

Washtenaw County Community Action Board

Zoom Meeting

Wednesday, September 22, 2021

5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

General Session/Regular Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

1. Comm. Justin Hodge,
2. Cherisa Allen,
3. Danyelle Reynolds,
4. Jimmie Wilson
5. Mary Phillips-Smith,
6. Rhonda Weathers,
7. Alyshia Dyer
8. Elizabeth Janovic
9. Shoshana DeMaria,
10. Linda Adams
11. Comm. Ricky Jefferson

Members Absent:

1. Juanita House,
2. Mark McBride,
3. Linh Song
4. Jo Ann McCollum,

Staff Present: Teresa Gillotti, Morghan Williams Boydston, Caitlin Nagler, Moonson Eninsche

Staff Absent:

Guest:

- I. **Call to Order**
 - Chair called the meeting to order at 5:35 pm.
- II. **Welcome and Introductions**
 - Roll call of CAB board members
- III. **Public Comments**
 - No public comments at this time
- IV. **Approval of Meeting Agenda**
 - A motion was made by Comm Hodge to approve the Agenda. Motion supported by Elizabeth.
 - Roll call vote:
 1. Comm. Justin Hodge, yes
 2. Cherisa Allen, yes
 3. Danyelle Reynolds, yes
 4. Jimmie Wilson, yes

Washtenaw County Community Action Board

Zoom Meeting

5. Mary Phillips-Smith, yes
6. Rhonda Weathers, yes
7. Alyshia Dyer, yes
8. Elizabeth Janovic, yes
9. Shoshana DeMaria, yes
10. Linda Adams, yes

- Motion carried.

V. **Approval of August 31, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

- Motion made by Rhonda. supported by Comm. Hodge.
- Roll Call vote:
 1. Comm. Justin Hodge, yes
 2. Cherisa Allen, yes
 3. Danyelle Reynolds, yes
 4. Jimmie Wilson, yes
 5. Mary Phillips-Smith, yes
 6. Rhonda Weathers, yes
 7. Alyshia Dyer, yes
 8. Elizabeth Janovic, yes
 9. Shoshana DeMaria, yes
 10. Linda Adams, yes
- Motion carried to approve meeting minutes.
- Shoshana wants to note that she tried to join previous meeting and wasn't able to get in.

VI. **Discussion/Approval of CSBG-D Equipment Purchase**

- Caitlin presented on CSBG-D plan/budget and new technology purchase.
 - There is \$18,000 available in CSBG-D funding.
 - OCED chose to use this for agency capacity building, including technology improvements for OCED main conference room to improve meetings and trainings and to allow for virtual and hybrid meetings.
 - CSBG-D Budget: funding for Logitech microphone, camera, and laptop link. Also 2 smaller Logitech cameras for virtual meetings in smaller meeting rooms. The equipment for CAB approval is the Dell Collaboration Monitor (86 inch display), because the cost is \$7,444, which is over the \$5,000 equipment purchase limit, and a waiver is needed from the BCAEO for this equipment. We are asking for CAB's approval because this monitor is an important piece of the total tech upgrades to allow meeting participants to see the monitor from every side of the conference room.
- Comm. Hodge motion to approve, Rhonda seconded.
- Roll Call vote:
 1. Comm. Justin Hodge, yes
 2. Cherisa Allen, yes
 3. Danyelle Reynolds, yes
 4. Jimmie Wilson, yes
 5. Mary Phillips-Smith, yes
 6. Rhonda Weathers, yes

Washtenaw County Community Action Board

Zoom Meeting

7. Alyshia Dyer, yes
 8. Elizabeth Janovic, yes
 9. Shoshana DeMaria, yes
 10. Linda Adams, yes
- Motion carried to approve CSBG-D equipment purchase.

