

Washtenaw County Community Action Board

Zoom meeting

Wednesday, June 22, 2022

5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

General Session/Regular Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

1. Comm. Justin Hodge,
2. Danyelle Reynolds,
3. Alyshia Dyer
4. Comm. Ricky Jefferson
5. Juanita House,
6. Cathryn (Cath) Antkowiak-Howard
7. Beth Dulka
8. Jason Towler
9. Rhonda Weathers,
10. Elizabeth Janovic

Members Absent:

1. Jimmie Wilson
2. Mark McBride,
3. Mary Phillips-Smith,
4. Cherisa Allen,
5. Linh Song

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

Staff Absent:

Guest:

- I. **Call to Order**
 - Chair called the meeting to order at 5:32 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 Cath.
 - Roll call vote:
 1. Comm. Justin Hodge, yes
 2. Danyelle Reynolds, yes
 3. Alyshia Dyer, yes
 4. Comm. Ricky Jefferson, yes
 5. Juanita House, yes

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6. Cathryn (Cath) Antkowiak-Howard, yes
7. Beth Dulka, yes
8. Jason Towler, yes
9. Rhonda Weathers, yes
10. Elizabeth Janovic, yes

- Motion carried.

V. **Approval of May 25, 2022 Meeting Minutes**

- Motion made by Cath. supported by Danyelle.
- Roll Call vote:
 1. Comm. Justin Hodge, yes
 2. Danyelle Reynolds, yes
 3. Alyshia Dyer, yes
 4. Comm. Ricky Jefferson, yes
 5. Juanita House, yes
 6. Cathryn (Cath) Antkowiak-Howard, yes
 7. Beth Dulka, yes
 8. Jason Towler, yes
 9. Rhonda Weathers, yes
 10. Elizabeth Janovic, yes
- Motion carried to approve meeting minutes.

VI. **OCED / CAB strategic planning and SWAT follow up**

- a) presentation/discussion by Morghan
 - similar presentation to what was discussed in April 2021, follow up from SOAR/SWAT analysis that was done previously
 - history of CAA and war on poverty
 - Economic Opportunity Act
 - Differences between Public and Private CAAs
 - Public: advisory board, advise governing body and CAA on programs related to poverty; carry out duties as any “reasonable prudent person”
 - Private: non-profit 501c3, the CAA board is the governing board; responsible for overall direction, conduct, effectiveness of programs; fiduciary responsibility
 - Alyshia: question, sometimes policies call for vote to approve, for CAB to approve things, even for a public board, so can you explain why that is? The CAB voted to approve the CSBG-D for remote meeting technology, for example
 - Morghan: yes, the CAB board for public CAA can still provide guidance, sign off on applications and budgets and decisions, even if not technically fiduciary/fiscal responsibility
 - Alyshia, follow up: how does the CAB know the difference, when these votes need to happen?
 - Morghan: we follow the policies laid out, when votes from CAB are required to move forward, it’s usually written into policy

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- Comm. Hodge: serves on the state Economic Opportunity Commission, so they've been talking about the various public and private CAAs in Michigan, there's actually only 5 public CAAs within County governments in Michigan, the rest are all nonprofits
 - at the federal level, moving more towards nonprofits being designated as CAAs, rather than county gov
 - but Comm. Hodge says he is in favor of government implementing these programs, when possible/feasible
- Morghan: to continue, CAA and community action is about moving people towards self sufficiency
- CAAs are flexible, immediate, and able to coordinate
- The pandemic funds, CRF and CARES funds, helped us be able to pivot and start up new programs quickly, to meet needs and target community needs quickly and effectively
- Programs within OCED: Barrier Busters, Senior nutrition program; homelessness programs; Foster Grandparent Program; Home Improvements;
 - CSBG funds support some of these programs
- Rhonda: question, can you elucidate on the Homelessness Supports part of this?
 - Morghan: OCED houses the Continuum of Care, lead in homelessness response system in the County, also oversees use of HMIS to track services in homelessness system
 - OCED also gets funding for staff support as homelessness response coordinator
- Beth: question, remembers hearing at the last meeting that some agencies were not funded recently, and Community Action Network didn't get funded, or something?
 - Morghan: previously was Coordinated Funding, was more funding and more communication; now we have more limited funding with the New Human Services Partnership, and the recent safety net grants RFP program
 - Unable to fund all the agencies we want to, with NHSP
 - This is a good question though, how can CAB advocate/request more funding for human service agencies?
- Morghan discusses the 15 CAB members, from each sector: public, private, consumer/community sector
- Characteristics of high performing CAB board
 - How do we engage with community and take action on important issues
- Morghan review of previous SOAR/SWAT analysis
 - Strengths of our own CAB board: broad knowledge of CAB members; diverse representation from across the county
 - Weaknesses that CAB members wanted to move on, make progress on:
 - Connection to more organizations, formal and informal, working towards community resiliency and ending poverty
 - No focus or specific tasks defined

