



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

**Date:** Friday, 6/11/2021  
**Time:** 9:00 – 10:30 am

**Location:** Zoom  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84448067751?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84448067751?pwd=M3daczloeVgxWDdQVDFGdIE3SGk4QT09)  
[pwd=M3daczloeVgxWDdQVDFGdIE3](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84448067751?pwd=M3daczloeVgxWDdQVDFGdIE3SGk4QT09)  
[SGk4QT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84448067751?pwd=M3daczloeVgxWDdQVDFGdIE3SGk4QT09)

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

## Meeting Minutes

### **I. Welcome / Introductions**

In Attendance: Madeline DeMarco (LCMHA), Clint Brugger (CAA), Jackie Bradley (LCMHA), Liz Fuss (Child Care Network), Christal Albig (Goodwill), Jennifer VanEtten (CAA), Ashley Vandebusch (MI Works!), Connie Carroll (UWMLC), Todd Ritzler (Huntington), Tami Farnum (CAA), Tim Ruple (Neighbors of Hope)

### **II. Review Agenda & Minutes**

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

### **III. Treasurer's Report**

Our current bank balance is \$7,223.07. A \$300 mini IDA check went out at the end of May. \$4,623.17 is available to us due to currently allocations.

### **IV. Activities –**

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

##### **1. Clean Slate Program**

MI Works! has a process that they are facilitating with Legal Aid to help community members navigate expungement. Folks can visit the MI Works! website, fill-out a form, and they will be connected with an Expungement Navigator. The state is allowing folks to receive assistance if their expungement is a barrier to employment. MI Works! is willing to be flexible, regardless of their reasoning for wanting expungement. So far, 5 people have gone through the program. This program is FREE! to consumers.

MI Works! is also providing assistance with expungement for marijuana-related expenses.

The Coalition agreed to change the data measuring this goal to include the number of participants in the Clean Slate Program.

A conversation was had around how to share information about this program with the community to increase participation. **Ashley will ask the MI Works! communication department for social media posts that coalition members can share on social media. Ashley will also re-share this information with 2-1-1.**

The County has a group meeting around criminal justice. It would be helpful to have representation from that group in our meetings and vice versa. Their meetings are open and on the first Thursday of the month @ 10:00am. **Clint will email Rebecca Borton (Rebecca.Borton@lenawee.mi.us) about adding the LFSC to this committee's agenda. If you are interested in attending these meetings, the agendas and Zoom links are published on the [County website under "Agenda Center"](#).**

The Lenawee Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition would also like to know about this information. **Madeline will contact Ashley about the possibility of sharing this information with the Coalition or on WLEN 103.9. Flyers about the program will be shared with Pathways Recovery Engagement Center and other related community resources.**

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

The group agreed to remove this goal from our monthly agenda. Many groups are already working on this issue. Clint participates in many of these meetings and will share updates as they pertain to the Coalition.

Conversation was had about the Adrian City Commission's decision to label two properties, including the Adrian Inn, a Public Nuisance. A letter was sent to the Commission advocating against this decision on behalf of the LFSC.

## 3. Bail Reform

We start with showing up at the Criminal Justice Committee meeting and will make connections to find the right champions for this cause.

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

#### 1. Blight Action Committee

This was part of the reason for the Public Nuisance mentioned above. This is clearly a priority for the City. We need to continue to advocate for solutions that aren't just "Do-it or else". Tim suggested asking Tamaris Hennegan, the former City Attorney, to come

to this meeting and talk about the City's blight policies. Madeline brought up the importance of coming up with concrete, creative solutions to blight instead of just removing folks from their homes and boarding up businesses. Clint suggested a small group of folks discuss these ideas more thoroughly. **Tim volunteered to be part of this group and will research alternative solutions to bring to the July meeting.**

2. End high-interest pay day loans

No legislation is currently moving through on this topic.

