

Long Branch Partners (LBP) Meeting Minutes (5/5)

❖ Meeting Scheduled Start (3:30)

➤ Agenda

- Updates on Needs: Any additions of changes?
- Review of Tool for sharing information on resources and services
- How do we share information?
- What services are currently being offered?
- What additional ways to coordinate to meet needs in Long Branch?

❖ Introductions (3:34) – 15 attendees

- Bruce Baker. - CHEER
- Emily Luyo. – Community Health Advocates
- Sara Mussie. – Impact Silver Spring
- Reemberto Rodriguez. – Director of Silver Spring Regional Center
- Dayana Muniz. - CentroNía
- John Brill. - CHEER
- Lisa Buttner. - Neighbor in Long Branch, CHEER volunteer
- Robert Geiger. – Principal at New Hampshire Estates Elementary
- Melissa Ferguson. – Community Action Agency
- Claudine Schwebber. – Co. Chair of Emergency Preparedness committee
- Maureen Larenas. – Test Community Action Center
- Pat Wellington. – Community Health Nurse for Montgomery County
- Pazit Aviv. – Aging and Disabilities Services
- Vanessa Pinto. - CHEER
- Anthea Levy. – CHEER

❖ Review of Agenda (3:42)

❖ Brief Description of Needs Tool (3:44)

- Google Sheet that includes the following sections:
 - Long Branch Partner Member information including:
 - ◆ Name
 - ◆ Email
 - ◆ Organization Name & Type
 - ◆ Telephone Number
 - ◆ Website
 - “What kind of services do you provide?”
 - “Who and how many people do you serve?”
 - List of needs including:
 - ◆ Unemployment Benefits & Income Security
 - ◆ Food Security
 - ◆ Education & Youth Support
 - ◆ Personal Support Networking
 - ◆ Other

❖ Floor Open for Additions to List of Needs

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- **Pat (3:49)**
 - Asks which organizations will be receiving emergency money that Montgomery County has available?
 - Money was initially given to families with Care for Kids
 - To her understanding money will then be given to various organizations depending on need; she does not know the full details
 - Asks if any Long Branch Partners organizations will be receiving money so she can direct her patients to specific organizations for specific needs
- **Maureen (3:50)**
 - Does not know what stage the EARP (Emergency Assistance Relief Payment) is in right now
 - Last week it seemed that the County already distributed benefits to individual families and they [Montgomery County] were still deciding which non-profits would be receiving funds
 - May still be in process of deciding who non-profits are
 - There were a handful of people who were receiving Care for Kids benefits but did not report a change of address, so checks could have been sent to old addresses
 - Concerns about what if a spouse takes a check but does not share it; which is out of our control
 - There will be a 3rd phase where the County will be able to assist with people who have these types of issues
- **Reemberto (3:52)**
 - The County is behind on getting funds to non-profits
 - Will try to get updated information
 - The County Assistant Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) says that the second phase of the EARP should be coming out “early” next week
- **Pazit (3:52)**
 - HHS is working on a platform similar to “holiday giving”
 - The platform would allow people to enter information as a referring agency
 - First phase is still on-going so naturally phase two, which is the application of phase one, cannot begin until phase one is complete
 - **Melissa (3:53)**
 - Explains that phase 1 sends checks to families who have a child enrolled in Care for kids
- **Maureen**
 - Scams being reported
 - ◆ In particular scams are asking people to open paypal accounts in order to received money
 - Please be careful who you speak to and what information you share
 - This process is free and does not require any money from its participants
 - **Claudine**
 - Has been collecting scam warnings, particularly from federal trade commission (FTC)
 - Is there a place where these can be shared?
 - **Reemberto**
 - Possibly the Office of Consumer Protection

