

One local charity feasts and wastes while others starve

Here is a list of many social service organizations that are wholly or partially devoted to assisting the poor, the needy and often the addicted. They are chronically underfunded and, by and large, their dedicated, selfless, and highly competent employees are underpaid in comparison with workers in for-profit companies.

Aids Community Alliance, Bethel AME Church, Bridge of Hope, Career Link, Center City Clinic, Children & Youth, Church Street Tower, Clare House, Comprehensive Care Clinic, Council of Churches, Council on Drug & Alcohol Abuse, Crisis Intervention, Crispus Attucks, Domestic Violence Services, Gatehouse For Men, Gate House For Women, Gathering Place, Gaudenzia Elsie Shenk Outpatient Center, Hogar Crea Hospice of Lancaster City, Jubilee House, Lancaster Freedom Center, Meals On Wheels, Milagro House, Mission New Life, Nuestra Clinica, Ribbon of Hope, SACA – Spanish American Association, Salvation Army, SHOUT – Student Health Outreach, Southeast Lancaster Health Service, Transitional Living Center Urban League, Vantage, Water Street Rescue Mission, Wellness Center, YMCA, YWCA

Another charity, Lancaster General Hospital, earns an average of \$100 million a year, in large part due to its monopolistic health care dominance throughout the county. Its ever increasing strangle hold on the county health care market enables it to charge insurance companies more than other hospitals; in turn, the insurance companies pass on their extra costs in the form of higher premiums on health insurance to local policy holders.

LGH is legally a ‘Public Charity’, yet its dealings are hardly public (all meetings but once a year are closed to media and the public) and their charity amounts to giving ‘chunk change’ to non-profits to keep them grateful.

For example, two years ago LGH donated less than 2% of \$118 million in profits to charities. Meanwhile, LGH increased the base compensation of LGH’s top nine executives by 50%, despite 2008 being the worst year for the economy since the Great Depression.

Last year LGH donated 6% of its earnings to other local charities, but two-thirds of that was a one-time grant to Southeast Lancaster Health Service.

To add insult to injury, LGH’s trustees, chaired by attorney Alex Henderson, have recently announced an outright gift of \$1, 200,000 to its President / CEO Tom Beeman to compensate him for earnings lost when he takes a leave of absence to serve a year in the Navy. LGH is a ‘Public Charity.’ How can the trustees justify such cronyism?

Consider how much the \$1,200,000 would benefit Lancaster if spread among the above listed organizations. It would double some of their budgets!

Further consider how the Lancaster community would benefit if LGH devoted 20% of its earnings to public health and education?

When will the Lancaster newspapers find the courage to editorially call LGH to account? When will public officials speak up? When will you discuss with your friends and colleagues LGH’s officials and trustees misuse of public funds and lack of transparency?

INTELLIGENCER NEW ERA:

Article “**No federal funds for work on Harrisburg Avenue**” reports: “*Lancaster County transportation officials took a second swing at federal funding for Harrisburg Avenue and again came up empty...*

“The application for \$30.8 million was submitted in August to a U.S. Department of Transportation grant program...

“With the application, the county had sought funding to connect streets in northwest Lancaster city, improve the Harrisburg Pike/Route 30

interchange, widen the avenue between the interchange and the Norfolk Southern overpass bridge and build a walking and biking trail between the city and Long’s Park.”

WATCHDOG: Had the highly dubious \$20 million to rebuild the Harrisburg Pike Interchange with Rt. 30 on behalf of the proposed Crossings Shopping Center not been included in the county’s request, would the remaining \$10.8 million for vital projects such as connecting streets in northwest Lancaster city been approved?

Has once again the true needs of the Lancaster population been thwarted by powerful private interests who prey upon public funds?

Landlord blight: Lancaster now has the tools it needs

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: The Neighborhood Blight Reclamation and Revitalization Act, signed by Gov. Ed Rendell last week, gives municipalities more power in dealing with owners of deteriorated properties that are a public nuisance. The law makes three key changes.

Where in the past the remedy available to a city, borough or township was to place a lien against the offending structure, the law now permits municipalities to file court actions that could result

in claims against other assets of the property’s owner. That means, for example, that landlords who don’t take care of their rental properties might end up with a lien against the place where they live...

Finally, the law allows municipalities to extradite out-of-state residents for prosecution for code violations, which should be a particularly effective tool for addressing problems associated with absentee landlords who don’t take care of their buildings...

Has the PLCB gone bonkers?

Visitors to the “Wine and Spirits Shoppe” at the Hawthorne Center on Fruitville Pike were greeted by wine cartons stacked three high every eight to ten feet in the middle of the narrow aisles throughout the entire store.

When queried, the manager-on-duty said it was necessary to restock the shelves. It was pointed out

to her that there were better times to restock than at 5 PM on Saturday afternoon and, in any case, there would be no reason to stock the entire store simultaneously.

Perhaps the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board has been infiltrated by saboteurs who want to expedite the systems long threatened privatization.

**The above have been excerpted from NewsLanc.com.
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