

NOVEMBER '21 MEETING MINUTES

Merrill Enrichment Center Committee

Meeting was held on November 18th, 2021 at 2:15pm

Merrill Enrichment Center Conference Room – 303 N. Sales Street

Present: Rick Blake (Aldersperson), Gene Bebel, Sharon Anderson, Rose Akey,
Jennifer Clark (ADRC representative)

Absent: Laura Bertagnoli (Chair), Paul Russell (Aldersperson), Josh Jaeger, Sharon Harvey

1. Opening

- a. Blake called the meeting to order.

2. Consent Items

- a. Motion by Bebel second Anderson to approve Oct '21 minutes. Motion carried.
- b. Motion by Anderson second by Akey to approve Oct/Nov '21 vouchers. Motion carried.

3. Public Comment

- a. none

4. Operations

- a. Nov/Dec events
 - i. Director shared that we reached 250 Thanksgiving meals two weeks before Thanksgiving Day. Director stated that we generally receive calls right up to the day before and always plan for a cushion. Next year the MEC will try to find smaller parishes in our community to work together with us to offer the Thanksgiving meal here in our Expo. We will plan for 350+. Blake asked how many people, we could fit in the expo. Director stated that the capacity is over 700 but to sit people comfortably we *may* be able to accommodate up to 500. This would take a *substantial* amount of funding and volunteers.
 - ii. Director shared more information on our Dec. 3rd evening shopping event. We promoted the evening as a Sip, Shop and support with the intention of promoting a local winery. It was brought to the Directors attention that we needed a picnic license and a licensed bartender. This would have been fine but then Director found out we would need to purchase wine through a distributor. This defeated the original purpose of promoting and supporting a local business. Blake suggested looking further into this.
 - iii. The MEC participates annually in O'Tannenbaum. This year our Cricut group offered to make all the ornaments and decorate the tree. We are thankful for their time and efforts.
 - iv. The MEC will have Christmas Joy Deliveries for the 23rd year. Deadline to order is Dec. 15th. Delivery will take place on Dec. 22nd. Clark asked if there are any restrictions on who can receive the delivery. We do not have restrictions but generally focus on those who are home alone on this holiday. Clark asked if she could have a flyer for the meals on wheels participants.
- b. The MEC is considering working with the UW Extension and the ADRC on the Wisconsin DHS/Hunger task force of Milwaukee Stockbox program for seniors (commodities). Meetings are taking place and decisions will be made by the beginning of December.
- c. There are funds left over from the Lifting Lincoln County outreach from last year. The MEC will receive funds to provide outreach bags to our community. Some of these will go out with our Christmas Joy deliveries. Bebel added the need for support for our local St. Vincent. They do receive money from the Salvation Army annually but the money goes fast. They are taking on more than ever before as churches are not able to take care of their parishioners as before and are now referring people to St. Vincent. He also mentioned that people need help year round, not just at the holidays. Akey mentioned the food pantry being full but no people are coming. Further conversation centered on the stigma associated with going to get food and that people like to pick their own food vs. having it picked for them.

5. ADRC

Jennifer provided the following updates;

- a. ADRC now has a Full time dementia specialist opening. Training available. Please visit the Marathon county website. The Executive Director position is also available.
- b. The ADRC was happy to have 165 Farmers market vouchers distributed this year. 184 were available. The MEC will help to ensure all are utilized next year.
- c. The ADRC is working again with Peyton's Promise to provide food and shelf stable meals to the community. A local Girl Scout troop assists with packing and delivering meals. Peyton's Promise serves as the middleman between food drives (organized by them) and organizations fighting hunger.

- d. The ADRC had received additional grant funding to continue COVID-19 vaccination registration and outreach through 2021 and into 2022. We will be connecting older adults/adults with disabilities to COVID vaccines and booster options.... and will help them navigate any barriers to receiving booster/vaccine (i.e. Transportation issues etc.).

6. Discussion

- a. Director shared the approval of the Marketing committees' requested budget for personnel. Council member Blake shared the details including a need for a contracted Communication Director and a Social Media specialist. These two positions will spearhead our marketing plan for the city.
- b. Director asked the committee to bring their ideas for MEC's Goals for 2022 to our January meeting. Director would like to revisit our SOAR analysis results from 2018 for updating.
- c. MEC committee will not meet in December.
- d. Director asked committee members to email discussion items for January.

7. Adjournment

- a. Motion to adjourn made by Bebel second by Akey.

The next meeting date is **January 20th at 2:15pm in the MEC Conference room.**
Vouchers will be available for review 10 minutes prior to meeting time.

Respectfully submitted,

TMrachek, Tammie Mrachek, MEC Director