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***Advisory Governing Board***

Thursday, September 19, 2024, 12:00 pm

**Meeting Minutes**

1. Call to order
  - a. Chairperson VanderMolen called the meeting to order at 12:04 pm
2. Welcome and Roll Call for Quorum
  - a. Present: Emily Madsen (alternate for Wende Randall), