

**OTTAWA COUNTY COMMUNITY
ACTION AGENCY ADVISORY BOARD**

Mission Statement: Ottawa County Community Action Agency aims to reduce the effects of financial hardships by promoting self-sufficiency and empowering individuals and families to achieve economic independence.

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: April 19, 2023

TIME: 10:00 am

LOCATION: 12251 James Street, Holland

PRESENT: Dick Matzen, Mechele Vaughn-Dean, Britney Brown, Danielle Weeks, Molly Brouwer, Amanda Price

VIRTUAL: Alison El-Cassabgui

STAFF: Olga Frederick, Jennifer Brozowski, Kerri Mammoser, Megan Kwantes, Barb Koning

QUORUM: Yes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Jennifer Brozowski.

Consent Items

- A. Meeting minutes from the February 15, 2023, meeting were approved.
- B. Approval of the Walk for Warmth Assistance Guidelines document as provided in the board packet.
- C. Approval of the Walk for Warmth Parameters document as provided in the board packet.

Announcements

- A. Welcome to Britney Brown! Britney has been approved as an Advisory Board member representing the Consumer Sector.
- B. The updated 2023 meeting schedule was provided in the board packet. The December meeting has been moved to the 13th due to the holiday season.
- C. Legislative Day is scheduled for May 11 in Lansing. Megan Kwantes nominated Kim Blaker for the volunteer award. Kim is a volunteer with the senior food commodities program and was chosen as the winner! Jen Brozowski and Megan will be at the event. It was suggested to bring Kim and her award to a Board of Commissioners meeting as well.

Committee Reports

A. Finance

- a. Olga provided the financial report.
- b. Olga noted a couple of changes in funding. Community Services Block Grant received an additional \$25,000. The MI Hope grant funding was returned to MSHDA. The Emergency Housing Voucher grant was reduced by \$30,000.
- c. Walk for Warmth had funding left from the 2022 Walk. The total collected for the 2023 Walk is not included in the report provided.
- d. Low Income Household Water Assistance Program is underspent due to difficulties getting providers to sign a memorandum of understanding. The MOU is necessary for the providers to accept payment through this grant.
- e. There is one Community Development Block Grant project in process. It will use a significant amount of the funding remaining in that program.

B. Program Reports

- a. Reports were provided in the board packet and were reviewed at the meeting.
- b. An updated number was provided for the Commodities program. An additional 204 seniors were served in April.
- c. Jen asked for feedback on the programmatic reports. If any changes are needed, please let her know.

C. Board Development

- a. All OCCAA Advisory Board positions are now full!

Old Business

- A. The policy review committee has met. The focus was on the agency bylaws to see where some fine tuning could take place. There was guidance given by the National CAP to create internal policies that are more specific than the bylaws. Alison El-Cassabgui and Danielle Weeks volunteered to be on the committee. There will be further discussion on areas of improvement identified.
- B. The 2023 Walk for Warmth was held on March 4th. The donations to date are right around \$10,000. This is a significant decrease from last year. In 2022, SEMCO donated \$10,000; this year the donation was \$1,000. Consumers Energy did not participate this year. OCCAA is exploring other funding/donation sources. The decrease will impact the agency's ability to provide utility assistance in the coming year. Planning is underway for the 2024 Walk for Warmth.
- C. The MI Hope grant funds were returned to MSHDA. The original grant was \$200,000. The program was to pair with the Weatherization program but did not. The grant included very little funding for administration of the grant. It was decided to focus on the Weatherization program along with the Deferral Reduction program.
- D. OCCAA's partnership with Door Dash will continue. The agency received a grant called Reach and Resiliency that will cover the costs of the Door Dash deliveries for the next year. Participation in the CSFP program has increased by 80 seniors a month since inception of the partnership. WOOD-TV did a story highlighting the program.

- E. OCCAA is exploring expanding the partnership with Feeding America. It is being considered to have Feeding America take on the warehousing and packing of the boxes each month. More information will be provided as details are worked out.

New Business

- A. OCCAA has hired a new staff member in the Weatherization program. Aaron Goodell will be a new auditor. He will be starting on May 1. Aaron currently works for the Parks and Recreation Department within the County. He will need to complete the training needed for certification. Welcome, Aaron!
- B. One of the strategic plan goals is focusing on the branding of the agency. There is a consideration to shorten the agency name to our acronym OCCAA. Jen has reached out to the County Communications Manager, Shannon Felgner, for help with a new logo and branding ideas. Another area of focus is community accessibility to the agency. There are discussions around being open one evening a week and/or month to accommodate those that cannot come to the office during regular hours. The Health Department clinic is open on Tuesdays until 6:00 pm. OCCAA would hold appointments during that same time.

Adjourn @ 11:00 am

Next meeting is scheduled on June 21, 2023, at 10:00 am at 12251 James Street in the main conference room.