3. Establish a local micro-loan program

\*On Hold due to COVID\*

4. Increase the number of participants for existing Financial Education

Clint attended Huntington's webinar. A lot of their materials are virtual. Moving forward, they are hoping to be able to offer more of their educational materials in-person. If there's a particular, high-need area that currently isn't being addressed, Huntington would be willing to roll-out some programming. They are looking for channels to get this information out. Project Connect was mentioned as a good avenue for this. MI Works! can hand out materials as well and would be willing to hold in-person classes at their offices. **Ashley and Todd will have a conversation about partnering. Jennifer will share CAA's upcoming financial education resources with Madeline.**

5. Mini IDA Committee

There are no current mini-IDAs coming up that require our approval.

Jennifer will be attending a Getting Ahead training later this month. More to come!

6. VITA

The program is winding down to just one day/week. Appointments are not filling up. The program will be moving to the CAA in June and programs will be offered sporadically depending on need. Tami estimates that we had more participants than last year, but numbers are still below those from previous (non-COVID) years and our goals. They did have more volunteers and interest from others who are interested in volunteering in the future this year though! Good relationship building was done.

No updates about Show Me the Money Day.

**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)

Review the list below (feedback and ideas out of March 18<sup>th</sup> training) and highlight the priorities our group should have – will discuss as a group in June

- **Increase collaboration between agencies**
- **Coordinate services**
- Streamline the process for applying for services, especially across agencies
- **Break down the bureaucracy**
- Educate selves/others on barriers
- Advocate for changes in regulations and policies
- **Bail reform**
- Supporting organizations that take chances on people with criminal records
- Increase access to mental health care, especially for those in the middle who are currently falling through a gap.
- Increase the number of care providers in the community
- Increase access to healthy food and the number of people wanting to use it
- Better understand the traditional roles of churches for people of color and work with them to strengthen the community
- Expand public transportation. Is there a role for churches here?

Jackie suggested: How can we break down the bureaucracy in the system towards the community? For example, working with community members to increase awareness around public meeting protocols and procedures. This also includes challenging the city to follow and clearly explain the rules for public meetings. The rules for Public Meetings are published right on the State of Michigan's website. **Tim will reach out to a connection about this topic. Clint will investigate the rules around public meetings. Jackie works in compliance and is happy to help with this topic.**

Connie mentioned the importance of involving community members with voting power in Lenawee County in these conversations.

The coalition decided to include increasing collaboration across sectors, coordinating services, breaking down the bureaucracy, and bail reform to our priority list.

3. Host professional development seminars (2 per year)

Clint is reaching out to the Community Foundation about the possibility of holding our meetings at their new building. Goodwill has a virtual meeting space with wif and TVs available. Let's move forward with Goodwill! **Christal will reserve space for us.**

**D. Improve representation at the LFSC meetings from diverse sectors**

**Please bring a friend to next month's meeting – Residents count!**

**E. Build landlord/tenant relations and resources**

1. Rent For Success

This class is still being offered online. The special foreclosure program will be offered next instead because of low participation in the Rent For Success program. **Tami will send information about this event to Amy Sweinhagen.**

2. Landlord Group

No updates.

**V. Collective Impact Core**

The Core is moving the community to become more trauma-informed and increase resiliency among residents. Each month, we will do a short learning session with discussion around these topics so that we are walking the walk in addition to talking the talk. This will get moved to the top of the agenda moving forward!

**VI. Other Issues**

**LCMHA** - Has launched myStrength, a new wellness app available to community members. myStrength offers custom online tools to help you overcome the challenges you face and stay mentally strong. It's all safe, secure, and personalized to support your goals and well-being. Tools are offered in both English and Spanish.

- To sign-up, visit [www.mystrength.com](http://www.mystrength.com), click "Sign Up," enter the Access Code (LENAWEE), and complete the sign-up process.

**Ride for Recovery** - June 26, 2021 with registration beginning at 10:00am. Motorcycle ride from Harley Davidson of Tecumseh to Covenant Church in Tecumseh. This event is sponsored by Celebrate Recovery – Tecumseh & Broken Chains – JC, with all proceeds going to Pathways Recovery Engagement Center. Call (517) 815-4044 or email [crtecumseh@gmail.com](mailto:crtecumseh@gmail.com) for more information.

**Neighbors of Hope** – The building that housed their men's ministry is under new ownership. As a result, they are trying to find alternative housing for their guests until their new building is ready.

**VII. Next Meeting: 7/9/2021**