VII. **CAB Bylaws Discussion/Approval**

- Danyelle leads this discussion
- Wants to make sure we move this discussion along
- How do people feel about the 9 meetings a year
 - Meetings every month except March, July, December
 - Mary said, we used to meet every month, so 9 meetings a year makes sense
 - It will be minimum of 6 meetings, with 9 scheduled, to allow us some flexibility
- Comm. Hodge said, we want to approve all changes at once, then send bylaws to BOC for approval
- Cherisa said we should do one by one, so we can approve each bylaws change individually
- Comm. Hodge said we can just hold all of them until agreed on all of them, even if 2 of the 3 votes passes and one fails
- Rhonda motion to approve change A) update to 9 scheduled meetings, with 6 minimum . Mary seconded.
- Roll call vote:
 1. Comm. Justin Hodge, yes
 2. Cherisa Allen, yes
 3. Danyelle Reynolds, yes
 4. Jimmie Wilson, yes
 5. Mary Phillips-Smith, yes
 6. Rhonda Weathers, yes
 7. Alyshia Dyer, yes
 8. Elizabeth Janovic, yes
 9. Shoshana DeMaria, yes
 10. Linda Adams, yes
- Motion passed, bylaws update A) update to 9 scheduled meetings, with 6 minimum, update approved.
- Danyelle moved on to update B) updating virtual meetings section.
- Explained what the updates are.
- Cherisa motion to approve B). Rhonda seconded.
- Roll call vote:
 1. Comm. Justin Hodge, yes
 2. Cherisa Allen, yes
 3. Danyelle Reynolds, yes
 4. Jimmie Wilson, yes
 5. Mary Phillips-Smith, yes
 6. Rhonda Weathers, yes
 7. Alyshia Dyer, yes
 8. Elizabeth Janovic, yes

Washtenaw County Community Action Board

Zoom Meeting

9. Shoshana DeMaria, yes

10. Linda Adams, yes

- Motion passed to approve update B) of the bylaws.
- Danyelle moved on to update C) on term limits.
- Shoshana is against this change. She is worried about loss of knowledge/experience if long-serving CAB members are not allowed to continue past the 10 year cap.
 - Understands the research shows this as a best practice, but what constitutes a best practice?
 - Important to see whether a member fits with the board and with the organizations mission and vision.
 - Shoshana has been on board a long time, and is working in the community, and involved with OCED and with helping people apply for programs.
 - She is against term limits for the CAB board.
- Rhonda has served on board of directors of nonprofits for years. Supportive of term limits, because important to have new ideas on the board, new people. Sometimes when there is instability in the agency, could amend bylaws at that time to extend term limits to see the agency through the time of instability and difficulty.
 - Important to keep board members around and engaged, if they served a long time and were valuable members and made valuable contributions.
- Linda likes the idea of CAB members who term off, they could start another advisory board?
- Morghan said yes that is possible
- Mary was very perturbed at the last meeting, and she feels targeted by the term limits discussion. Does not agree with the idea of term limits for the CAB.
- Jimmie asked if there are other County boards/commissions that have term limits?
 - Teresa said not sure, can't think of any others
 - Jimmie responded, then maybe its not fair for just one board to have term limits; maybe the BOC should make it a rule for all County boards, so its all or none have term limits in place.
- Alyshia wondered if having term limits would allow for more young people in the community to get involved, to join in and engage with the board.
 - Morghan said yes this would allow for some natural attrition, natural turnover, so young talented people have an opportunity to join the board.
- Morghan brought up that we can have 1 year off, and then they can apply for a term again, after year off. That's also an option.
- Danyelle said she doesn't want this conversation to make anyone feel attacked. She really appreciates the individuals who have served a long time. And we can go about this, finding a solution, different ways, she's open to other ideas.
- Cherisa supports term limits. We could also add in the 1 year off, or other ways to stay active, volunteer, join other boards.
- Comm. Hodge said what if we form a sub-committee to discuss term limits bylaws ideas, other language?
- Danyelle said that is a good idea, doesn't want to move forward with a vote if we don't feel close to consensus.
- Linda said she would be interested in helping the sub-committee.

