

**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: June 28, 2021

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Zoom Meeting

PRESENT: Molly DeWald, Barbara Hooper, Danielle Weeks, Alison El-Cassabgui, Deb Rayla, Rosa Hernandez, Amanda Price, Angie Eliopulos

STAFF: Olga Frederick, Jennifer Brozowski, Kerri Mammoser, Michelle Brothers

VISITOR: None

QUORUM: Yes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Barbara Hooper.

Consent Items

- A. The Agenda for today's meeting was approved with the addition to review the agency mission statement under New Business.
- B. Meeting minutes from the April 26 meeting were approved.

Announcements

- A. The MCA Summer Conference will be held virtually August 10-12. A partial agenda was released and shared with the board. The opening session will feature a doctor that worked on the front line of the Flint water crisis. Anyone interested in attending should let Jen Brozowski know.
- B. In person board meetings may resume soon. Those not comfortable with attending will still be allowed to join virtually. We will be switching to Microsoft Teams for the virtual meetings. Jen is trying get clarification from BCAEO on whether meeting in person is going to be a requirement. When the board packet goes out, Kerri Mammoser will be asking each board member to respond with how they will attend – virtual or in person.
- C. Every two years board members must acknowledge having the board manual, whistleblower and conflict of interest policies. Forms have been mailed out to board members that are due for signing.

Action Items

- A. The Fair Housing Policy and Fair Housing Resolution were presented to the board for approval. The board voted to approve both policies.

Committee Reports

A. Finance

1. Olga Fredrick provided a financial overview for the board. The report covers the numbers through May 31, 2021. Most categories are spending out on track.
2. Some categories that are underspent will have funds that roll over. CERA and CARES do not roll over, but CARES is a two year grant that runs through 2022. Food assistance, MEAP and Weatherization do not roll over. Weatherization may get a percentage of the underspent funds the following grant year.

B. Program Oversight

1. Jen Brozowski reviewed the program reports that were provided to the board prior to the meeting. No questions were raised from the board.

C. Board Development

1. A board training video was shown from CAPLAW. It was called "How do you get the right people on the board?"

New Business

- A. Michelle Brothers gave an overview of the Home Rehab program. This started as a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). OCCAA does not have an active grant currently but continues to operate with program income. Program income is generated from past Rehab clients that pay back the lien that was placed on their home. Currently OCCAA is only able to do emergency repair projects that are health and safety concerns. Eligibility for the program is based on income at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI).
- B. A client success story was provided in the packet. Jen reviewed the story noting this was our first case using the CERA grant. This was a single mother of three that had lost income from COVID because she is a home health worker. CERA funding was able to assist with past due utilities, future utilities and future rent payments.
- C. A LiWAP grant is potentially coming for customers with water bill arrearages. This time utility companies do not have to opt-in to participate in the program. The program would run through 2023. The Bureau will be working to get contracts in place.
- D. A link to the ALICE Report was provided in the board packet. This report is done every two years. The 2019 report is the most recent available. Some things to note are Ottawa County has higher income than the State average, lower unemployment and a lower percentage of those in poverty.
- E. There is a large Weatherization expansion in the works. There is not a specific timeline yet. The new DOE grant includes a lot of funding for training and technical assistance (T&TA) in hopes of being able to hire additional staff if necessary. LIHEAP funding will be increasing with the new grant year that begins October 1.
- F. Part of the Organizational Standards process is to review the agency mission statement with the board every five years. Jen asked for feedback from the board about the current

mission statement or any suggested changes. The use of the word “poverty” was questioned because of CDBG using AMI instead of the federal poverty level to determine eligibility. The phrase “self-sufficiency” was questioned as well. Board members asked what was done to promote self-sufficiency. Jen will check with the Bureau on any requirement for the mission statement and will send that out to the board when she receives it.

- G. Strategic Planning will be coming up in 2022. Volunteers from the board will be needed during this process. There will be an RFP put out for a facilitator.

Old Business

- A. The CERA funding is starting to be utilized at OCCAA. Good Samaritan is the fiduciary through MSHDA. Our agency received \$100,000 to provide utility and future rent assistance. The grant runs thru December 31, 2021. There may be another round of funding for 2022.
- B. Jen Brozowski sent out a survey link to board member asking for feedback about the board meetings. If you have not responded thus far, please do as soon as possible. The feedback is very helpful.
- C. The CAA staff have been participating in the referral derby. Staff members earn “points” for referring clients to other CAA programs. For each point their derby horse is moved up the track. The goal is to reach 20 referrals. The hope is this will help to bring awareness to other programs available to clients.
- D. The ESG grant is to help prevent homelessness. OCCAA is the fiduciary for the 2021-22 grant year. Good Samaritan, Salvation Army Grand Haven and Community Action House are the sub grantees that assist the clients.
- E. The Migrant program is underway. AnaSue Jaramillo oversees this program. It is designed to help fill the income gap for migrant families that have just travelled from another state to begin working in Ottawa County. There is a \$100 gas card per household and \$40 Walmart gift cards for each household member. This is being run by appointment only. Jen will send out AnaSue’s contact information.

Public Comment – None

Adjourn @ 3:00 pm

Next meeting is scheduled on August 23, 2021 at 1:30 pm. Information will be provided on whether the meeting will be in person or held via Microsoft Teams.