

Allied Partners

March 16, 2021

Present: Rhea Schultz (president), Scott Anderson, Debra Annen, Mary Collet (secretary), James Costello, Eileen Dresser, Wynn Davies (treasurer), Ryan Estrella (Joining Forces for Families), Janice Ferguson, Flora Flygt, Ruth Hein (RSVP), Susan Hoffenberg, Alice Howard, Tiffany Loomis (Boys & Girls Club), Joe Maldonado (Aldersperson), McKenzie Mellecker (Boys & Girls Club), Molly Plunkett, Carol Rushmore (Allied Food Pantry), Deborah Speckmann, Karen Stephens, Su Timmerman

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

Treasurer's report (Wynn)

Eviction Prevention—The Eviction Prevention Fund received \$6,430 in donations in February. The fund was used to prevent eviction in four situations. The current balance is about \$18,000.

Scholarships—The balance is \$2,602.

Special Projects—The balance as of the end of February was \$750. Thanks to Heritage Congregational for a \$100 contribution to Allied Community “kids.”

Wellness Center—Wynn distributed the sign-up list of congregations for supplying transportation cards for the Essentials Pantry. Openings remain for September and October.

Total balance in treasury: \$21,480.

Note: *Checks intended for Allied Partners should be written to MUM dba Just Dane. Indicate Allied Partners in the memo line.*

Joining Forces for Families (Ryan)—A protocol for moving back into the office is underway; initially, visitors will need to make an appointment. Ryan fielded about 50 calls/day for rental assistance. He has been searching for housing for residents of two buildings that have been taken over by new owners. Scholarship applications were sent to school social workers and other contacts; one possible application is in the offing.

Allied Fresh (Janice Ferguson)—Janice is awaiting notification about three grant applications for Allied Fresh, an effort to provide free fresh produce to the Allied neighborhood. At present, through an effort with the Madison Metropolitan School District, market boxes are being distributed on Fridays at the Boys & Girls Club. In conjunction with NewBridge, a COVID clinic will be held at the Boys & Girls Club on March 24 from 9:30 a.m. to noon. The clinic will provide information about the vaccine as well as an opportunity to be vaccinated. Janice has applied for a grant to continue work on educating the community about the vaccine.

Allied Food Pantry (Carol Rushmore)—Wednesday morning hours continue, as usual. Saturday morning hours have been discontinued; Wednesday evening hours have resumed. Carol continues to try to advertise the availability of the pantry through flyers.

Boys & Girls Club (McKenzie Mellecker and Tiffany Loomis)—Because of the pandemic, the youth program was stopped on March 15, 2020, and the staff was reduced from 28 to 3 persons. Open hours were discontinued. The Club expanded its mission to include food security: a pop-up pantry and free meals-to-go, obtained through Second Harvest. Holiday meals will be continued. The Club also served as a voting site. A resource coordinator has been hired. Several pop-up events were held for youth during the summer. The recently installed rock-climbing wall will soon be opened for small groups. The Club has been holding virtual dances and video sports for youth. As of the present, the Club will be accessible only by reservation (no drop-ins).

Allied Community Coop (Alice Howard)—Alice has designed a survey to get a feel for what residents need and have an interest in. She envisions a neighborhood center that could house, for example, access to resources, classes, a library, and a nurse. Joe Maldonado (alder) said that funding for the neighborhood center would most likely be available through the city of Madison. Fitchburg also has a small (less than \$15,000) Healthy Neighborhood grant. Funding cycles usually begin in February. Should Alice decide to retain a lawyer for this effort, Flora Flygt offered to help locate one skilled in working with nonprofits.

The neighborhood continues to need a place(s) to post information. Molly will look into the whereabouts of an old digital sign.