

Washtenaw County Community Action Board

Zoom meeting

Wednesday, June 28, 2023

5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

General Session/Regular Meeting

In-person: 415 West Michigan Avenue, Ypsilanti, MI - 2nd floor suite

<https://washtenawcounty.zoom.us/j/81780628968>

Members Present:

1. Jason Towler
2. Mary Phillips-Smith
3. Cath Howard
4. Cherisa Allen
5. Juanita House
6. Elizabeth Janovic
7. M. Jeanice Townsend
8. Nicole Brown
9. Beth Dulka

Absent:

1. Rhonda Weathers
2. Yvonne Cudney
3. Annie Sommerville
4. Caroline Sanders

OCED staff:

1. Katie Hoffman-Pariyar
2. Hannah Lane
3. Morghan Boydston

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OCED Staff Present: Katie Hoffman-Pariyar, Morghan Williams, Moon Eninsche

- I. **Call to Order**
 - Vice-Chair called the meeting to order at 5:3pm
- II. **Welcome and Introductions**
 - Roll call of CAB board members
- III. **Public Comments**
 - No public comments at this time
- IV. **Approval of June Meeting Agenda**
 - Jeanice motions to approve, Danyelle seconded
 - Jeanice asked about the board retreat – wasn't a Doodle poll sent out?
 - Cherisa – When was the Doodle sent out?
 - Yes, Jason will go over results – Jason will send it out again

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- Unanimous
- Motion carries

V. **Approval of May Meeting Minutes (with corrections)**

- Cath motions to approve minutes (with corrections), Danyelle seconded
 - Cherisa, yes
 - Juanita (abstain)
 - Nicole, yes
 - Beth, yes
 - Elizabeth, yes
 - Cath, yes
 - Mary, yes
 - Jason, yes,
 - Jeanice Townsend, yes
- Motion carries

VI. **OCED Updates**

- a. Strategic Plan (5-Year Plan) and Community Needs Assessment Updates (Jasmyne Townsend)
Board packet available in Google Drive Folder at
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qTtF4j2GQmbgLYC-ZZwnqvRfEZbZ5OvM/view?usp=drive_link

- Jasmyne Townsend presenting
- See presentation for introduction slide
- House and Neighborhood Survey (community needs assessment) included 43 questions and available in 4 languages
- Total of 500 survey respondents from around the County
 - 494 English
 - 38 Spanish
 - 8 in Arabic
 - 0 in Somali
- 2022 Washtenaw County Housing and Neighborhood Survey
 - Caveat: with paper and virtual surveys, some answers might not have equate to total # (left blank – answers)
 - Q34 Age and 36 Race/Ethnicity
 - White individuals make up ¾ of the survey respondents...
 - Q37 Hispanic or Latinx
 - Q42: total annual household income: less than \$10K (6%)
 - Q33: Majority were representing 48197/48198
 - College Heights, Dexter, and Old West side are the most represented neighborhoods
 - Q5 – affordability of housing makes up 42% of respondents reasoning for continuing to live in their neighborhood

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- Q7 Neighborhood Recommendation: 50% of respondents would recommend their neighborhood
- Q11 – Neighborhood needs
 - o Youth facilities (31%), public safety services (18%), health facilities (23%), housing facilities (25%)
- Q17 – Forms of assistance
 - o 57% social security assistance
 - o Housing assistance 18%
 - o Medicare 13%
- Q18 – failed to apply for housing assistance due to fear of losing housing
 - o 20% of respondents agreed
- Types of housing arrangements
 - o 20% lot rental, 20% live with family, 20% subsidized housing
- Rent paid with section 8 voucher
 - o 69 out of 171 YES, 92 out of 171 NO
 - o DO you also ask about if they tried to get a section 8 voucher and the complications?
Jason asked
 - NO, I don't think we ask that
 - o Q24 – difficulty leasing with section 8 voucher
 - Out of 57 responses, 59% of respondents answered “no” to having difficulty leasing with a section 8 voucher
 - 42% of respondents who answered “Yes” to explain further. Respondents noted 3 primary reasons; lack of acceptance, difficult to acquire, and housing application criteria
 - Jason – getting a voucher in the first place is what I was wondering about...
 - Jeanice: the difficulty is that there are several entities providing housing vouchers... MDHHS vs. local housing commissions
 - You also have places that have previously accepted vouchers that no longer do (privatized)
 - People that own private homes, condos that are not educated... there needs to be a stronger partnership with the A2 Board of Realtors to address this
 - Discriminatory practices
 - Jason: had a student that got a voucher and violated some of the rules.... Didn't even know what the rules were. More education around section 8
 - Jeanice: biggest concern is that there is no new housing development... the need is there
 - Cath: less housing available
 - Jason: doesn't A2 have a discrimination law?
 - Jeanice: Yes, city of Ypsi has the same... but not the township

