



Meeting Minutes

EVENT | LaGrange Partners

DATE | April 11, 2023

FIND ONLINE | [LaGrange Partners](#)

Present | Alicia Milliman, Andrea Sherman, Audrey Mumma, Catherine Thomas, Cheri Perkins, Christina Blaskie, Daniel Foster, Deb Linstromberg, Debra Seman, Denise Landers, Emilee Fincher, Erica Cook, Greg Giczi, Jackie Christman, Jasmin Miller, Jenna Anderson, Jennifer Kennedy, Julie Poertner, Kathy Dunafin, Katie Whetstone, Ken Weaver, Leanna Martin, Monica Weinhold, Rebekah Brooker, Richard Yoder, Ron Sherck, Sara Patrick, Sonja Giggy, Stephanie Young, Steve Sherck, Tammy Stafford, Tye Risner, Dr. Rustin Krapfl, Dr. William Pipher

Welcome

Leanna Martin, LaGrange County Community Foundation

Each meeting will include an opportunity for each attendee to share news and current programming or resources. If you have a resource to share, you may provide it to me before or after the meeting and I will be sure to include it on the resources page (prefer pdfs or links to websites).

You will be able to access meeting minutes, agendas, and resource documents through Foundation's website: lccf.net/LaGrangePartners

Homelessness in LaGrange County

Rebekah Brooker, Volunteer Lawyer Program of NE Indiana

Volunteer based program to meet the legal needs of residents. Also provide services on divorce, custody, power of attorney, wills, etc as well as eviction legal needs. Eviction is a prerequisite for homeless, starting eviction clinics in LaGrange County. Eviction clinics will take place in the courthouse once a month on the day of eviction hearings, an attorney will be present during those hearings. Providing free legal advice and having representation in the courthouse.

Rental assistance – helping connecting to resources, providing them at the courthouse. Looking to begin eviction clinics in June.

Dr. Rustin Krapfl, Agape Missions of LaGrange County

Homelessness looks very different in LaGrange County. People are typically staying with friends or family until they cannot or in their vehicles. We also have professional homeless people; they don't want help they want to remain homeless. We don't have tent cities.

Agape Missions provide temporary housing and loving assistance in LaGrange County, our passion is this community. We do have people from other counties, but our passion is LaGrange County residents.

Agape Missions has two apartments, one apartment is large enough for family of 5, second apartment family can accommodate a family of 3, they are allowed to stay up to 3 months. There is an apartment upstairs that is charged rent and it supports the cost of the home.

Long-term vision is to have 5 homes throughout LaGrange County.

We have mentors that come alongside the residents, meet every week, some people are going through a lot of things. Mentors help with jobs, budgets, hygiene, and future plans. Most residents don't have a next steps plan; they live in the moment. Most move onto the government subsidized apartments in the area. We do provide spiritual care as well, the Church of God is across the street and we encourage them to attend.

Agape has provided support for 30 people this last year. Typically, we receive a call once a week. We are happy to report that 95% find stability after they leave Agape Missions. Success comes in the opportunity of someone holding them accountable.

We are limited to the number of people we can serve and are looking for additional places to house people.

People find themselves homeless for a variety of reasons, long term illness to spouse, mental illness, loss of employment, emergency, fire, drug addiction, grandparents caring for grandchildren, dealing with trauma, and some are habitual homelessness. Drug abuse is a real issue; Agape is zero tolerance for drugs, clients sign contracts and they have to be enlisted in a drug-free program in order to stay. Mentors do not provide drug abuse counseling.

Anyone that is from a domestic violence situation we refer to Elijah Haven.

We are currently looking for a home in Topeka, Wolcottville, Howe, or Shipshewana.

To contact Agape Missions, please call Beth at Brighton Chapel, 260-562-2505.

Dr. William Pipher, Bloomfield Township Trustee

Township emergency assistance; 11 different townships. Trustee assistance is based on where you reside, a person can say they live in a specific township. Our designation is to help those in the township they reside, maintain basic needs.

Goal is to keep people in their homes, keeps them from being on the street and homeless. Some transients that come through. Very limited resources on short term houses. There is one hotel in Bloomfield township, can't put someone in another township. Can't make hotels take people. Available shelters in surrounding cities like Albion, Elkhart or Angola, but limited accessibility – transportation. We can help with transportation but are limited in resources. If I send them to other townships for housing, then they become a resident there.

Many families do not know what township they live in, there is a map of LaGrange County online to help.

Trustees can help with funerals.

A person can receive assistance for 2 months in a row or 3 months within a 12-month period. There is an application. We encourage people to use other resources in the community to help them so they don't have to keep coming back for assistance. Trustees are used for emergency resources not long term solutions.

Roundtable

Christina Blaskie, Parkview LaGrange Hospital - LaGrange County Child Abuse & Neglect Collaborative. Month of April raise awareness with the blue tire at courthouse, stop child abuse in its tracks. A hashtag is used to post your picture on social media. Bonita, DCS, SCAN, Northeastern Center, Bowen Center, do a child abuse panel, we will teach how and when to report to DCS, when it's not appropriate to report there are other ways and Children First come along side with resources for financial, anger management, reduce the likelihood of child abuse to take place.

Jenna Anderson, Thrive by 5 – May 4 Emerging Providers event, anyone interested in early childhood education, homecare provider wanting to get license or just wanting to learn more should attend. May 4, 6-8pm at Linder's Tavern.

Deb Semen, Arc of LaGrange County – Offering an 8-week summer discovery program for people (ages 13-22) with disabilities, if anyone knows of an individual that may enjoy this opportunity or to work this summer, please connect. Also, feel free to donate items to the Arc Thrift Store in Shipshewana all proceeds go directly to the Arc of LaGrange.

Tammy Stafford, St. Martins Healthcare - Mobile clinic is coming – June 1st.

Denise Landers, Crossroads United Way - Volunteers needed for the LaGrange task force for St. Martins Healthcare, keeping people informed reach out to Denise for more info.

Katie Whetstone, Salvation Army – Mobile food pantries in April and May. Hope to provide this monthly throughout LaGrange County. We do provide rent & utility assistance. Accepting resources to share with clients.

Audrey Mumma, Cancer Services – Ribbon Walk Fundraiser on May 6. We do offer spiritual care; a spiritual care counselor is available (can zoom this as well).

Andy Sherman, LaGrange County Community Center – Connect the dots for the LaGrange County Community Center build. Wanting to reach out to organizations to support a community center in LaGrange. Build a space that is self-sustaining. If you are interested in being involved reach out.

Jennifer Kennedy and Stephanie Yount, FCS Headstart – Taking applications for next year. Federally funded all day preschool offered free for low income families. If a family is homeless or a part of SNAP or foster care they are automatically qualified for the program. Please reach out for applications or more information.

Ken Weaver, Chaplain of Parkview Hospice – The hospice group is offering free grief support group. We do have memorial services twice a year. Call Parkview for times.

Next meeting June 13 – Food Insecurity in LaGrange County