

Draft Minutes Livingston County CARES Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, January 26 at 3:30 pm

Zoom Meeting

Attendance: J. Cope, T. Matthews, E. Lee, A. Herman, S. Miner, L. Murphy, S. Olbert, A. Ellis, C. Barrows, D. Emerson, H. Ferraro, H. Harvey, N. Palumbo, L. Burns, O. Marra, T. Wilsom, W. Carmen, M. Rhees

Call to Order

- Matthews called the 26 January 2026 meeting to order at 3:30pm.

Approval of Minutes

- Approval of the minutes of the 27 October 2025 board meeting was moved by Emerson, seconded by Harvey, and passed unanimously.

Officer Reports

President Matthews

- See president's report (Appendix I).
- Matthews explained several recent Executive Committee actions and requested that the full board affirm these actions. These affirmations appear under New Business below.

Vice President Palumbo

- Trips:
 - Palumbo reviewed the student application process. 23 students have signed up for trips.
 - Grants of \$12,400 have been distributed to students. This includes \$10,000 from the Student Association. This figure is consistent with the past several years. The total cost for trips is approximately \$23,500, so about 50% of student costs have been covered by grants.
 - Deposits and trip forms have been collected from participants and flights have been booked. Everything seems to be on track.
 - Training sessions for volunteers is coming up in February. We have a full complement of experienced trip leaders joining this year's trips.
 - Matthews noted that there is only one student on the North Carolina trip; the remainder are community members.
 - Matthews noted that the schedule for the Puerto Rico trip needed to be amended due to airfare costs (the group will be returning on Friday instead of Saturday).
- Website: Palumbo reported that he is updating the website as needed, this includes updates on the gumbo fundraiser and nomination forms for the CARES awards.

Secretary Cope

- No report

Treasurer Emerson

- Emerson reviewed documents including the financial statement and budgeted versus actual expenses for the 2025-26 budget year. She noted that there will be a revision based on the budgeted versus actual costs of airfare for the service trips.
- Emerson summarized the Executive Committee decisions regarding the endowment. The long-standing goal of Livingston CARES has been to have a \$100K endowment; the annual interest from this endowment will fund community-based, local-impact projects. With the CD and Gordinier fund transfers, the endowment has reached the \$100K goal.
- Matthews discussed history of the Gordinier funds (see president's report). There was discussion of the ways that Livingston County CARES has served as fiscal sponsor for organizations. This is something the organization will continue to do, serving as an incubator for local projects.
- Emerson reported that donor letters for 2025 contributions have been sent out.

Committees and Teams Reports

Report on Home Away from Home: Guest Christa Barrows

- Barrows reported that the Home Away from Home program is operating out of the Community Center of Geneseo (formerly the Interfaith Center) on Tuesdays and Thursdays during academic semesters. Operations for summer are planned for Thursdays only.
- Barrows noted that this year there are 15 student assistants (4 are returning) working with 5 participants. This is lower than the last couple of years, but Home Away from Home is working to identify 2-3 additional families; referrals from board members are encouraged.
- A student successfully submitted a Student Ambassador project grant to support the program, which is being used for music therapy, supplies, and enhancements to the community center space.
- The program accepts donations, which help cover rent and other expenses. The program is advertised through Noyes and social media.

Report on April 10, 2026 Volunteer Recognition Awards Event: Burns

- Burns reported that the call for nominations for the CARES Awards has gone out and applications are beginning to come in. Board members are encouraged to share information about the awards through their networks; additional nominations from the college are especially welcome, since there were not many last year. Information is available at livingstoncountycares.org/caresawards.
- Members of the awards team presented to board of supervisors in January and received good feedback. Supervisors are also sharing information about nominations in their

communities.

- Burns noted the GVCA's support for helping design and create the awards. Designers for this year's awards have been identified, and the committee will be working with the GVCA to plan for next year.
- Burns noted that this year, invitations to nominees and nominators will be sent out in paper copies to mailing addresses.
- Burns noted that the committee hopes that information on the new community grants will be ready to share at this event.

Report on Volunteer/Agency Connections Hub Team: Ellis

- Ellis reported on ongoing conversations with United Way on developing a one-stop resource for matching volunteers to service organizations. A workshop was scheduled for 27 January but is being rescheduled for later in the spring (March or April).

Report on Reducing Transportation Barriers Fund: Ferrero

- Ferrero provided a summary of the annual report on this initiative (see appendix II). The program continues to be successful.
- A new senior planner will be joining the project and will coordinate day to day management and operations.
- Matthews noted that a bicycle bank idea has been floated as another way to ease transportation access issues.

Report of the Marketing Team: Herman

- Herman reported that the team continues to work on social media marketing.

Report of the Fundraising Team: Lee

- Matthews reported that SEFA contributions totaled \$5,116 from 15 donors. This is a substantial increase over last year.
- There was discussion of ways to enlist the organization's alumni base as donors.

