



Kent County Community Action Governing Board

Meeting Agenda

Monday, August 28, 2023

10:30 am

1. Call to Order- Commissioner Stephen Wooden, Chairperson
 - a. Chairperson Stephen Wooden called the meeting to order at 10:31
2. Welcome, Roll Call, and Introductions
 - a. Present: Tony Baker, Ivan Diaz, Stephen Wooden, Milinda Ysasi
 - b. Absent: Kelsey Purdue
 - c. Staff: Gustavo Perez, Ashley Huey, Sherrie Gillespie, Chad Coffman, Brenna Kotcha, Bobby O'Connor, Stephen Stratton
3. Review and approval of June 26, 2023 Meeting Minutes --- **Action Item**
 - a. Motion from Ivan Diaz, support from Milinda Ysasi. The minutes are unanimously approved.
4. Director's Report --- **Information Item**
 - a. Staff & Program Updates
 - i. Staffing – Gustavo informed the Board that we have had a few challenges with hiring for open positions, but despite those challenges we have been able to bring on more staff. A new driver was hired, and a Contract and Compliance Administrator for Community Development will be starting soon. After six offer attempts, KCCA was able to fill our Weatherization Specialist position. The new hire is bilingual which will be helpful in that program area. There are still more open positions to fill, and more applications have come in over the weekend. Rachel Ahee was promoted to Emergency and Specialized Services Supervisor, and it filled a need that had been missing.
 - ii. Programming – The Leadership Team has been working on moving forward with the data visualization goal set out in the Strategic Plan. We started some of this in the Annual Plan, but we want to do more. Gustavo shared that he is using Power BI to organize our data. There are currently four different software providers for different program areas, and we want to consolidate everything in one place to visualize our data and show impact. The University of Michigan was accepting applications for organizations to submit project ideas for their graduating seniors in the IT program. We are in the final stages of the selection process and hope to visualize where we are assisting, where we have less assistance, demographics, etc. Even if we do not get selected, we can work with our IT department to get a dashboard set



up. October is Energy Awareness Month, expect to see us in the media promoting this, sharing how people can participate as a client, or how contractors can partner with us to do this work. We want to also promote our open positions during this time. This will lead into a networking event on 11/1 that will be used to meet contractors and let them know how they can work with us. Once we get the final version of the marketing flyer, we will share it with the Board. Gustavo also shared that he was elected to the Michigan Community Action Board as the Urban Officer. MCA has a new policy director who is very knowledgeable and wants to be a resource to help our organization.

- iii. Walk for Warmth – Gustavo challenged the Advisory Board to plan the event for 2024 which will take place on Saturday, February 10. The planning committee is working through the details but is focusing on raising money and awareness. Consumer’s Energy made a verbal commitment to sponsor the event, and we are working with DTE on some weatherization things and hoping that they will become a sponsor as well. The Advisory Governing Board has set a goal of raising \$20,000. Commissioner Ysasi brought up the possibility of the City of Grand Rapids Office of Special Events sponsoring the event and asked what other agencies around the state are doing. Gustavo noted that outside of the Detroit area it seems that other agencies do struggle to raise funds with this event. Commissioner Ysasi followed up by asking if there are other options for the fundraising event rather than a walk during the winter. Gustavo plans to inquire about fundraising options at the next new executive director orientation.
- iv. The Leadership Team has been participating in the Kata process improvements training, with a focus on KCCA’s intake process for Weatherization. We are looking at every step along the process to see how we can improve each area. After examining the process, we found that some of the issues arose from a staffing shortage, but some was the process flow itself. The Kata training is ongoing, but we have already seen improvements. On average it had been 450 days from initial contact to when the project was completed, and our goal is to cut that in half. Previous data had shown an average of 206 days from initial contact to intake complete, but we are now down to 66 days. Leadership presented our new processes and expectations to staff and they were excited to be a part of these changes and improve our numbers. The Weatherization program has been struggling due to not having enough auditors, but we connected with Allegan County and their auditors may be able to assist with our workflow. Commissioner Diaz asked if we are having trouble hiring contractors for this work. Gustavo said yes, and that is the point of the upcoming networking event. Commissioner Ysasi inquired if we have connected with Michigan Works! to see if we can work together to get that pipeline of contractors.



b. Monitoring Updates

- i. We have not had any recent monitoring's, but our initial review for our Organizational Standard audit is scheduled this afternoon. Leadership is working on tracking our Organizational Standards for this year and compiling documents so the process next year will be smooth.

