteering just 4-hours a week can make a huge difference! Please share this information with your network and encourage folks to volunteer. MI Works! will do what they can to share this information with their clients, but they have been struggling with targeted marketing since folks no longer have to come into the office to file for unemployment.

VITA has been accepted to be part of a cohort from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. As a result, they will be able to receive free technical assistance.

VITA has also received a \$500 grant for Show Me the Money Day. This event typically comes through Project Connect in Lenawee County, but Project Connect is currently being reimagined. There was discussion about taking inspiration from what Jackson County is doing for this event this year (an all virtual event with prize giveaways) with a potential partnership with Huntington. We will add this to the agenda to further discuss next month.

C. Increase awareness of financial resources among professionals and the general public in Lenawee County Support and/or partner with the LISD to host Poverty Simulations (2 per year)

1. Support and/or partner with the LISD to host Poverty Simulations

On Hold due to COVID

2. Sponsor Bridges Out of Poverty for Lenawee County (2 per year)

CAA will be sponsoring a Bridges Out of Poverty class in February. Goal is for professionals to go through this training in an intentional way. We also hope to offer another class in late summer, 2021.

3. Host professional development seminars (2 per year)

On Hold due to COVID

D. Improve representation at the LFSC meetings from diverse sectors

Everyone: Bring a friend to next month's meeting!

E. Build landlord/tenant relations and resources

1. Rent Smart

See above.

2. Landlord Group

Clint reached out to Elizabeth Salerno about getting on the meeting agenda. This can happen, just not immediately.

3. Legislative Issues

1. Tax Credit for Supporting Affordable Housing

No updates.

2. Federal Housing Bills

No updates.

V. Collective Impact Core

The Core did not meet in November, so there are no new updates.

VI. Other Issues

- A.** Huntington announced a \$20 billion community investment program. Some of this will be allocated to Michigan! The goals of this program are to (1) Increase access to capital, especially for women, minority groups, and veterans to start businesses with; (2) Affordable housing; and (3) Community lending and investment.
- B.** The Resident Coalition has a meeting this Sunday (11/15) @ 2:00pm, in person and via Zoom. **De'Angelo will share the link with this group.**
- C.** The Emergency Food and Shelter group is releasing more funds soon.
- D.** Families looking for help paying for licensed child care can complete the intake form at: <https://www.childcarenetwork.org/family-support-program>.

VII. Next Meeting: 12/11/2020