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- Will find email and send to Claudine/Bruce
- For scam information, examples, and more please email Eric.Friedman@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov
- **John (3:56)**
 - We spoke about rent and utility assistance as needs being included under income security
 - Would be a good idea to have these captured on the tool
 - Mentions that there are some programs created just for rent and utilities, maybe we should consider having a section specifically for these needs on the tool
 - Regarding non-profits receiving funds from the County, asks if the County is focusing on big non-profits or are they hoping to provide funds across the board?
- **Bruce**
 - These needs were intended to be included under income security
- **Melissa (3:57)**
 - Heard that “hub” non-profits would be used
 - Holiday Giving program is widely used and accessible to most if not all non-profits, suggesting that this program might be widely accessible as well
- **Robert (3:58)**
 - COVID-19 disease has become more prominent in our community
 - Two grandparents lost in last week from school community
 - Some families in community have parents or entire families who are showing symptoms of COVID-19
 - We are now dealing with healthcare impacts, there is a need for testing particularly for those who do not have health insurance and undocumented individuals
- **Bruce**
 - CHEER community health workers are discovering more families in the community with confirmed cases of the disease
 - These families are quarantined and looking for assistance
 - We will add a new category in notes about “Medical Care and Quarantine Support”
- **Pazit (4:01)**
 - There are some providers who are organizing under the Food Security Task force to provide food to people in quarantine
 - Suggests that members from Long Branch Partners participate in these meetings
- **Bruce**
 - CHEER is involved with Food Security Task Force
 - At the time of this Long Branch Partners meeting, there was a call led by Diana Tato-Niktash of the Food Security Task Force
 - CHEER plans on increasing food delivery to COVID-19 impacted community members
- **Melissa**
 - Food access group call 1-2:30 on Monday
 - Much is going on to address this need

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- Many organizations are providing “stay put packs” to help people stay quarantined and still receive
- **Sara (4:03)**
 - Has heard situations where one family member gets sick and another member will go out into the community
 - IMPACT has been reminding people that just because their family member is sick, but they are not, they should still not be going into the community because they could be in the 2-week incubation period and could still pass it on to others
 - Are there local organizations educating people about the disease?
 - Could be done via zoom call
 - Education could include providing suggestions for how to isolate yourself from a family member within the same apartment
 - IMPACT has created a “Go Team” initiative which works in underserved communities to provide in-person testing for COVID-19
 - There is not widespread promotion of this program as of now
 - Still working on the kinks
 - Sara will provide more information as kinks are smoothed out
 - If you have anyone in your community in bad shape due to COVID-19, email Sara @ IMPACT so they can help
 - Education is key
- **Bruce**
 - Will include “COVID Education/Information” to LBP tool
- **Pat**
 - Are Spanish speaking news stations providing information about COVID-19
 - **Reemberto**
 - Yes, at the national, regional, and local levels
 - Number of calls in Spanish to 3-1-1- has drastically increased
 - There is a lot of focus on educating the Spanish-speaking community
 - There is a lot of information out there, so there is an emphasis on sorting through the clutter of information to provide the critical information about COVID-19
- **Vanessa (4:09)**
 - Radio America; AM frequency has been providing information on COVID-19
 - Addressing fear coming from community members
 - ◆ Community members understand they cannot be evicted now, but are fearful that when this ends, they will be told they owe large sums of money to landlords
 - **Melissa (4:11)**
 - People should be heeding information from Office of Landlord Tenant Affairs
 - When courts reopen, her understanding is that domestic violence issues will be handled first and then landlord/tenant issues second
 - Maureen
 - The City of Takoma Park has a new Landlord/Tenant Mediator who speaks Spanish
 - They have funding for those who are experiencing rent issues; in order to access funding you must reside in Takoma Park

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❖ **Best Way to Share Information? (4:12)**

➤ **Bruce**

- The tool is created on a Google Sheet which would allow everyone to edit the sheet once invited to it
- Not everyone has a google account, those who do not would not be able to edit the tool
- Suggests sending the tool out, having people individually add their comments, and then send the tool back to CHEER
- Christopher can help figure this out
- What is best way for everyone to access the document?

▪ **John**

- Is it possible to take a hybrid approach?
- Share the Sheet with those who do have google accounts so they can enter their information directly and also send the tool out via email to those who do not have google accounts. They can send an email response back with their additions and then someone from CHEER would have to enter the information manually

❖ **What Services are Currently Being Offered? Or Request for Assistance on Needs of Your Own?**

➤ **Maureen (4:16)**

- For burial assistance other than the County, does anyone know of any other available funding to address this need?
- Counties limit is \$650 dollars, not enough to pay for a burial
- Currently working with four families who need assistance

▪ **Pat**

- Social workers at Holy Cross have some resources

▪ **Reemberto**

- Can send contact information for social workers at Holy Cross
- This is increasingly a dire need

➤ **Vanessa (4:18)**

- Question about the Needs tool
- Do you have a date that you would like the tool to be completed so we can share information?

