

***Advisory Governing Board***

Thursday, July 18, 2024, 12:00 pm

**Meeting Minutes**

1. Call to order
  - a. Chairperson VanderMolen called the meeting to order at 12:08 pm. A quorum was initially not met, so the meeting proceeded as an informational session. However, at 12:27 pm quorum was officially established.
2. Welcome and Roll Call for Quorum
  - a. Present: Daniel VanderMolen, Janelle Deblaay (alternate for Tricia Vanderhaar), Kendrick Heinlein, Kim Moore, Bernard Ayoola, Wende Randall, Jessica White-Hatinger, Reyna Quintino
  - b. Absent: James Geisen, Chris Smith, Samarhia Giffel, Kristina Colby, Jean Ramos, Catherine Aldridge, Hattie Patterson,
  - c. Staff: Gustavo Perez, Sherrie Gillespie, Ashley Huey, Robert O'Connor, Rachel Pillar, Chad Coffman, Rachel Kunnath
3. Review and Approval of Minutes, May 16, 2024 --- **Action Item**
  - a. Motion to approve the meeting minutes by Jessica White-Hatinger, support from Kendrick Heinlein. The motion carries unanimously.
4. Customer Satisfaction Survey Results  
*Gustavo Perez, Director --- Information Item*
  - a. The meeting began with a review of the survey results concerning emergency and specialized services. It was noted that the majority of assistance requests were related to utilities. Sherrie presented the findings of the report, which included an overview of the Weatherization results. Out of 12 survey responses, the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Rachel Kunnath then discussed the outcomes of the Senior Services program, specifically the OAA FY23 program results. The survey saw a good response rate, with over 20% participation. Rachel elaborated on how the program addresses the survey feedback and works to meet the needs identified. It was highlighted that more than half of the

Home Delivered Meal participants reported that their delivery driver was their only weekly contact. Drivers are trained to engage with clients and connect them with outreach workers if necessary. Transportation received a lower response rate, as KCCA is not responsible for scheduling and routing. VanderMolen inquired whether KCCA meals served as the main source of food for recipients. Rachel explained how KCCA supports individuals to address long-term needs. Gustavo also discussed proposed changes aimed at streamlining services in the future.

5. Director's Report --- **Information Item**

a. Presentation of the 2023 Annual Report

- Gustavo presented the 2023 Annual Report, detailing the numbers impacted and served throughout the year. He emphasized that 2023 marked the first year of transitioning away from pandemic response efforts. Jessica White-Hattinger sought clarification on the "number served" section of the report. Gustavo explained that this figure includes individuals served through funding provided to partner agencies as well as through community development public infrastructure projects.

b. Staff & Program Updates –

- The Kent County Housing Commission board recently convened and voted to transfer the housing vouchers back to HUD for redistribution to another public housing agency. KCCA is unable to sustain this program long-term, and in the interest of being responsible stewards to both clients and landlords, the decision was made to transfer the vouchers to an agency capable of managing them effectively over the long term. Community members were present and provided public comments on the decision. It is recommended that the vouchers be transferred to the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), although the final decision rests with HUD. Efforts have been made in collaboration with HR to identify available positions within the department for the remaining program staff. Gustavo discussed the transition process with HUD, outlining a timeline for the changeover. Wende inquired about the future of the Kent County Housing Commission if it is no longer managing vouchers. Gustavo indicated that plans are being developed to address this situation going forward.

c. Assistance Activities and Potential Conflicts of Interest – None

d. Monitoring Updates

- KCCA achieved a 100% rating on the most recent organizational standards review. Gustavo expressed his gratitude to both staff and board members for their efforts in making this accomplishment possible.

6. Fiscal Report: *Org. Standard 8.7* –

*Rachel Pillar, Financial Analyst* --- **Information Item**

- a. One Time Funding Grants – CDBG-CARES administrative funds have been fully utilized. However, some funds have been reallocated to ensure continued use.

- There are several more years available to spend the remaining grant funds.
- b. 12/31 Ending Grants – GRICB there is an uptick in spending with this grant, which is being paired with the new LWUA water grant. We are on track to fully utilize the remaining funds from the 12/31 HCV grant.
  - c. 6/30 Ending Grants – These grants recently concluded. In the upcoming report, the grants that ended in 2024 will be removed, and new grants will be added to the list. The oldest CDBG funds are being prioritized for expenditure first. The CGRS grant has been fully utilized. For the DOE grant, challenges in securing contractors and filling staffing roles have resulted in \$420,000 remaining unspent by the end of the grant period. Wende inquired about the possibility of rolling over these unused funds. Bobby clarified that rollover of these funds is not an option. Despite this, KCCA has made substantial efforts to collaborate with Purchasing, administration, and other stakeholders to address the contractor shortage and has achieved some success.
  - d. 9/30 Ending Grants – These grants are generally on track to be fully expended by the end of the grant period. There are some remaining funds in the LIHEAP, BIL, and WXDEF grants. Spending for SRMM is progressing well. The focus is now on utilizing the older spendable funds, with efforts directed towards the top two priorities. Once the MEAP funding is fully expended, it will be removed from the report.