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- From this we learned that CAB members wanted more focus, maybe a work plan of some sort; also want to understand what each member has expertise in, roles in community
- Aspirations:
 - Input and engagement of immigrant communities
 - Increase engagement with OCED programs
 - More action and work on things between meetings
 - More communication strategy with community, about OCED and county programs that aim to combat poverty
- Morghan: any thoughts on this?
- Danyelle: a lot of these go in multiple different directions; wonders if it would be helpful to have a landscape of the programs and service delivery, and help show us what each other CAB member has knowledge in
- Beth: interested in opening up communication more with gathering community concerns and include input from those we serve in CAB meetings
- Comm. Hodge: recently had a Commission meeting at the Mid Michigan CAA, and at that one they do Head Start, and WIC, because the local health department there declined to implement WIC program; So various CAAs have different programs and are meeting different needs
- Morghan: discussion of Threats
 - Maintain status quo instead of re-imagine new approaches to addressing poverty and inequity
 - Lack of integration with local nonprofits
 - Resources that exist and operate in silos
- Comm. Jefferson: the way that our organization as a county operates with nonprofits that we grant money to; the funds that we provide should be fighting poverty
 - Need to be funding programs that bring people out of poverty
 - Much of Ypsilanti still experiencing poverty, for example
 - Important to monitor nonprofits, look at the data and reporting done by nonprofits, to hold them accountable
- Morghan: yes, that's a good point; how do we not hold the status quo, how should we push the boundaries and encourage our nonprofit partners to try new and more innovative programs?
- Moving forward at each meeting, work on work plans that address some of the goals within each of these categories
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VII. **Board: New Business**

- Danyelle: Last meeting we talked about meeting in person sometime soon
 - Today too hot, and covid cases too high, so it wasn't safe to do for today's meeting
 - Next meeting will be August, we can see if we want to do an in person meeting then?

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- Teresa: would people be able to do an earlier meeting, 4 to 5:30? To help with Morghan's new schedule; just want to see how people would feel about that
 - Comm. Hodge: also maybe some mornings
 - Cath: votes for afternoon meetings
 - Rhonda: 4 pm would work well, except for the first week of the month
- Teresa: we will reach out and discuss scheduling
- Juanita: works everyday, she couldn't do mornings, and afternoons are iffy
- We will follow up with an email about this, see if it is possible
- Cath: wants more info about LIHWAP program
 - Caitlin: coming soon, just waiting on some MOU approvals

VIII. **CAB Member Discussion**

- Danyelle: was talking to someone today about manufactured home communities experiencing increased prices and rent, and other issues facing residents of these communities. Is this happening in our area, does anyone know of any specific communities?
- Morghan: yes that is happening in Washtenaw as well
- Beth: seems to be an issue where public assistance for renters is ending, also landlords can't afford all the bills, so it's a continuing problem
- Teresa: a lot of this covid public assistance is ending, and evictions are likely to go up again
 - Try to help folks the best we can, it won't be the same level of funding, but we'll try to help
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IX. **BOC Representative Report**

- Comm. Hodge: larger funding package for ARPA being discussed:
 - funding for Financial Empowerment Center, debt relief services, etc.
 - funding for eastside community center
 - some community engagement sessions also
 - will do 2 readings on it, and 2 BOC meetings
 - Will send more updates and emails out about this
- Comm. Hodge: interested in getting the state to focus on what Washtenaw does
 - Also the BCAEO seems too focused on Weatherization, which is a great program, but there's other things CAAs do
 - Want to shift the state's focus to more root causes of poverty issues, instead of interventions in the middle of the problem
 - Governor created the Poverty Task Force, but hasn't been collaborating with the Econ Opp Commission
 - Comm. Hodge wants to get the 2 groups to work together better
 - Also wants to see how CAAs can do more for affordable housing
 - MSHDA completed a report on housing, will come out soon
 - The MSHDA Housing Plan
 - Danyelle: excited to hear more about the MSHDA plan when that comes out

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- Comm. Jefferson, wanted to give update on community center; working with YCS school board also
 - First time a rec center in the area has had so much interest and so many entities involved in planning
 - Dealing with some issues to iron out, but it is moving forward

X. **Public Comment**

- No public comment at this time

XI. **Adjourn**

- Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.