c. Assistance Activities and Potential Conflicts of Interest - None

5. Audit Report: *Org. Standards 8.3-8.4*

Stephen Stratton, Fiscal Services Supervisor --- ***Information Item***

- a. Stephen informed the Board that every year we are required to present the results of the Single Audit of federal awards for the County to KCCA's Advisory and Governing Boards. The report is not only KCCA, all County awards are included so everything will not be covered. Page 9 shows an auditor's report on the schedule of expenditures of federal awards. The letter refers to next seven pages of actual expenses. The amounts in the report are accurate when compared to the 200-page financial statement document. This report is over the internal controls; it does not state if it is effective, only if there is a deficiency. Stephen informed the Board that the audit did not find any deficiencies and explained the difference between a material weakness vs. a significant deficiency. A significant deficiency is an issue with internal controls, which presents a slight risk, but not critical. A material weakness is more serious and could have an impact on the reliability of your financial statements. The audit found no material weaknesses, but some significant deficiencies. The first finding had to do with the Housing Commission, which was a repeat finding from the previous year. Not all the housing inspections that were required to be done were completed. To address this finding KCCA resolved to do those testing going forward. Gustavo noted that this finding was in part due to a staffing issue. We used to have a part time inspector and there was an interim director. However, now we have a full-time staff and Gustavo gets a report to stay on target. We also have a backup person as well. The next finding was for the Community Development Block Grant. Stephen explained that the last time this particular item was tested was 2014 and no one was aware of this type of reporting. Now that staff is aware of this compliance standard, we will be sure to meet the requirements. Commissioner Ysasi wanted to point out that with all the new leadership and different systems, this number of findings was not surprising. The training and structures in place now will set us up for success later. Commissioner Wooden asked if both of our backups for inspections are out, do we have another backup plan? Gustavo said we are starting to speak with the Grand Rapids Housing Commission about sharing resources. Finally, Stephen stated that the last part of the report is the corrective action plan. These plans are intentionally vague because we can't lock ourselves into a specific date if it is hiring, etc.



6. Financial Reports: *Org. Standard 8.7*

Bobby O'Connor, Financial Analyst --- **Information Item**

- a. Bobby noted that page 34 of the packet lists the 12/31 ending grants that have been changed to a 9/30 end date. The LIWACA grant was supposed to be coming to an end but got an extension. Fiscal is reworking those numbers to see how we can spend that grant down. Senior Weatherization, staff being hired will take care of extra funding. There is still some funding left in the LIHEAPWAP grant. MDOTM and FSS should be spent out, due to buying a new buss and hiring a new staff member. Page 37 lists grants that have a 6/30 end date, so those ones have just started. The BIL grant is up and going and Fiscal is putting together a plan to spend that out. MEAP 16-17 funds have been spent out, and we have older funds that we are working on spending out. Gustavo noted that LIWACA has been underspent across the board because of restrictions in place for that program. Stakeholders have been having conversations about needing more flexibility. Sherrie noted that another issue is that the vendor must agree to participate in the program as well, so if City of Grand Rapids did not want to participate its water customers could not get assistance.

7. Programmatic Report: *Org. Standard 5.9*

Sherrie Gillespie/Rachel Kunnath/Chad Coffman --- **Information Item**

- a. Emergency & Specialized Services- Sherrie informed the Board that KCCA has made 11 payments through the Compassionate Cares fund, which is less restrictive and helps families who don't qualify for our other programs. 323 payments have been made through the LIHWAP program so far in this fiscal year. The program was scheduled to end 9/30, but we did get a 6-month extension. 137 payments have also been made through the BCAEO MEAP program. Commissioner Baker asked for clarification as to what these funds go towards. Sherrie explained that it is for gas and electric. There is also an affordable payment plan for participants who have must make a monthly payment consistently, and we can help with arrears. For the CSBG Homeless Prevention program, 34 households have been helped to date with mortgage and rental assistance and the CDBG-CV funds helped 160 households to avoid eviction. The next quarterly TEFAP food distribution will be at KCCA on 10/5. The next CSFP food distribution for seniors 60 and older will be on 9/22.
- b. Senior Services – Gustavo provided the update for Senior Services. Additional funding was requested to support programming, and we did receive about a 23% increase. It was less than what was requested but the additional funding will help. The tentative award is just under \$700,000. The goal is to achieve 80% coverage for the program area. We are still struggling with participation for HDM and Congregate. There is still some hesitancy from seniors to come in person during and after COVID. Transportation added an additional route for congregatate meal participants. For Outreach and Assistance 80-85% of contract units have been achieved and for Ride Link 73% of contracted units have been achieved. and Way 2 Go! Gustavo noted that Rachel has done great



work with partners to make sure we are getting our share of rides. KCCA will continue working on looking for additional funds for the transportation program. We have also asked the County administration for additional support to close the funding gap.

- c. Community Development – Chad provided an addendum to the packet to the Board. He noted that we have over 30 different agreements in place for construction projects and funding for nonprofit partners. End of program year was 6/30 and he shared some of those completed projects. There is about \$10 million worth of project activity that is going on for this program year. Chad noted that once the Contract and Compliance Administrator is brought on he will be able to focus on HOME funding program and other grants. The LINC Up and ICCF affordable housing projects are completed and are up for sale. Three projects local government infrastructure projects were selected to be completed with CDBG funding. 3 projects for CDBG local government infrastructure projects. KCCA was awarded \$3 million in lead remediation and also received \$2.4 million award for capacity building for lead remediation from HUD. This program is expected to roll out next year. Chad informed the Board that we are putting out our first RFP for HOME ARPA money. There is \$250,000 available for an RFP for nonprofit organizations to propose program to alleviate homelessness. We have until 2030 to spend HOME ARP grants. Commissioner Wooden asked if these have the same limitations as other CDBG funding- cannot be spent in City of GR or Wyoming. Chad said that these funds can be spent outside of GR. Commissioner Diaz followed up and asked if we know how much it costs for lead remediation and could this funding be used to house people while their homes are being repaired? Chad replied that the County has never run this program, so we don't know exact numbers and that we haven't written the policies or guidelines, but funds should be able to be used for that.

8. Information Items - None

9. Other Business - None

10. Public Comment - None

11. Meeting Adjourned

- a. Meeting is adjourned at 12:12

Next Scheduled Governing Board Meeting

October 23, 2023

10:30 am