**Executive Director Report**

**Fiscal Year Goals**The Board approved the following 2022-2023 goals for Ms. Shannon Tiernan:

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| **Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Goals** | **Timeline** | **Progress** |
| Goal I: Further development of the Foundation’s Strategic Plan and initiatives that arise from the work of pursuing the plan.  | **Sept. 2023** | **In-progress** |
|  Objective I: Survey non-profits and possibly host subsequent focus groups to vet priorities. | **Dec./Jan.2022-23** | **Nearly Complete**  |
| Objective II: Create a platform and execute proactive grant making.  | **July/Aug. 2023** | **On Hold** *(see note below)* |
| Goal II: Continue refining the new Board and Committee member on-boarding process.  | **Oct. 2022** | **COMPLETE/On-going** |
| Goal III: Finalize the grant-making review process and implement approved changes.  | **Aug. 2023** | **Nearly Complete** |
| Goal IV: Finalize the scholarship review process and implement changes.  | **May 2023** | **COMPLETE/On-going**  |

**Goal I. Further development of the Foundation’s Strategic Plan
*Board Update: Business and Manufacturing Leaders Focus Groups***
Ms. Tiernan has developed a strategy to engage the community’s business and manufacturing leaders via focus groups (see Appendix A). The primary purpose of these groups is to narrow down a definition for and potential objectives within the strategic priority of “Community Vitality.” She is planning to launch these focus groups in June and report findings back to the Board at its August meeting.

**Board Consideration: Goal I, Objectives I and II**
Ms. Tiernan is requesting that the Board consider extending the timeline on Goal I, Objectives I and II to Sept 2023 and FY 2023-24 respectively. With the addition of focus groups, the information needed to determine how to apply proactive grant making may not be available for the Board to consider until the end of this fiscal year.

**Board consideration: Funding for Focus Groups**
Ms. Tiernan is requesting the Board consider a $1,200 grant to cover expenses associated with the upcoming focus groups *(i.e. food/refreshments, printed materials, other necessities.)*

**Goal III. Finalize the grant-making review process and implement approved changes
*Board Consideration: Social Safety Net Grant-making***Historically, several local health and social services agencies would submit a quarterly grant at least once annually for recurring funding/general operating support. With recent changes to the Foundation’s grant-making priorities, these types of requests no longer qualify for funding. In alignment with the Foundation’s strategic priority of “Essential Needs,” staff are proposing a special one-time grant opportunity for non-profits that meet specific criteria (see Appendix B).

If approved, Ms. Tiernan is proposing the Foundation utilize the Emergency Response Non-endowed Fund to cover qualified requests until that fund is depleted. She feels this new initiatives aligns with the parameters originally established for this Fund.

 ***Board Consideration: Large Grant Process***

Ms. London worked with the grant review sub-committee to establish criteria for the Foundation’s large grant opportunity initiative. Please see Appendix C for their proposal. Staff are asking the Board to further consider the following points:

* Should the minimum value be $25,000, $50,000 or $75,000? Should we set a maximum value?
* Should large grants only be available for capital projects, capacity building, or new major projects, and not for on-going or multi-year initiatives?
* Should the review committee consist of a mix of existing GRC members, along with new members who have experience in the areas of capital improvements, large project management, and operational/financial management?
	+ If not this scenario, than how should this committee be structured?
* Is the timeline appropriate, or should we consider a tighter turn around?
* Is the actual grant application asking the right questions to thoroughly vet the program or project?
* Should the Foundation cap large grants at one annually?
* Might we include wording such as, “Large grants will be distributed at the discretion of the Board of Trustees,” or “Large grants are dependent on available resources.”
* If an agency receives a “large grant” should there be contingencies on how and when they can reapply for a subsequent grant via either the quarterly OR large grant process?
	+ Should the contingency be tiered? I.e. if an agency receives a $25-50,000 grant, they may not be eligible to reapply for two year; if an agency receives a $51-100,000 grant, they may not be eligible to reapply for four years.
* Is the final report thorough, or are there additional questions the Board would like addressed in the report?
* What should the large-grant process be called? (Ms. Tiernan would like to reserve the name “Impact Grant Making” for pro-active grants.)

