

## **Allied Partners**

### **October 20, 2020**

**Present:** Rhea Schultz (president), Mary Collet (secretary), James Costello, Eileen Dresser, Wynn Davies (treasurer), Ryan Estrella (Joining Forces for Families), Janice Ferguson, Flora Flygt, Carmella Harris, Joe Maldonado, Gloria Manadier–Farr, Molly Plunkett, Marcio Sierra, Jr.

Rhea opened the meeting with a prayer. The minutes from the September meeting were approved.

#### **Treasurer's report (Wynn)**

**Eviction prevention fund**—The fund was used to prevent eviction in three situations. The balance at the end of September was \$2,858.57. In October, \$1,350 has been expended to date, leaving a current balance of only \$1,509.

**Special projects fund**—In September, \$100 was sent to Queen of Peace parish to supplement their purchases for the Wellness Center Essentials Pantry. Similarly, in October \$100 will be given to Namaha/Fountain of Life Church to supplement their contributions. Wynn asked whether this practice of supplementing congregational contributions to the Essentials Pantry by \$100 each month should be continued. Gloria said that donations are welcome and needed, but she doesn't want to place financial stress on congregations. The matter was placed to a vote. Allied Partners members voted to continue to supplement congregational contributions to the Essentials Pantry by \$100/month. Wynn suggested that churches check with Gloria before buying supplies.

#### **Joining Forces for Families (Ryan)**

The City of Madison has reduced Ryan's office hours to two half-days/week. Ryan continues to field about 20 phone calls a day and has received as many as 35 calls in a day. Most are requests for assistance with rent. The MGE moratorium on service disconnection is still in effect; Ryan expects the moratorium to continue through the end of the year.

Ryan reported that Selena, a former president of the Allied Drive–Dunns Marsh Neighborhood Association, is suffering from cancer and will soon be undergoing dialysis. Neighbors have been providing support, and the Neighborhood Association presented Selena with a gift basket and restaurant gift certificate.

**Scholarships**—Ann is stepping down from the support committee. Molly will step in if Su Timmerman steps down. A check was given to Carmella's granddaughter for college. Three applications are in process.

**Comments from Pastor Sierra**—Marcio was invited to introduce himself since he is new to Allied Partners. When asked what his needs are, Marcio responded, "How can I serve you?" His congregation at the Lighthouse Church is African–American and Hispanic. Many have lost their jobs due to the pandemic. The church has started a food pantry and has purchased a truck to make it mobile. Marcio says that he has a lot of resources and wishes to help in whatever way he can.

#### **Wellness Center (Janice and Gloria)**

The greatest need right now is for bilingual staff. Information is published in English and Spanish, but outreach is limited because of the language barrier and cultural differences. Gloria has been searching for a Latina volunteer. She has contacted Centro Hispano. Gloria says that supplies run out fast. She feels a need to get the word out about what the Wellness Center can offer. She is willing to talk with Marcio Sierra about Spanish-speaking volunteers from his congregation.

Wynn asked about the possibility of sustained funding for the Wellness Center via a grant. Janice said

that they need about \$20,000 for a part-time employee. She said that she'd be happy to work with Allied Partners on writing a grant. Flora and Carmella also offered to help.

**Meeting time, focus area (Wynn)**—Wynn proposed two items: (1) that the time of our meeting be changed once to accommodate more involvement from neighborhood residents; (2) that we identify an area of need and focus on it; bring in County reps and academics; hold a special meeting on how Allied Partners can best address the identified need(s).

- Janice asked whether Allied Partners could handle more needs.
- Flora said that as a new member, she would like to understand more about needs.
- Carmella spoke to her work with bridging the gap between the community and service professionals such as the police. She can share information about community needs; e.g., mental illness, children dealing with anxiety. The biggest area of need is mental illness.
- Janice said that the neighborhood needs a grassroots effort such as the one Carmella is providing. She is looking for funding to sustain this effort.
- Carmella can provide a written summary of her work. She will send it to Rhea for distribution to Allied Partners.
- Janice described work with All of Us, an organization at the UW that has been creating a data base on health needs. There are funds for training six people as health workers. They will receive virtual training, some synchronous and some on their own; they will be trained on how to use the technology. Each health worker will have a coach. Training will be held from mid-November to February.

**Agenda for next meeting (Rhea)**—Rhea will review the agenda at the beginning of the meeting so that issues can be added, if necessary.