

Washtenaw County Community Action Board

Zoom meeting

Wednesday, August 23, 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. Jeanice Townsend
3. Yvonne Cudney
4. Rhonda Weathers
5. Beth Dulka
6. Danyelle Reynolds
7. Danyelle Reynolds
8. Comm Caroline Sanders
9. Cath Howard (arrived late)
10. Elizabeth Janovic (arrived late)

Absent:

1. Juanita House
2. Cherisa Allen
3. Mary Phillips-Smith
4. Comm Annie Sommerville
5. Alyshia Dyer

***** fill in who isn't hear and if they were excused****

OCED staff:

1. Katie Hoffman-Pariyar
2. Morghan Boydston
-

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 August Meeting Agenda**
 - Jeanice motions to approve, Yvonne seconded
 - Unanimous
 - Motion carries

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

- Jeanice motions to approve, Comm Sanders seconded
- Unanimous
- Motion carries

VI. **OCED Updates**

<https://www.washtenaw.org/668/Continuum-of-Care-CoC>

- Morghan Boydston, OCED Human Services Manager gave updates on the Continuum of Care
- Data updated every month (September, we will have August data)
- Add links to website
- During the pandemic, significant funds going toward rapid rehousing
 - Significant funding
 - Huge increase in the ability to house folks
 - Starting to see that fade out
- Average 184 days to house someone in 2023
- Data reports tab – quarterly reporting
 - January 2023 Joint Leadership Data (add links)
- Morghan would offer one on one if you want more information
- Where in the data do people fall off? Where does that data go? (Jason)
 - We do track that
 - It's called "inactive" if people are not responsive within 60 days
 - Present out call center HAWC #s
 - o Shows how many times clients follow up for services
 - Veteran homelessness
 - o Example: Month of December, many moved to inactive bc they didn't touch base
- Is jail part of that system too?
 - No, it isn't part of the
- Do we follow up with people that fall off? Systems in place?
 - Call center does make calls to people that fall off to ensure they are okay
 - o Make sure they aren't incarcerated or in the hospital
- Fort Path (?) – outreach center
 - Reaching out to folks
- Can you talk about the housing? I've heard that there's not enough housing for those experiencing homelessness? Are you seeing limited housing (Beth)
 - Housing programs are in different buckets affordable housing unsuit with supportive services, aff housing without, market based units that anyone can rent
 - Aff housing with services is very limited
 - Subsidized and housing programs
 - Rapid rehousing is not considered permanent housing at all..

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- By name list
 - MSHDA will let us know who is next on the list
- Can you share some of the prioritizations... how do you prioritize clients? Caroline
 - Individual – chronic individual – documented disability, documentation of the amount of time exp homelessness (1 year over 3 years, not necessarily consecutively)
 - Having a record determines where you lease up
 - Those exited out of the system... if you're in the system
 - For families, depends on unit size available
 - o Lower scoring folks are prioritized and then middle scoring, up to high scoring
 - What are your crises?
 - All based on unit size
 - "Chip space"
 - o Who is the best fit for the available resource?
- Jason: what is your goal?
 - System goal is 90 days (3 months)
 - Ideally, that's the longest amount of time you would want someone to be in shelter
 - Housing stock – homelessness is increasing...
 - o 90 days to 180 days bc we've almost doubled homelessness
 - Increasingly, there are not units available that people can afford, even with subsidies
- Yvonne: From shelter to securijng housing, what's the timeline from being homeless to being shelters
 - Assessment to housing is about 90 days
 - # entering shelter – we don't have enough shelter...
 - People might not ever get a shelter resource but they
- Danyelle: you talked about some of the factors (i.e. funding, pandemic)... are there are other things (i.e. resources from the county) that might be factors? What are some resources that might help get these numbers down? Other factors that can be addressed?
 - Morghan: We are the malfunction of other systems... thousands literally homeless or housing insecure.
 - o Ultimately, we need more financial support for folks to afford housing
 - o Money alone is never going to be what solves this...
 - o Need to increase economic opportunity.
 - o Access to quality mental health care, job opportunities, etc.
 - o County has put significant funds into addressing homelessness.
 - Transition funds
 - Community priority grants
 - Supports for non-profits addressing.
 - o Systems need to come together and problem solve.
- Comm Sanders: Maintained or increased the funding