***Board Consideration: Mini-grant process parameters***In order to accommodate some of the community’s most valued programs that may no longer qualify for funding under the Foundation’s new quarterly grant-making parameters, staff are proposing that the mini-grant process remain open to non-profits looking to submit a grant for a recurring activities or requests that only benefit a handful of individuals. By allowing this, it may encourage non-profits to seek additional funding sources while still providing an avenue for the Foundation to invest in important community activities. As is standing policy, the Executive Committee would review mini-grants, determine the request’s potential value to the community and its fit with the Foundation’s priorities, and move to support or deny. If interested, Board members can review the current mini-grant application [here](https://marshallcf.org/receive/grants/apply/).

**Goal IV: Finalize the scholarship review process and implement changes
*Board Consideration: Roy and Martha Rocco Farm Donor Advised Fund***The Rocco DAF was established in 2009 by Martha Rocco. Though an advised fund, Ms. Rocco requested that distributions support health and arts initiatives in the Marshall-area and surrounding communities. Ms. Rocco also requested distributions from the fund to support Calhoun County 4-H programs. Upon Ms. Rocco’s passing, her daughter, Sharon Pratley, has occasionally made distribution recommendations from the fund, but has not connected with the Foundation since 2019. Ms. Rocco did not stipulate in the fund agreement that her children could have advising privileges upon her death.

Ms. Tiernan is requesting that the Board consider converting this fund to a Field of Interest Fund, allowing staff to apply distributions to local programs and initiatives that reflect the priorities established by Ms. Rocco. By doing this, the fund would then adhere to the Foundation’s policy of at least one distribution per fund every three years, unless otherwise stipulated by the donor. In addition, Ms. Tiernan is requesting the Board consider a transfer of $1,000 from the fund’s income fund to the principle endowment, raising the funds endowed total to $5,166.67 in order to classify the fund as fully endowed.

***Board Consideration: Conley Scholarship***Clyde and Marian Connelly established a scholarship in 2000 with an estate gift. Originally, the scholarship was awarded to Marshall High School graduates who are in their junior or senior year of college and majoring or minoring in music. The maximum amount per person was originally set at $1,000. Since, the fund’s endowed principle has grown to $379,473, and its income fund totaled $89,024 at the start of this fiscal year.

Through the last several decades, the Foundation Board has expanded the fund parameters to encompass former graduates of Branch, Barry, Calhoun, Eaton, Ingham, Jackson and Kalamazoo counties. In addition, applicants must only show pursuit of continued education in music, with preference still given to those pursuing a major or minor. Previous recipients may reapply.

Though the MCF Scholarship Committee that oversees distributions from this fund made an effort to grant significant awards this year (three applicants are receiving $46,500 in scholarships), this fund will continue to generate an additional $23,000+ a year in distributable income. Because of this, staff are requesting further expansion of parameters to include all junior- and senior-level college students from across Michigan continuing in music, with a preference given to those with a music-related major or minor.

***Board Update: Clissold Scholarship***Staff recently spoke with Ms. Cathy Clissold regarding the Phillip R. Clissold Vocal Music Enrichment Scholarship. When she is in Marshall for Mr. Clissold’s memorial service, she intends to meet with staff to discuss this fund’s parameters. Ms. Turner is recommending that she consider expanding the fund’s parameters to encompass all music students, not just vocal students. In addition, she is recommending expanding the purpose from solely summer vocal music camps/seminars to activities, such as but not limited to, camps, seminars and school sanctioned, music-related travel experiences. Ms. Clissold seemed amicable to these changes.

***Update: Collins Scholarship***It is with extreme pleasure that staff announce the inaugural distribution from the John and Susan Collins Historic Preservation Scholarship. A total of $70,000 was awarded to graduate students from Boston and Eastern Michigan universities. Thank you to our own Jay Larson for agreeing to serve on this committee, along with fellow Marshall neighbor, Jeff Greene, Susan’s nephew, Rob Everetts, and Marty Overhiser’s daughter, Marla Collum.