Report of the Disaster Response Team: Kallio

- No report.

Report of Events & Gumbo Team

- Donohue reported that the November gumbo fundraiser brought in \$2,800. Donohue reminded board members that the next gumbo fundraiser will be held on 26 March. Flyers will go out soon and board members are encouraged to assist.

Future of Livingston CARES Discussion on Grants for Community Improvement: Cope

- Cope referenced information on “Grants for Community Improvement” that was shared in the president’s report. The intent for these grants is to provide small amounts of funding to help develop and implement service projects that meet the needs of communities in Livingston County.
- An ad hoc working group will be working to clarify the purpose and scope of the grants and the process for applying. The working group will bring a proposal to the March board meeting for approval and, if successful, the initiative can be announced at the April 10 awards event.

New Business:

A motion to affirm the Executive Committee decision to move \$16,000.00 from a CD to endowment and to move the Fr. Gordinier Donation of \$20,000.00 to the endowment was moved by Wilson, seconded by Burns, and passed unanimously.

A motion to affirm the Executive Committee decision to donate \$1,355.10 to All Hands and Hearts for Hurricane Melissa Relief Efforts in Jamaica was moved by Burns, seconded by Emerson, and passed unanimously.

A motion to affirm the Executive Committee decision to spend \$3,500.00 from the Matthews Donation to the Livingston CARES Photo Archives project was moved by Wilson, seconded by Cope, and passed unanimously.

A motion to affirm the donation of the Livingston County CARES Archives to Milne Library Special Collections was moved by Cope, seconded by Ferrero, and passed unanimously.

Adjournment

- A motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:35pm was made by Harvey, seconded by Rhees, and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Joe Cope, Secretary

Appendix I: Livingston County CARES President's Report

January 26, 2026

Tom Matthews

Keeping Warm in Geneseo. Looking forward to seeing all of you on Monday at 3:30 at our January Zoom Board Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87168603522?pwd=N0OyprExDH8krg8c80ZRYa3Jw45NNk.1>

Meeting ID: 871 6860 3522

Passcode: 626684

Volunteer Recruitment Made Easier: United Way Volunteer Platform Workshop
(Board members are encouraged to attend this program)

Livingston County CARES and the United Way of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes are partnering to help Livingston County organizations strengthen volunteer engagement.

A workshop will be held on January 27 at 5:00 p.m. in the County's Emergency Operations Center Training Room, located at Hampton Corners. Attendees will learn about the United Way's Volunteer United platform, a free online hub that connects volunteers with nonprofit organizations by matching individuals to service opportunities based on their interests and availability. The platform allows community members to browse and sign up for volunteer opportunities while helping organizations promote their needs.

The goal of the workshop is to introduce the platform as an additional tool for nonprofits to recruit and manage volunteers. Participants will learn how to register their organization, post volunteer opportunities, reach a wider audience, and use the platform to support volunteer engagement and outreach.

The event is free, and nonprofits are not required to be United Way members. Organizations already registered on the platform are encouraged to attend to ask questions and learn how to maximize its use. Attendees are welcome to bring laptops; assistance with registration and questions will be available. The workshop will be facilitated by Caitlin Farnung, Community Engagement Manager, United Way of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes.

By working together, we can expand volunteerism across the county and provide local organizations with an effective tool to recruit, manage, and retain volunteers.

Livingston CARES Awards Nomination Deadline Coming Up on Friday, February 6th

Lisa Burns and her team have been working on the 2nd Annual CARES Awards Event scheduled for April 10 at the Big Tree Inn at 5 pm. On January 14, Angela and Lisa made great presentations to the Livingston County Board of Supervisors on the United Way Workshop and the Livingston CARES Awards. Each Supervisor received paper copies of the nomination forms and an invitation to participate in making nominations and attending the awards event on April 10. Full page ads for the nominations were run in the Pennysavers throughout the county and in the Livingston County News. But, as with so many things, word of mouth and social media are the best forms of publicity. Please help by identifying and nominating volunteers for the awards. Lisa will provide more details in her report to the board on Monday.

Recognizing and promoting Community Partners: Lisa Burns and I met with Tim McMahon to explore options and ways for the Father Gordinier Fund Committee and Livingston CARES to collaborate on recognizing volunteers in Livingston County. Although we agreed to keep the two recognition programs separate and distinct from each other, we later agreed that Livingston CARES will create additional website pages to highlight our current relationships with three important community partnerships: the Father Gordinier Awards, the Home Away From Home Respite Program, and the new Reducing Transportation Barriers Program. Currently, these three partnerships are only included in our Annual Reports to the Community and referenced with newsworthy updates. The new pages will ensure our continuing support is public and always recognized as a community asset.