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- With the increase of rent across the board – unaffordable – the #s are based on the “status quo” historically
 - How do you educate community on how to afford housing that’s double in cost?
- Morghan: data is showing family AND individual homelessness is on the rise
 - Homelessness before and after pandemic is drastically
 - Ongoing conversations and strategy meetings about how to address this
- Are there any incentives for private
 - WHA has a landlord mitigation fund
 - They provide incentives for landlords to rent with folks with subsidies
 - Section 8 used to be a good incentive... but vouchers only allow a certain amount of market rent... However, no regulation for landlords to charge a specific amount
 - You have to pay whatever the voucher doesn’t cover
- Yvonne: used to be illegal for landlords to charge more... people would lose their voucher if they can’t pay balance
 - Agents get paid based on how many units leased
 - Folks can lose the voucher if they don’t pay tenant-based portion of their rent
 - Our local funds/federal \$ cannot support families who have vouchers
- Comm Sanders: public dollars are paying individuals to incentivize homelessness... (referring to housing agents – pay based on how many folks they lease up)
- Jeanice: Ann Arbor housing comm is the only authority that’s great to work with
 - Client received notice of “overpayment”
 - Didn’t calculate their balance properly
 - Threatening to kick client off Section 8 for this overpayment (but we don’t know where this overpayment came from) - \$69 per month (payment plan)
 - A lot of money for family with 6 kids
 - Arrears of \$249
 - Housing Administrative Plan
 - I’ve had to become versed in section 8 and the lingo
 - Housing Commission will be more likely to work with you/respond if you know the lingo/terminology
 - Ann Arbor Housing Comm was able to provide more insight so I could advocate for my tenant today
- Jason: I was looking at how many Airbnbs are in Ann Arbor– I was just curious
 - Just in Ann Arbor, there are 800 units at \$225 per night
- Beth: I have an extra room in my house and have been thinking about renting out the room to someone in need. Would love to know more about how that process would work.
- Jeanice: landlord program needs to be more visible and streamlined
 - Very hard to get information... unless they have a relator that’s versed in the area

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- Any other programs available out there to help, I think it would be good if the local agency and the County can work together to streamline this process
- Cath: does anybody do anything with foreclosed housing and how to reutilize it for affordable housing?
 - Jeanice: we don't really have foreclosed housing
 - Morghan: Washtenaw County doesn't have a lot of foreclosed housing... here is really about building new and designating them as affordable (and for a long time too)
 - We're -2,400 units that we hoped to have (goals of the county) for affordable units
- Jenaice: I worked for Fanny Mae who handled many of the foreclosed housing – ended contracts in 2018
- Yvonne: At one point HBS would have a home share program... a way to socialize seniors and less costly rent for the seeker
 - Ended during COVID
 - Discussion about WHA taking over this program
 - Probably not only seniors but anyone who has an extra room

b. Community Guest Program

c. Board: New Business

- Working board meetings (Jason)
 - I look around the room/Zoom and I see lots of resources and passion
 - Jason sent out a list of committees
 - Possibility: 2 hour meetings - the first hour, meet with committee and report out during the second hour
- Jason: 2-3 maximum committees
- Thoughts on the different committees?
 - Jeanice: narrow down the list to pick our top priorities
 - Yvonne: can we have a doodle poll to pick our priorities for committees?
 - Jason: Yes, but we want to encourage participation
 - Cath: I think it's not just action... for me, I'd like to see some accountability from other actors in the community that are supposed to be addressing
 - Jeanice: How do we work together to make OCED better?
 - I see as two-fold... see where we can help and support
 - Danyelle: I saw a lot of committees... how do you see the committees being different than others in the County?
 - For example: DEI committees – feels vague... perhaps it could connected to other entities within the county so we're not duplicating what other entities are doing
 - Jason: I put 3 down... but these are others
 - Rank choice
- Jason: is there anything you want to add to this extensive list?
 - Will send out a rank vote poll and vote on those