**General Operations of the Community Foundation
*Update: Marketing Initiatives***The following were initiated or completed over the Second Quarter:

* Financial Investment Webinar
* Impact Report
* Enewletter
* Several press releases and Facebook posts

In addition, Ms. Tiernan is working with Mr. John Hendler to capture the stories of some of our most long-standing volunteers/Board members. He will interview and write stories about their time working with the Foundation, that can then be shared on our website, enewsletters and in the Advisor.

***Board Comment: Layout of MCF website, specifically the secure online portal***If any Board member has ideas on how to make the current website more user friendly – or if you have an example of a user-friendly website with design aspects the Foundation might replicate on their site – please reach out to Ms. Tiernan.

***Board Consideration: Marketing and Development Committee***
After much consideration and consultation with Barbara Cooke, Marketing and Development Committee Chair, Ms. Tiernan would like the Board to consider dissolving this committee. The number of committees directly managed by Ms. Tiernan (four active, and one additional committee that meets as necessary), in combination with her work overseeing the advancement of the office, has made it difficult to effectively manage this committee well. In addition, when this committee was formed, the Foundation had not yet contracted with BluFish for its marketing and communication efforts. She works with Ryan Traver and staff to develop and execute communication pieces, and rarely needs the committee to offer additional insight or guidance.

Ms. Tiernan will work with the Nominating Committee to reassign committee members who are interested in continued service. She and Ms. Cooke meet often to discuss marketing initiatives, specifically messaging. Ms. Tiernan would continue to engage Ms. Cooke in this capacity.

***Update: Youth Advisory Council (submitted by Ms. London)***This quarter allowed for a number of leadership and volunteer opportunities for the Youth Advisory Council (YAC). Ms. London is pleased with this particular group’s dedication to “moving the needle” on important youth issues. They are committed to their role as YACkers and take pride in the important work they do.

A group of YACkers were invited to attend the Board Development meeting on April 4. The members chosen to participate in the meeting are especially active council members who have demonstrated interest in, and commitment to, making a difference in their community. The Board reviewed the results of the Needs Assessment Survey which was conducted by the YACkers. The results of the survey were reviewed in conjunction with results from a separate survey conducted by the Board. The YACkers in attendance were able to share valuable thoughts and concerns regarding important topics youth in our community are facing. The information offered by YACkers will be beneficial to the Board as they begin to narrow the focus of the Strategic Plan.

On Monday, April 10 a group of ten YACkers and their advisor, Ms. London volunteered at the Bread of Life food pantry located in Marshall. The YACkers served as “cart pushers” for the individuals who came to shop at the pantry. The event was exceptionally well organized and the adult volunteers were especially appreciative of the young people being there to help. Ms. London was approached multiple times throughout the three hour event by adults sharing how impressed they were with the work of the YACkers. One of the main coordinators noted, “the YACkers are having real conversations with the shoppers. This can be a vulnerable experience for the shoppers but YACkers are making them feel valued.” The YACkers who served at the food pantry all agreed this was one of the most rewarding experiences in their time on the council. Plans are in place to volunteer at the event in the future.

Prior to meeting for their third quarter grant review, the YACkers gathered at the Brooks Memorial Fountain for group pictures. Ali Cook, a budding area photographer, captured group photos at the fountain and then attended a portion of our meeting to take candid shots. All current YACkers have a signed photography release, so these photos will be used for social media posts and in recruitment efforts.

The YACkers met for the third quarter grant review meeting on Sunday, April 23, 2023. Ms. London continues to be impressed with the level of conversation that the YACkers have regarding the grants they review. The council members come to the meetings well prepared and ready to discuss important elements of each grant request. The extra effort YACkers are willing to go to in order to thoroughly review grant applications illustrates their commitment to impacting the youth in the Marshall area. Council members voted to recommend supporting the request from the Brass Band of Battle Creek in full.

A committee of YACkers and Ms. London are preparing to meet with Ms. Becky Jones, Marshall Public Schools Superintendent, to present the results of the Needs Assessment Survey. Not only will the results be presented, but they will also be discussing opportunities to “move the needle” on the areas of concerns that rose to the top of the survey results. The YACkers are encouraged that school administrators are interested in, and receptive to, having this conversation. Ms. London would like to express her appreciation for the Marshall-area school administrators’ for their support with this survey process.