7. Programmatic Report: *Org. Standard 5.9 -*

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

- a. Community Development Chad presented an addendum to highlight key information from his program report. Plante Moran has completed most of its subrecipient monitoring, identifying a few issues that are currently being addressed to prevent any findings during the monitoring process. Activities for the 2024 program year have commenced, with Casnovia, Sparta, and Plainfield Township as the local government partners. In the HOME program, an ADA-compliant condominium remains for sale. However, LINC UP is encountering difficulties in finding an income-qualifying family with a need for ADA accessibility. Efforts are underway to explore options for selling the home. Regarding CDBG-CARES, funds have been reallocated to the Admin budget after initially reducing the amount; additional administrative expenses necessitated this adjustment. Funds were also shifted from the transit program to the rental assistance program, and agreements have been extended to nonprofits for Tenant-Based Rental Assistance programs. For the ARPA Lead program, partnerships have been secured for a trial program in the Village of Kent City.
- b. Senior Services – Rachel provided an update on Senior Services programs, most of which are funded through the Area Agency on Aging. They received their tentative award letter for millages and were granted additional funds, though only 76% of their total request. This shortfall in funding limits their ability to fully support the operational costs of the program, despite an increase in services provided. One of the primary goals had been to secure

additional funding for meals and outreach. Although the OAA funding request included provisions to expand the team by one full-time worker, this request was not fully met. The team will be expanded using supplementary funds. Programmatically, there are constraints on the outcomes that can be achieved, which may affect future funding. The department continues to advocate for funding increases, seek new funding opportunities, and manage expenses efficiently. A strong partnership with the Fleet Services department has helped reduce costs by keeping services within the County. Upcoming events include the second annual senior prom at the congregate meal site, themed "Into the Enchanted Forest," which has generated considerable excitement among seniors. Over the past six months, a variety of classes and events have been offered, including computer and health education classes. Additionally, a new Cook has been hired and the position has been rebranded to Executive Chef. A new full-time driver will also be starting soon. The department received a donation of corn from Kids Food Basket's farm. All program areas are on track, except for senior outreach.

- c. Emergency Services – Sherrie reported that the Emergency Services team has been exceptionally busy due to other agencies ceasing utility assistance. Currently, approximately \$500 remains from the \$5,000 allocated for LSPDTE, which is being used along with MIENROLLS to assist with gas and electric bills. Sherrie reviewed other grant awards, noting that the LIHEAPWAP grant ended on March 31 and will be removed from the next report. The MEAP grant has been fully utilized for the 2024 fiscal year, and new funding is anticipated for FY25. The LWUA program launched in May, and in its first month, 23 payments were made with an average award of \$6,000. The team is still finalizing the infrastructure for the plumbing repair component of this program. The Diaper Bank program is operational and averages about 50 new enrollments each month. The CSBG eviction prevention program is expected to increase its rental assistance efforts. The TEFAP distribution on July 11 saw nearly 500 boxes distributed, while the next CSFP distribution is scheduled for tomorrow, with seniors needing to register for the program. In Weatherization, one staff member has passed the first portion of their certification and will be testing for the second portion next week. Sherrie also reviewed the number of units weatherized.

## 8. Other Business

- a. Walk for Warmth – Daniel VanderMolen discussed the upcoming Walk for Warmth event, noting that planning should commence soon. An email will be sent out to board members to gauge interest in joining the planning team. This year, there will be a strong push for donations to support the event.
- b. Gustavo highlighted a recent interview he conducted to promote employment opportunities within the department. He has been actively involved in housing and eviction prevention efforts and has joined the Mobility Taskforce.

Additionally, he is participating in the "100 in 100" initiative. The next strategic planning cycle is scheduled to begin soon.

9. Public Comment – None

10. Adjournment

- a. Motion to adjourn from Jessica White-Hatinger, support from Bernard Ayoola.  
The meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm

**Next Scheduled Advisory Governing Board Meeting**

Thursday, September 19, 2024

12:00 PM