

Allied Partners

April 20, 2021

Present: Rhea Schultz (president), Jon Anderson, Mary Collet, James Costello, Eileen Dresser, Wynn Davies (treasurer), Ryan Estrella (Joining Forces for Families), Johnna Georgia, Susan Hoffenberg, Alice Howard, Diana Jost, Jan Karst, Gloria Manadier–Farr, Molly Plunkett, Deborah Speckmann (RSVP)

Rhea Schultz opened the meeting with a prayer. The March 2021 minutes were approved.

Treasurer's report (Wynn)—Wynn described the purpose and content of his monthly reports, noting that they do not reflect volunteer efforts by congregations nor direct congregational contributions to the Wellness Center, Food Pantry, and other efforts serving the community. He proposed the appointment of a team to develop a more complete annual report. Volunteers for this team should contact Wynn. Wynn noted two trends in finances: (1) an increase in individual contributions, particularly to the Evictions Fund, and (2) a lack of contributions from several previously active congregations. He asked for a volunteer to help in recognizing individual contributors.

Eviction Prevention—The fund was used to provide help with a rental security deposit and to pay an MGE bill. The current balance is about \$18,000.

Special Projects—The balance is \$550.

Wellness Center—An individual contribution of \$100 was sent to the Wellness Center in March. To date in 2021, \$300 has been channeled to the Center.

Joining Forces for Families (Ryan)—There has been an increase in requests for utilities assistance since the moratorium ended on April 1. Residents are asked to contact MGE first before applying for assistance. Calls for help in avoiding eviction are down; residents are referred to the Tenant Resource Center, which has Federal funding. This funding does not support those who have monthly leases. The office is still closed. Once open, Ryan would appreciate volunteers to help organize materials. The search for scholarship applicants is on hold.

RSVP (Diana Jost, Assistant Director, and Jan Karst, Community Connections Program Director)—RSVP organized two drive-through collections for the Wellness Center Essentials Pantry; 31 donors contributed 4 carloads of materials.

Wellness Center (Gloria)—Two Covid vaccination clinics were held at the Boys & Girls Club. The overall turnout was high but participation by Allied residents was low, despite outreach. Requests for personal supplies, particularly bleach and detergent, have gone up. The treasurer for the Wellness Center has resigned. Four new people took the virtual community health worker training.

Awaken Dane (Wynn and Johnna Georgia, Program Director)—Awaken Dane is an ecumenical effort to strengthen connections between churches and their neighborhoods. The focus is on building relationships. Congregations will be grouped into clusters of 8 to 10 with diversity and geographic proximity in mind. Pastors have been invited to attend a Zoom session on April 28 to become familiar with the program. Three Allied Partner congregations are participating: First Baptist, Westminster Presbyterian, and Memorial United Church of Christ.

Allied Neighborhood Association (Alice)—Alice is holding a writing contest for the newsletter; writers will receive \$25 for each article, \$35 if the article is bilingual. A neighborhood event is planned for June 5. Alice will send a description to Wynn for support through the Special Projects fund.

Allied Neighborhood Resources Website (Sue Hoffenberg)—Sue has set up a website for posting resources (alliedneighborhoodresources.com). She envisions this as a one-stop shop for such resources as food, housing, youth activities, etc. She invited Allied Partners to submit information on partner efforts such as the Wellness Center and Food Pantry. Descriptions should be sent via email to alliedneighborhoodresources@gmail.com.