Father Gordinier Awards Fund: This fund was created in 2017 when Tim McMahon and several local leaders were asked by a classmate of Father Gordinier to honor him by recognizing local community leaders with cash awards. Livingston CARES was asked to serve as the non-profit agency and custodian of the donations. We accepted the funds with the proviso that we would hold and disburse the funds as requested by the committee and that any interest earned would be retained by Livingston CARES. Since that time, there have been three donations, the first one for \$10,000.00, the second for \$5,000.00 and in December a likely last gift of \$20,000.00. We keep the interest and we write checks as requested each fall to the annual recipients of the Father Gordinier Awards. The December gift has been deposited in our endowment fund at the Rochester Area Community Foundation.

Fundraising: Speaking of money! This fall, our three fundraising events added to the Livingston CARES treasury. Thanks to the efforts of Brenda Donohue and her events team, our net profit for Gumbo to Go on November 6 was \$2,757.95. The ROC The Day on December 2 raised \$3,668.00 from 11 donors including matching donations from Eddie Lee and me. The third annual event, the State Employees Federated Appeal (SEFA) is a month-long campaign organized by state employees, and this year produced \$5116.00 from 15 donors. Last year, the total was less than \$2,000.00. And as you may recall Denise Battles contributed every year and I understand that Linda Treadwell is also donating during 2026.

Grants for Community Improvement: In recent board meetings and discussions, members have asked what we are doing or planning to do with our money. If you look at the increase in assets over the 20 year history of Livingston CARES, you will see a gradual increase in our financial assets. By design, Lyle Lehman who was our treasurer for many years, and I, worked together to move the organization in that direction. We needed \$50,000.00 minimum to create an endowment and that happened four years ago when Karen Bailey was our treasurer. Since that time, we have had several sizable donations and multiple Gumbo to Go successful fundraising dinners. We have also secured considerable funding for grants to students from the Student Association. Although over time, the Father Gordinier Fund will decrease and produce less interest, that surprise gift led to some good conversations about how we might begin giving back to the community by creating "grants for community improvement." Our current treasurer, Debby Emerson, pays close attention to our assets and we both agree that now is a good time in our history to create some opportunities that can be focused on our county and promote volunteer engagement.

You may recall our ah ha moment during the budget discussion when we doubled our disaster and recovery fund from \$5,000.00 to \$10,000.00 and agreed that half of that amount would go to local needs. We have not had any disasters that need our funds (the last one was in Canisteo) so the Executive Committee started talking about creating a small grants (\$500.00) program to help non-profits organizations and/or their individual members with funding for worthy local projects (examples might be a Girl Scout Gold project or a Boy Scout Eagle project). I have shared this idea with several board members and there is interest so I have asked Joe Cope to lead an ad hoc committee to draft a grant proposal that we might approve at our March meeting and announce at our CARES Awards event on April 10. If you are interested in this initiative and would like to help, Joe will be leading a discussion on zoom on Wednesday, January 28 at 4:30 pm. Let Joe or me know and we will add you to the zoom.

Reducing Transportation Barriers



LIVINGSTON COUNTY
CARES

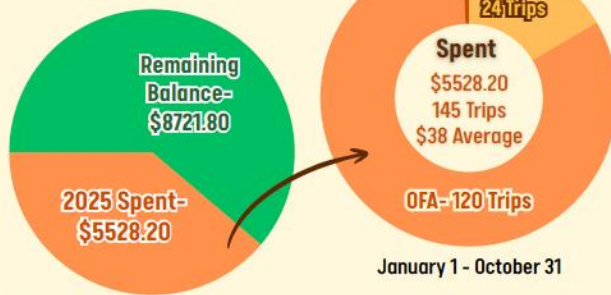


Livingston CARES provides funding support for clients of county agencies experiencing poverty who cannot access transportation through traditional means or funds.

In 2025, Livingston Cares Funding has covered:

145 Trips 917 Miles of transportation
14 Unique Riders Across 3 County departments

2025 Budget (\$14,250)



At the Geneseo Summer Festival, the chicken barbeque event raised \$3,000. At an average cost of \$38, this provides 78 additional rides for those in need. Thank you to all those involved in organizing! Your efforts have made a very tangible difference in the community.

Impact

Livingston Cares funding has played a vital role in supplementing the Office for the Aging’s (OFA) transportation services where other resources are inapplicable. In the past year, these funds have covered 69 trips to the UR Noyes kidney and dialysis center, which have helped Peter, Mary, and Katherine get to their life-sustaining dialysis appointments.

Through the Public Health Department, Livingston Cares funding enabled Eloise, a patient at the CNR, to make weekly visits to her father while he was receiving hospice care. These rides provided support during an emotional significant time, and were impactful not only for Eloise, but her family as well.

Another example of the program’s success is 2-year old Liam. The son of immigrant parents, Liam receives Early Intervention services in Mount Morris. Prior to Livingston Cares funding, Liam’s parents were having a great deal of difficulty finding transportation, and he was missing EI services regularly. Since the conception of the fund, finding reliable rides for Liam is no longer an issue.

2025 Trips by Month