▪ **Bruce**

- ◆ One week would be ideal
- ◆ Would like to have information added to the tool before our next meeting

➤ **Claudine (4:20)**

- If you know people who need a regular phone call, there is program called “Phone a Neighbor”
- People can get on the list if they’d like to be called, or you can sign up to make calls
- Ask for Ms. Paula
- Call 240.687.4132 or go to Takoma Park website and search for “phone a neighbor”

➤ **John (4:21)**

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- Agrees a week is a good amount of time to have information added to the tool and shared with the community
- We do not need to wait until the document is 100% complete
- It can be shared and edited on an on-going basis
- **Robert (4:23)**
 - Action in Montgomery (AIM) has been working with the New Hampshire Estates school and is working with Dr. Travis Gayles, the Montgomery County Health Officer, who has an interest in sending folks to Long Branch area to do testing
 - Does anyone in Long Branch Partners know anyone who needs to be tested?
 - If so, reach out to Robert so he can notify AIM
 - Heard that IMPACT Silver Spring had a mobile traveling around to provide health care services. Wanted to get confirmation on this service
- **Melissa (4:25)**
 - Understanding is that the Montgomery Cares Clinic has appointments for testing that are two weeks out
 - Included Covid-19 hotline phone number in the chat and the COVID-19 website for the County
 - MedStar Montgomery is the hospital treating COVID-19 patients
 - Testing sites require a referral from a health care provider saying you need a test
 - ◆ You cannot just show up at a testing site saying you need a test
 - Suggests checking with the Mary's Center to see if they can write referrals for testing
 - Asks if “mobile med” still comes to the Long Branch Community Center
- **Bruce**
 - They do not come to the community center anymore
 - They have a clinic at the Briggs Chaney East County location
 - We need to see what we can do about this need, may be out of our hands due to test capacity limitations
- **Vanessa (4:28)**
 - There are situations where families do not have a primary care provider
 - Some families choose to avoid Montgomery Cares Clinic because they are concerned about public charge rule
 - Reached out to IMPACT Silver Spring for testing because referral from a health care provider was not needed
 - Would like Sara to describe this service from IMPACT
- **John**
 - Was this an on-site mobile test? (No answer provided)
- **Claudine (4:31)**
 - The former Washington Adventist Hospital location does operate as a urgent clinic
 - It will be opening several beds for COVID-19 patients in the next few weeks
 - 63 beds will be opening for COVID-19 patients
- ❖ **Wrap-up (4:33)**
 - **Bruce**
 - Will make an attempt to get tool shared the best way possible

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- Adjustments will be made to add new categories
- We will convene again to discuss developments
- **Reemeberto (4:34)**
 - Discussed Giving Tuesday and distribution of list of organizations in Long Branch that are working to address community needs
 - Discussed an international movement to describe stories of success during COVID-19 pandemic
 - Everyone in Long Branch Partners meeting should have received an invitation to participate in the Silver Spring Complete Census count committee held on Thursday 5/7
 - The County is converging the matters of COVID-19 and the census in order to be mindful and economical regarding the amount of messaging they are putting out to the community.
 - Considering having a fire truck driving through communities with banners to raise awareness of the census as it relates to COVID-19

❖ **Next Meeting: Tuesday May 19th @ 3:30 PM**

❖ **Information Included in the Chat**

- Takomaparkmd.gov – For “Phone a Neighbor” program
- 240-777-1755 – COVID-19 hotline
- <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS/RightNav/Coronavirus.html> - Montgomery County COVID-19 website
- <https://www.givingtuesday.org/blog/2020/03/givingtuesday-announces-day-global-action-giving-and-unity-response-covid-19> - Link to Giving Tuesday site to add your short story of success
- <https://us5.campaign-archive.com/?u=bd8805537d3a89b3ed6979ce2&id=dc28be6f1a> – E-blast including list of organizations addressing needs in Long Branch Community