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- Tara: Wenisha does a section 8 educational program
- Jason: common theme among this group is housing and the Township - talked about advocacy – Ypsilanti Township level, educate
- Jeanice: more financial literacy training... people get comfortable with having a voucher
- OCED has the financial empowerment center
- Jeanice: County should be spearheading more programs for financial literacy and housing support
 - As a board, this is something we can help with and change the trajectory – because this is quality life we're talking about
- Q28: affordability (30%), size (15%), deposit amount (13%) and lack of options (13%) were the most prevalent housing limitations among respondents
- Q30: 19% of respondents stated having faced discrimination in the past when looking for housing. Perceived discrimination included race (21%),
- Q31: 3 in 10 respondents have applied for home purchasing options
- Q33: for those who have been declined, reasons such as credit history, income level, and down payment amount create restrictions in their mobility
- 2023 – 2027 Consolidated Plan – Priority Needs and Goals
 - 27 Priority Needs and Goals
 - Priority needs range from community oppositions to a lack of resources for fair housing agencies and organizations
 - Each need indicates its level from low to high
 - More information can be found at washtenaw.org/AFFH
 - Consolidated Goal
 - Annual Aciton Plan, ~\$1.36M in HOME funding and \$232,389 in CDBG funding will be used to provide affordable housing for low to moderate income households
 - Visual report of the assessment
 - The chart shows completed, in progress, not completed, no longer applicable
 - How was the survey circulated? (Mary)
 - Facebook, website, shared with partnering agencies (Surveymonkey)
 - Meals on Wheels, Ann Arbor Housing Commission, WISD – paper surveys
 - November to mid-January
 - Jeanice: concern is that Facebook... only limited amount and we don't know how aggressively agencies sent it out
 - more strategic about outreach
 - 500 respondents is ~1%
 - How can we, as a body, can get the word out more
 - Jason: What did we learn that was new that we didn't already know? How do you take a few of those goals and really hone in on them?
 - Jeanice: biggest goal is housing

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- Cath: at one time, Habitat was building new houses... now they're rehabbing homes. Where are they at now?
 - o Tara: I think that is still what they're doing
 - o Cath: I'm always thinking about coordination... I live in an area where there is a lot of blight and not a lot of blight removal
 - Ypsi Township ... aware of housing that become abandoned... It could be useful for housing... nothing happens and nothing is coordinated
 - I brought this up at the BOC meeting... totally inadequate sheltering system
 - Jeanice was talking about more education... because everyone that is homeless was once housed with a job
 - What different kinds of partnering could be done?
 - Educating realtors is a wonderful idea
 - o Danyelle: is there data about homeownership and if there are a lot of people buying them/flipping and renting out
 - Tara: neighborhood profiles – we had someone working with us that pulled tons of data... looked at trends homes sold, homes rented
 - o Jeanice: Supply and demand – when you had the situation where they built homes... Apple Ridge
 - Intentional decisions to build homes and make them affordable
 - This is how many Black residents were able to purchase homes
 - The problem now is, how to make it affordable? For example, those with vouchers who want to purchase, restrictive deed to make it affordable
 - Stuck with the house... unable to sell it because no equity (for those who purchase with vouchers)
 - Ypsi Township didn't want to be a rental heavy area
 - o Jason: 95% of affordable units are on south side of Ypsi
 - o Cath: several units in Ypsi were very affordable... might have been in Ypsi Township... Ford/Forest area but the amount of \$ you had to make 4x the amount of rent in income
 - I couldn't afford them as a social worker
 - Less than \$500/month
 - 4 complexes that I remember
- b. Sign up to volunteer at Parkridge SummerFest/Joe Dulin Day (Hannah Lane)
 - Looking for volunteers to facilitate the event
 - Saturday, August 26
 - Hannah will send out volunteer sign up and if you have organizations that would want
 - Mary: why can't it say Joe Dulin Day
 - Cherisa: You would have to come to the Parkridge meetings – first Saturday of the month at 10am – next meeting Saturday, July 1 at 10am, Parkridge Community Center (every 2 weeks)

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- We have invited CAB members every year to sit in our meetings and give input
- We've always had SummerFest going on... we still recognize him
- Cherisa: SummerFest/Joe Dublin Day August 26, 2023, 11 am-6pm. Live Music, with special guest Prince Marc Jacob; Tik Tok Sensation, Merchandise Vendors, and Resource Vendors
 - o Email Cherisa (cherisaallen@gmail.com) if you know people who want to be a paid vendor

c. **Community Guest Program**

- a. Please sign up for August – if you have ideas, Jason is also happy to reach out to them

d. **Board: New Business**

- a. Board vote to formally accept community needs assessment and 5 Year Plan
- Jeanice moves to accept, Danyelle seconds
 - o Unanimous
 - o *Fulfills standard 3.5: The governing board formally accepts the completed community assessment.*

e. **CAB Member Discussion**

- CAB Fall Retreat
- Dates: October 6 and 7, 5:30pm on Friday – 12:30pm on Saturday
- It will be local
- Jason will build out an agenda
 - Action thing, take time to grow as a group
- It would be great to see everyone here in August in person
- Morghan: As long as there is quorum in person, they can vote
 - Difference in what we can do
 - I would lean on in person quorum
- Jason: please try to be here in person
 - Hoping that the general meetings can be shorter and then we could meet
- Jeanice: Do you need assistance planning the retreat?
- Danyelle:
- Are there any rules against ?
 - Morghan: we do get donations in the human services space and there is a letter drafted to ask for donations
- Jeanice: wouldn't people be more giving if it was a commissioner?
- Morghan: commissioners might not be able to ask
- Nicole: elected officials cannot ask for donations... it would have to be the department
 - But it can come from the department
- Jason works closely with Zingermans
- Jason will send out a sign up sheet
 - Everything is in the Google Drive as well

**** everyone please check your spam folder... emails from individuals sometimes go to spam ****

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f. **BOC Representative Report**

- Jason: Engagement has been low from the County commissioners.
- Danyelle: I think when we consider the committees and roles

g. **Public Comment**

- a. No public comment at this time

h. **Adjourn**

- a. Unanimous

Next meeting: Wednesday, August 23

- Mary: Are we privy to the rule against a stipend?
- Morghan: absolutely, you can have that information/we'll provide you with that information

- Beth: would like to recommend Community Action Network to come present to the board
- Cherisa: on behalf of the Summerfest and Joe Dulin, we're also accepting merchandising vendors (selling products, food, etc.) – email Cherisa (cherisaallen@gmail.com) and she'll send the application
- Jeanice: can we get a graphic for SummerFest/Joe Dulin Day?
 - Cherisa: yes, we will send that out once it's finished