

**OTTAWA COUNTY COMMUNITY
ACTION AGENCY ADVISORY BOARD**

Mission Statement: Ottawa County Community Action Agency exists to reduce the effects of poverty in Ottawa County by promoting self-sufficiency and economic independence.

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: April 26, 2021

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Zoom Meeting

PRESENT: Barbara Hooper, Rosa Hernandez, Tabitha Wolters, Alison El-Cassabgui, Molly Dewald, Angie Eliopulos

STAFF: Olga Frederick, Jennifer Brozowski, Kerri Mammoser

VISITOR: None

QUORUM: No

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Barbara Hooper.

Consent Items

- A. The Agenda for today's meeting could not be approved without quorum.
- B. Minutes from the February 22, 2021, meeting could not be approved without quorum.
- C. Consent items will be sent out via email for approval/disapproval.

Announcements

- A. Angie Eliopolus has been approved for the CAA Advisory Board as a consumer sector representative. Welcome, Angie!
- B. The MCA Summer Conference will be held virtually August 10-12. A variety of sessions will run from 11 am to 2:30 pm each day. The agenda is not yet out but will be provided to the board once it is released. There are funds in the budget for 1 or 2 board members to attend. If interested, please let Jen Brozowski know.

Action Items - None

Committee Reports

- A. Finance

1. Olga Fredrick provided a financial overview for the board. The report covers the numbers through March 31, 2021. This is halfway through the fiscal year.
2. The Emergency Solutions grant listed under service contracts will continue through 2022.
3. Weatherization will not be spent out due to the early COVID restrictions and customer comfort level. Weatherization is comprised of two grants: LIHEAP and DOE. LIHEAP funds do not carry forward. DOE was able to be carried forward for two years.

B. Program Oversight

1. Jen Brozowski reviewed the program reports that were provided to the board prior to the meeting.
2. Food program attendance has been lower. Katherine VanSweden is trying additional outreach to increase attendance. Additional food assistance through DHHS and stimulus funds could be a contributing factor to the reduction in numbers served.
3. Under miscellaneous programs, a question was asked about energy education. This is completed during the weatherization intake process.
4. The utility assistance chart now includes the CARES program. CARES funding does not require SER approval. MEAP funding does not carry forward. The grant ends September 30, 2021 and does require SER approval.

C. Board Development

1. The CAA Advisory Board has no openings at this time.

New Business

- A. The CSFP program was recently monitored. There were a few minor findings that the agency has since corrected. The findings included not providing a letter of denial to those not eligible, checking ID at distribution sites, using the USDA non-discrimination notice and identifying faith-based distribution sites.
- B. A client success story was provided in the packet. Jen reviewed the story noting the client was a 64-year-old female on a fixed income. She needed a new roof costing over \$10,000. Before and after photos were included.
- C. The programmatic monitoring is being done by the Bureau. It covers finances, programs, the advisory board, board involvement and clients served. The organizational standards are also being reviewed at this time. Board training is an organizational standard that is an essential part of board meetings. Jen will report the results of the monitoring when completed.
- D. Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) programs are being monitored by the State. Documentation has been provided. The CRF programs were successful.
 - a. The migrant farm worker program provided up to a \$1,000 stipend to those affected by COVID. \$65,000 was spent serving 69 individuals.
 - b. The essential services grant focused on transportation issues such as car repair, car payments and car insurance payments. \$33,813 was spent serving 53 individuals.
 - c. The water program provided assistance to individuals needing water repairs in their home. \$44,829 was spent serving 21 individuals with everything from municipal water hook up to replacing water heaters.

- d. The quarantine kit program provided household items, hygiene items and food boxes to those in quarantine due to COVID. \$13,336 was spent serving 78 households.
 - e. The CARES Discretionary funds are currently being used to continue the quarantine kit program. This program has spent \$3,574 thus far serving 19 households.
- E. Jen Brozowski asked for feedback from the board regarding the board meetings. Members asked for more understanding of the programs provided and the process people must go through to qualify. Members asked to have staff highlight a specific program at each board meeting so the newer board members can learn about them.
- F. A board training video from CAPLAW was shown entitled “Why are you here”. The video discusses being part of a CAA board.

Old Business

- A. The Web Walk for Warmth final donation total is \$11,672.65. This amount is lower than in past years due to the event being virtual, COVID restrictions and no Consumers Energy matching funds. Participation was good this year. We are hoping to hold the event in person next year.
- B. The MSHDA grant providing CERA funding is a program for eviction diversion. OCCAA is not the fiduciary for this grant but will partner with Good Samaritan to provide utility assistance to those that qualify. We are currently waiting on a contract. CAA will provide utility assistance as well as pay forward rent. The program is open to renters only.
- C. Strategic planning was last done in 2017 and will next be completed in 2022. CAA is focusing on the staff development portion of the current strategic plan. Staff has completed DISC and group Kolbe training. Staff will next focus on updates to the websites and using social media.
- D. Training with Paula Huyser started in September. The contract has been extended past the beginning of May. There is focused discussion at each meeting with topics such as program monitoring and organizational standards. Jen Brozowski feels the training is very beneficial.

Public Comment – None

Adjourn @ 2:47 pm

Next meeting is scheduled on June 28, 2021 at 1:30 pm via Zoom. Information will be sent out ahead of time on how to join the meeting.