Finally, the YACkers are preparing for upcoming officer elections. Council members interested in running for a position on the Executive Committee will prepare a short video highlighting their interest in the position and explaining why they are an exceptional candidate for the role. Office elections will take place at the May 30, 2023 council meeting. Graduating senior YACkers, Shannon Barba, Elliana Ebner, Kalvin Felix, Natalie Frever, Bodil Loonen, Lindsay Malone, and Addison Powers will also be recognized at this meeting. Senior council members will receive a certificate and YAC pin to wear on their graduation gown.

Ms. London is impressed by the work the council has done this quarter. They are dedicated to making a positive impact on the youth in the community. It is clear that these young people take pride in being members of YAC and are willing to serve our community in multiple ways.

***Update: New Funds and Significant Gifts***There were no new funds established in the second quarter, though Ms. Tiernan has had significant conversations with two individuals regarding the potential establishment of three new funds.

***Review: Board Survey Comments***
During the most recent Board Survey, Trustees submitted several comments. Some of these comments had been previously addressed by staff (see below.) Feel free to reach out to staff at any time if you are seeking specific documents or are experiencing difficulties accessing needed information. We are happy to assist you!

* *A one-page summary of fund types loaded to the portal for reference by Board members would be helpful.*
The “Description of Fund Types” is available under “Governing Documents” via the Board of Trustees secure online portal. Additional detailed information – as well as a listing of existing funds by type – can be found on the Foundation’s website under “About” and “Funds”.
* *I would like to see running minutes for our meetings. Something we are able to access quickly so that if I had a question about our last meeting we could access quickly.*
All previous meeting minutes that have been approved by the Board are available via the secure online portal under “Board of Trustees” and “Previous”. Minutes are grouped by fiscal year, with the current fiscal year’s minutes listed separately until the year is complete. The most immediate meeting minutes are included as part of the current meeting’s documents (i.e. consent agenda.)
* *When prospective grantees complete the online application, there may be complications/clarity issues with ‘saving along the way.’*
In the past we have had a small number of grantees who experienced trouble with the “Save and Continue Later” function on our online application. Ms. London worked with our web developer to correct this issue. The web developer was unable to recreate the problem grantees were having, but created a feedback form for grantees who were experiencing problems. The feedback form was designed to gather additional information, including screenshots, which would allow the web developer to troubleshoot more accurately. Ms. London is pleased to report that there have not been any instances of trouble with the “Save and Continue Later” function reported for nearly one calendar year.
* *I would like to see communications with schools and how to better the fluidity of our scholarship process.*
Foundation staff send bi-annual newsletters to all teachers, administrators and staff in the district. One is distributed electronically, and the other is in print form. These notifications list all the grant options available to educators.

A booklet that includes every scholarship the Foundation offers (as well as several other community scholarships) is made available to every student in the fall of their senior year. A subsequent letter outlining scholarship deadlines is mailed to each senior’s home address; this letter walks students and their parents/guardians through the application process. The Foundation submits two ads to the Advisor prior to the scholarship deadlines, and posts deadlines on the Facebook page. In addition, in the months leading up to the scholarship deadline, information is included in the high school e-newsletter, which is sent directly to a student’s parent/guardian almost weekly. In previous years, the deadline was also included in in-school announcements. Several high school English teachers require their seniors to identify scholarships they qualify for, and write essays as part of a classroom assignment. As with all programs the Foundation manages, staff are always open to suggestions on how to streamline or better promote scholarships to students or how to refine our process in order to increase application submissions.

* *I’m still not convinced all members prepare for meetings and whether additional education is needed.*
Please text Shannon at (269) 275-9075 if you have read to this point in the Board Report. ☺

In the days leading up to a meeting, Ms. Tiernan fields several phone calls and emails from Board members seeking additional information about Board agenda topics. She is happy to do this with any Board member – new or seasoned – as we continue to make improvements to processes and programs.