Washtenaw County Community Action Board

Zoom Meeting

- Rhonda also is interested.
- Alyshia interested.
- Mary interested
- Comm. Hodge motion to form sub-committee to look into term limits, to bring back options to the full CAB.
- Comm. Jefferson, joined, remotely from Washtenaw County, Ypsilanti Township. And he seconds Comm. Hodge's motion.
- Roll call vote:
 1. Comm. Justin Hodge, yes
 2. Cherisa Allen, yes
 3. Danyelle Reynolds, yes
 4. Jimmie Wilson, yes
 5. Mary Phillips-Smith, yes
 6. Rhonda Weathers, yes
 7. Alyshia Dyer, yes
 8. Commissioner Ricky Jefferson, yes
 9. Elizabeth Janovic, yes
 10. Shoshana DeMaria, yes
 11. Linda Adams, yes
- Motion passed. Subcommittee formed. The bylaws updates will be voted on and finalized at October 2021 meeting.

VIII. **OCED Updates**

- Barrier Busters program updates
 - Moon Eninsche presenting; OCED Human Services Supervisor, program lead for Barrier Busters
 - Overview of Barrier Busters, established for 20 years
 - 100+ social service agencies in partnership, serving people in need
 - Main component is Barrier Busters Emergency Unmet Needs Fund
 - Expanded services during the pandemic; reached out to grassroots orgs, school social workers, other groups to join Barrier Busters
 - Guidelines: mostly a 1 time annually assistance; types of assistance include housing, utilities, transportation, health, etc.
 - Funding increased significantly in 2020 and 2021
 - Trends this year, show housing as significant need area
 - 69% of requests from non-white households; 44% immigrant head of households; from an equity lens, we are trying to reach those people who have been most marginalized
 - Showed graph, in 2019, 82% of survey respondents were current on housing costs 6 months later

Washtenaw County Community Action Board

Zoom Meeting

- Shoshana question/comment: she is trying to help a family, they are living in their car, they have not been able to talk to anyone at any social service agencies, can't reach anyone at HAWC, have only received some help from Legal Services
 - Morghan said, you can call me and she can help connect them with assistance
- Alyshia asked can we see what the screening questions are? Also what is the waitlist process?
 - Moon responded, OCED staff is the administrator of the funds, the intake process tends to occur with other agencies; there's income limits for CSBG, try to keep it pretty flexible with other funding sources
- Linda asked, with Covid I can see people needing assistance more than once in a year, is there flexibility on that?
 - Moon said yes, before 2018 it was maybe 10 out of 300 who needed assistance more than once, but in 2020 and 2021 there's definitely been more people who need help 2 or 3 times, due to Covid. We are flexible on that policy when people need the extra help, and we have the extra funds due to CARES, CRF and CERA, among other funding becoming available.
- CERA updates
 - Morghan presenting
 - Just a quick reminder to tell people to apply to CERA, still lots of funds available
 - Reminders:
 - Apply for CERA, even if before receiving eviction notice
 - Attend your court dates
 - Stay in your unit, don't move out
 - Get help from legal services if needed
 - Jimmie, what are the income limits, any changes?
 - Morghan said, people can now self-attest their income, allowed by MSHDA, so they don't have to track down all income documents; they can also self attest their covid hardship
 - Comm. Jefferson, landlords not renewing lease, is that a problem you've seen?
 - Morghan said yes, this is a problem, landlord receiving CERA not required to renew the lease; this rule needs to be changed

IX. **Board: New Business**

- no new business

X. **CAB Member Discussion**

- Nothing at this time

XI. **BOC Representative Report**

- Comm. Hodge discussed updates from BOC
- Allocated \$30.5 million in Washtenaw Rescue Plan funds

Washtenaw County Community Action Board

Zoom Meeting

- Increased broadband access
- Countywide childrens savings accounts program
- Funding to OCED Weatherization program; target low opportunity areas
- Childcare needs also funded
- The good government funding, reimbursing government for some lost revenue due to the pandemic.
- Things coming up soon, in future packages of funds: affordable housing crisis, public health, financial empowerment center, also child literacy
- Comm. Jefferson said some funds coming from American Rescue Plan, some from other funding sources, just a note; we don't want to spend it all at once.

XII. **Public Comment**

- No public comment at this time

XIII. **Adjourn**

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- Announcement from Teresa: Morghan was on panel for United Way town hall today, it was a really good town hall; we'll send the recording around
- Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.