



Kent County Community Action
Advisory Governing Board
Thursday, January 18, 2024, 12:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to order – Daniel VanderMolen, Chairperson
 - a. Chairperson VanderMolen called the informational only meeting to order at 12:10 pm, as quorum had not been reached.
2. Welcome and Roll Call for Quorum
 - a. Present: Wende Randall, James Geisen, Jessica White-Hatinger, Samarhia Giffel, Daniel VanderMolen, Jean Ramos, Kristina Colby
 - b. Absent: Chris Smith, Tricia VanderHaar, Kendrick Heinlein, Catherine Aldridge, Hattie Patterson, Reyna Quintino, Kim Moore, Krashawn Martin (submitted resignation on 1/12/2024)
 - c. Staff: Gustavo Perez, Brenna Kotchka, Bobby O'Connor, Rachel Kunnath, Sherrie Gillespie, Ashley Huey
3. Review and Approval of Minutes, November 16, 2023 --- ***Action Item***
 - a. Meeting minutes could not be approved, as the Board did not have quorum. The item will be moved to the next meeting agenda.
4. Personal Hygiene Policy – Food Distribution Programs
Sherrie Gillespie, Program Manager --- ***Action Item***
 - a. The Personal Hygiene Policy could not be approved, as the Board did not have quorum. The item will be moved to the next meeting agenda.
 - b. Board Member White-Hatinger provided suggested revisions to the policy.
5. Director's Report --- ***Information Item***
 - a. Staff & Program Updates – The department is looking at a new water assistance grant from the State of Michigan. It would be a three-year grant with more flexibility to assist more people. We are still working on developing and designing the Lead program in partnership with the Health Department. The initial grant is for capacity building, but we will be ramping up over the next 2-3 years to do more lead remediation work. More positions are being posted to fill the roles needed to operate this program, including a Housing Specialist and Lead Supervisor. Jessica White-Hatinger asked if childcare providers who operate in their home can benefit from the lead assistance. Gustavo informed her we are still designing the program, but we will look at

the HUD guidelines and consider what we are able to do.

- b. Assistance Activities and Potential Conflicts of Interest - None
 - c. Monitoring Updates - None
 - d. Strategic Plan Update – Gustavo provided an update on the 2021-2025 Strategic plan. Some things on the original plan have not come to fruition because of pandemic and leadership change. Since Gustavo came on at end of 2022, he has been reviewing the document and found that the department had been making progress on several of the outlined tactics. The update categorized each of the tactics on a readiness scale of 1-10 for not started to ready to launch. Gustavo provided updates on each of the strategies and detailed the progress the department has made thus far.
 - e. New Member Orientation – One new member, Kristina Colby, started with the Advisory Board this year. A one-on-one meeting will be scheduled with Gustavo for an orientation.
6. Conflict of Interest: *Org standard 5.6 – Each tripartite board/advisory body member has signed a conflict of interest policy or comparable local government document, within the past 2 years.*
Gustavo Perez, Director --- Information Item
- a. The Conflict of Interest form must be signed every two years, but we would like everyone to sign them this year. Members were advised to sign and return the document
7. Fiscal Report: *Org. Standard 8.7 –*
Brenna Kotchka, Financial Analyst --- Information Item
- a. One Time Funding Grants-These include COVID grants. No funds have been spent from the HOME ARP as of the report date, but the money will be spent on two contracts that are coming together.
 - b. 12/31 Grant Ending - The grants noted with an asterisk have changed to 9/30. Brenna reported the department is doing well spending down most of these grants. FSS does run through December and there was some money left on the table, one new staff member started halfway through the year. For the HCV grant there were some admin dollars left from 2023.
 - c. 6/30 Grant Ending- The department is doing well spending out CDBG. A couple of the home projects were recently sold. We do not have final invoices for those yet though. The DOE grant has quite a bit of money left, as there have been problems spending the funds due to grant restrictions.
 - d. 9/30 Grant Ending– We are a quarter of the way through this grant year and are doing well spending out these grants.
8. Programmatic Report: *Org. Standard 5.9 -*
Chad Coffman, Rachel Kunnath, Sherrie Gillespie --- Information Item
- a. Senior Services – Rachel had updated information to share with the Board

since the meeting packet had been sent out. The previous day Senior Services went through their program audit. The official report is not yet available, but the verbal feedback was that there were no findings in any of the program areas. This is the fourth year in a row that there were no findings. The Meals program has transitioned to a waiting list for our home delivered meals. They are ahead of spending for that award and the delivery routes are currently full. Meals on Wheels does not have a waiting list. Clients can get their needs met there and can come back to us if they stay on the waiting list. We are still looking for a regular full time cook, but we have brought on a temporary cook to help in the meantime. The Outreach program has also enacted a waitlist. We are helping fewer people but are providing better service to the clients we are working with. The waitlist will help outreach workers keep their caseload manageable. They are looking for more funding and hope to have three fulltime workers. Staff recently processed their first case for the Senior Emergency Needs grant. The Transportation team is still fully staffed with six drivers. However, they are still struggling with efficiency of the RideLink program, which is run by Hope Network. Rachel has been in contact with contract administrator to advocate for improvements in scheduling, etc.

- b. Emergency & Specialized Services – Sherrie provided an update on the Specialized Services unrestricted funds. These funds can help households that fall between the cracks because they don't qualify for other assistance programs. KCCA was awarded a three-month extension for the LIHWAP program. We now have an additional \$30,000 in funds to help households with water arrears. The ICBAP grant is wrapping up the 2023 year and is moving into utilizing 2024 funding. The new water affordability program is anticipated to launch on April 1. We can help with water/wastewater, but also repairs related to plumbing, such as toilets, sinks, etc. Sherrie provided an update on the status of the MEAP program and the CSBG homelessness prevention funds. The most recent TEFAP distribution was on 1/12 and we distributed over 300 boxes. The next CSFP monthly food distribution is 1/19 from 8:30-2:30 here at KCCA. The food distribution program is looking at alternate options for warehouse space in 2024. The Weatherization program is working on spending out the BIL, DOE, and LIHEAP grants. Staff are working to continually improve the Weatherization process to make it quicker and more efficient.

9. Other Business

- a. Walk for Warmth

Daniel VanderMolen --- **Information Item**

Daniel encouraged Board members to show up in person to support the event, and to share information with their networks. The donation button is live, so it



is now quick and easy for donors to contribute to the cause. We don't have enough funding to support the demand, so we are hoping to be able to raise a substantial amount of funds at this year's event.

10. Public Comment - None

11. Adjournment

- a. Chairperson VanderMolen called the meeting to order at 1:41 pm and took roll call. Upon conducting roll call, it was determined that the Board did not have quorum. Action items will be moved to 3/21 meeting agenda. Motion to adjourn by Samarhia Giffel motion, support by Wende Randall. The meeting adjourned at 1:42 pm.

Next Scheduled Advisory Governing Board Meeting

Thursday, March 21, 2024

12:00 PM