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- Beth: Same thoughts of Danyelle... inclusiveness of this group and involvement in the community
 - o Base it on the community and the needs
 - o Connection with smaller groups within the county and their needs, what's being done, and community trust
 - o I think it's possible to make a dent
 - o Maybe getting together for dinner.. and bringing these goals to fruition

d. **CAB Member Discussion**

- CAB Fall Retreat
- Jason has a secured a spot for retreat – Whitemore Lake Golf Links
 - Jason will send it out
 - Dinner, breakfast, snacks taken care of
 - Asking *at max*, \$10 per member
 - Jason will be the bar tender if you stick around after the retreat
 - Jason said sent out a draft agenda
- Dates: Friday, October 6, 5:30pm – 9pm Friday and Saturday, October 7, 9am – 12pm

e. **BOC Representative Report**

- o Comm Sanders: highly listed priorities from retreat – working on how to address continuing homelessness issues
- 3 comm attended National Comm on Counties
 - o Touring a tiny home community (Austin, TX)
 - o Exhibition Hall – we had an opportunity to see emergency housing where they had containers they could ship in and pop open
 - o 1 person unit
 - o Very enticing... hoping we'll be looking at that
 - o Also looking at land banks... merge or marry with the Brownfield Program
 - o Things move slower than we'd like them to... and it takes cooperation/stronger stance
 - o I've asked How might we be able to levy new housing developments in the county to sustain/create affordable housing
 - o Prefer the term "multi-level" or "mixed income" housing (rather than low income)
- Resume normal (2x per month) schedule in September
- Please reach out if you have questions or need anything
- For some of us, this (housing) really is our top priority
- Yvonne: Senior Housing Bureau – annual conference
 - o Free CEUs
- This Saturday is Parkridge Summerfest/Joe Dulin Day

f. **Public Comment**

- a. No public comment at this time

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g. **Adjourn**

- a. Cath motions, Yvonne seconds
- b. Unanimous

Possible CAB Committees

1. **Outreach and Engagement Committee:**

- Responsible for creating and implementing strategies to engage the local community in the board's initiatives and programs.
- Organizes community events, workshops, and outreach activities to connect with residents and gather input.
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2. **Program and Services Committee:**

- Focuses on the development, enhancement, and evaluation of programs and services that address the needs of the community.
- Collaborates with local organizations and agencies to provide essential services like housing, healthcare, education, etc.

3. **Advocacy and Policy Committee:**

- Monitors policy changes and legislation that impact the community.
- Develops advocacy strategies to ensure the community's voice is heard at local, regional, and state levels.

4. **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee:**

- Works towards creating an inclusive environment within the board and the community.
- Develops initiatives to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of community life.

5. **Youth and Education Committee:**

- Focuses on initiatives related to education, youth development, and mentorship programs.
- Collaborates with schools and community organizations to support youth and provide resources for their growth.

6. **Economic Development Committee:**

- Develops strategies to promote economic growth and opportunities within the community.
- Supports local businesses, job creation, and workforce development initiatives.

7. **Health and Wellness Committee:**

- Addresses health disparities and promotes wellness programs within the community.
- Collaborates with healthcare providers and organizations to improve access to healthcare services.

8. **Environmental Sustainability Committee:**

- Focuses on initiatives related to environmental conservation, sustainability, and addressing climate change.
- Organizes clean-up events, educational workshops, and promotes eco-friendly practices.

9. **Communication and Public Relations Committee:**

- Manages the board's communication strategy, including social media, newsletters, and community outreach.
- Ensures transparent and effective communication with the community.

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10. Fundraising and Grants Committee:

- Identifies funding opportunities, writes grant applications, and develops fundraising strategies.
- Manages financial resources to support the board's initiatives and programs.

11. Emergency Response and Safety Committee:

- Develops plans and strategies to address emergency situations within the community.
- Collaborates with local agencies to ensure community safety during crises.