



Kent County Community Action – Advisory Governing Board Meeting
121 Franklin Street SE, Suite 110, Grand Rapids, MI 49507
Multi-purpose Room A
Thursday, May 16, 2019 - 12:00 PM

Minutes

Advisory Board Members Present: Jessica White-Hatinger, LaTarro Traylor, James Geisen, Ruth Kelly, Samarhia Giffel, Judy Knapp, Benjamin Escalante, Wende Randall, Christina Swiney, Tom Oosterbaan, Catherine Aldridge, Hattie Patterson, Reyna Quintino, Kendrick Heinlein.

Advisory Board Alternate Members Present: Donata Kidd, Attah Obande.

Advisory Board Members Absent: Tracie Coffman, Reyna Quintino.

KCCA Staff Present: Susan Cervantes, Sherrie Gillespie, Brenna Kotchka, Rachel Kunnath, Chad Coffman, Courtney Hammond.

Guests Present: Matthew VanZetten, Kent County Administrator's Office; Viran Parag, Bureau of Community Action and Economic Opportunity; Drew Kornecky, Bureau of Community Action and Economic Opportunity; Betsy Melton, Kent County Commissioner, KCCA Governing Board Member, Kurt Reppart, City of Grand Rapids Commissioner, KCCA Governing Board Member. Public Sector Consultants – Scott Dzurka, Katie Van Dorn, Dayna Emmons

1. Call to Order

Tom Oosterbaan, Chairperson, at 12:00 pm

Quorum obtained.

The Board Quorum is in compliance with Organizational Standard 5.5: The department's

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We work to eliminate the causes and circumstances of poverty by investing in individuals and families with lower incomes. Through dedicated staff and community partnerships we provide services, resources, education and advocacy to improve the quality of life for all residents of Kent County.





tripartite board/advisory body meets in accordance with the frequency and quorum requirements and fills board vacancies as set out in its governing documents.

2. Welcome and Introductions

Attah Obande is attending today in place of Reyna Quintino. LaTarro Traylor notified the board that this will be her last meeting, as she is moving to Baton Rouge.

3. Approval of March 21, 2019 Minutes.....Action Item

Motion: Hattie Patterson

Second: Judy Knapp

Motion Approved

4. Director’s Report – Susan Cervantes

- a. **Staff Updates** – With more grant funding becoming available on July 1st, we are hoping to add a Weatherization Housing Specialist I. The position has not yet been approved. We are also hoping to add another Community Resource Specialist to our HCV (Housing Choice Voucher) program, someone who will oversee reporting, mediate landlord communications, and assure quality customer service within the HCV program. We are hoping to have this new CRS on board by January 1st. We have received additional grant money for FSS (Family Self-Sufficiency) program, and will be able to move a current CRS fully into an FSS position. We have been awarded the full annual TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program) and CSFP (Commodity Supplemental Food Program) grants. The Weatherization Assistant position has been approved and will be posted tomorrow. A CSA II (Community Services Assistant) position will be posted, to assist in our Warehouse.
- b. **Report on Assistance Activities** – Nothing new to report.
- c. **Community Needs Assessment Synopsis** – Board members received a one-page synopsis prepared by PSC (Public Sector Consultants). The synopsis summarizes the conclusions of the previous Advisory Governing Board meeting, where the project’s direction and content were formulated. The final surveys, Customer and Provider, have been completed, and KCCA staff have translated into Spanish, as well. We have multiple strategies to ensure the broadest-possible distribution to ensure diverse representation.





5. Organizational Standards Update

Meeting packets included a printed “Assessment Tool for Meeting Organizational Performance Standards – KCCA Program Year 2018-2019”. This is a good report; we are getting there.

6. Board Training

Board members were shown the first part of an educational video created by the national Community Action Partnership. The video highlighted the values of Community Action and the roles and responsibilities of board members. Board members will see the next part of the video in our next meeting.

7. Risk Assessment Policy.....Action Item

Org Standard 4.6 states “The Department complies with its local government’s risk assessment policies and procedures.” The department does an internal audit towards this end. We are a public (not a private non-profit) Community Action, so we don’t have independent control over risk assessment. The board’s approval is needed to accept Kent County’s risk assessment policy (included in meeting packets).

Motion: Jessica White-Hattinger

Second: Christine Swiney

Motion Approved

8. Community Action Month

May is Community Action Month. There are 28 Community Action agencies in Michigan. Of those, only 5 are public agencies, like us. The rest are all non-profit private agencies. Nationwide, only 10% of Community Action agencies are public.

9. Financial Report – Brenna Kotchka

An updated financial report was included in the meeting packets. Included in the report is a synopsis of the operating budget, current administrative funds, support funding, an overview of direct assistance, and additional monetary items.





10. Programmatic Report – Sherrie Gillespie

The programmatic report was included in board members' meeting packets. We are on target. Our MEAP funding was stopped for a couple weeks, but we got it back. We will use the funding for affordable payment plans with DTE for our customers in need. MCA (Michigan Community Action) was our fiduciary for MEAP funds, but this year they had to hold back in order to meet their own commitments. We had a delay in approval, so we still had money to take back. Later that changed. Last year we got \$630,000, whereas this year we received only \$336,000. We asked for equitable distribution. We don't expect it will last long. Other agencies also took a hit, similar to ours: Tru North, Salvation Army, THAW. Also, we did not receive LIHEAP this year for deliverable fuel.

11. Other Business – In the national news last few days has been the new “Poverty Calculation” proposed by the current administration. Included in the meeting packet is a copy of the proposed guidelines published in the Federal Register / Vol. 84, No. 88 / Tuesday, May 7, 2019. Also included in the meeting packet are two public statements, one from the national Community Action Partnership, and the other from Michigan Community Action, regarding the proposed changes. Both statements express concern with the proposed new poverty calculation because it will define fewer people/families as poor, and will cause families currently eligible for assistance, to become ineligible. Because we are a public Community Action, we cannot lobby, but board members may do so as concerned citizens.

12. Public Comment – none

13. Adjournment 2:00 pm

