



**HILLSDALE COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES NETWORK**  
20 Care Drive  
Hillsdale, MI 49242  
(517)437-7395 x-106

**Joanne Sheldon, Chair**  
**Pastor Julie Carey, Vice Chair**

**Minutes of Human Services Network**  
**February 16, 2010**

**Attending:**

John Robertson - Community Health Agency  
Lesia Pikaart – MPRI  
Brooke Rains – Child Care Network  
Laura Nye – DHS  
Cindy Rowe – CAA  
Diane Cranston – LifeWays  
Lucy Booth – Hospice of Hillsdale County  
Maxine Vanlerberg – CAA  
Sharon Roberts – ISD/Early On  
Ginelle Skinner – Great Start Collaborative  
Julie Carey – Ministerial Association  
Terry Vear – Senior Services Center  
Karen Lewthwaite – Legal Services  
Ginny Wood-Bailey – Region 2 Area Agency on Aging  
Jane Munson – Key Opportunities

Jill Rodenhauer – United Way  
Ken Lautzenheiser – County Commissioner  
Patrice Martin – SCMW!  
Dan Boyd – Juvenile Court  
Dave Wallin - Veteran  
Sharon Bisher – Hillsdale Co. Community Foundation  
Lenn Johnson – SCMW!  
Renell Weathers – Congressman Mark Schauer's office  
Tony Slaughter – Life Challenge  
Joanne Sheldon – LifeWays  
John Stepansky – Life Challenge  
Sarah Hill – American Red Cross  
Oren Frank – American Red Cross  
Laurie Brandes - HSN

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

The HSN met at the Hillsdale Co. ISD on February 16, 2010. Joanne Sheldon called the meeting to order at 8:38am. Welcome was extended, and introductions were made.

**II. Approve Agenda**

A motion was made by Terry Vear, seconded by Julie Carey, to approve the agenda as presented. **The motion carried unanimously.**

**III. Approve Minutes of January 19, 2010, Meeting**

A motion was made by Ginny Wood Bailey, seconded by Julie Carey, to approve the minutes as presented. **The motion carried unanimously.**

**IV. Project Connect Update – Laurie Brandes**

Laurie Brandes presented a PowerPoint outlining the 2010 Project Connect, which was held on January 27, 2010, in conjunction with the Point-In-Time count. Data collected that day was compiled and presented to the group.

**V. Hillsdale County ISD Update – Robert Henthorne**

Bob Henthorne was not in attendance – his presentation will be rescheduled.

**VI. Complete Count – U.S. Census – Patrice Martin**

Patrice Martin spoke about the Complete Count efforts going on in Hillsdale County. Outreach is being made to local units of government, the HSN, the medical community, etc. to encourage them to speak with their clients about the importance of a Complete Count. Focus is being put on the “hard to count” populations – in Hillsdale County, that includes the Amish community, the home school community, etc. Patrice asked the group to think of ways to promote the count. There will be assistance centers –at Perennial Park and SCMW! Assistance Center – to answer questions privately. Much information is available online, including brochures on confidentiality. This year, everyone will receive the “short” form.

A challenge was issued the HSN members to think of a way that they and their agency could reach out to their staff and/or clients with Census information. Small prizes (Census “trinkets”) were given to those whose ideas were most creative:

- Brooke Rains of Child Care Network will create a template of a letter that children can send to their parent(s) to encourage the parent to fill out the census.
- John Stepansky of Life Challenge will use Facebook to spread the word about the Census.

- John Robertson of the Community Health Agency reported that CHA is spreading the word about the Census to WIC clients, and CHA is also informing WIC clients about the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) that is available to many.
- Karen Lewthwaite of Legal Services will encourage her clients, most of whom are women dealing with abuse and/or divorce, to do something positive for their families and complete the Census form.
- Julie Carey of Kings Kupboard will encourage their clients through brochures and “stuff” to complete the form.

#### **VII. Save the Date – HSN Visioning – April 20, 2010, 8:15am – 12:00 noon**

The HSN strategic plan is outdated, so Patrice Martin will lead the group in a visioning process on that date. She promises an energetic, interactive morning of visioning and planning.

#### **VIII. Agency Announcements**

- **Renee Weathers of Congressman Schauer’s office** announced that last week, the Social Security Administration added Alzheimer’s to its Compassionate Allowances List. Congressman Schauer is holding an event next Saturday to meet with farmers and agriculturalists about the Farm Bill of 2012.
- **Diane Cranston of LifeWays** announced that System of Care Planning Group met last month, and will be meeting monthly. Diane also announced that the process to access mental health services has changed. Effective January 1, clients will access services at the LifeWays office at 25 Care Drive on Monday-Friday, 8:30am – 4:30pm. For after-hours walk-in crisis emergencies, they will visit Hillsdale Community Health Center emergency room. LifeWays is also sponsoring a Mental Health First Aid Class on March 30-31 in Hillsdale – this class will be a basic class for laypersons, much like a first-aid class for physical health. Contact LifeWays to register.
- **Dave Wallin** announced that he has written a resolution, which has been supported by Post 53, to have envelopes available at funeral homes for donations that will help fund veterans’ groups.
- **Karen Lewthwaite of Legal Services** announced that there is a small window of time for people who own their own homes but cannot pay their taxes to claim an exemption for paying these taxes. It does not work for back taxes. This can be especially useful for senior citizens who own their own homes, but whose income is severely limited.
- **Jane Munson of Key Opportunities** announced the Grand Opening of In The Key, a new consignment shop located in the Key Opportunities building, on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Feb. 18-20. Ten Thousand Villages is also a part of In The Key.
- **Brooke Rains of Child Care Network** announced that the CCN website that was shown at the last HSN meeting works well if the pop-up blocker is turned off BEFORE accessing the website.
- **Cindy Rowe of CAA/Head Start** announced that a classroom will be opening on Monday, Feb. 22, at Greenfield School for infants and toddlers whose parents are working or going to school. Enrollment for next year’s Head Start will begin in March.
- **Maxine Vanlerberg of CAA** announced that there is a VERY small window – until the end of the week – for people to contact the Treasurer’s Office for help with their local property taxes. CAA is very busy with their income tax program – in the first week of this year’s program, they helped 132 people (last year, it was 66). The average return is about \$2,000/person. Maxine reported that in 2009, they had 1,282 requests for housing help (unduplicated) and 652 for utility help – this is about triple from the year before, which is stressing CAA’s financial resources and their staff.
- **Oren Frank of American Red Cross (Americorp) and Sarah Hill** announced their “Neighbor to Neighbor” initiative to reach out to Hillsdale County residents to inform them of ARC’s presence in this county. They hope to reach 3,000 households, in response to the focus groups held earlier.
- **Sharon Bisher of Hillsdale County Community Foundation** announced that the scholarship deadline is March 1<sup>st</sup>.
- **Tony Slaughter of Life Challenge** announced that they are continuing their efforts to connect with area parole offices, and to connect with the local community to assist in whatever way they can.
- **Lenn Johnson of SCMW!** encouraged everyone to continue to promote 211. Also, SCMW! is participating in Elevate American, which offers on-line training in computers and Microsoft programs. See the SCMW! website.
- **Terry Vear of Senior Services Center** announced the Super Spa Sunday is March 7, including a raffle. Blood drive is today at SSC. Men’s and Women’s Breakfast continues.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:55am. The next HSN meeting will be March 16, 2010, at the ISD at 8:30am.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laurie Brandes, HSN Coordinator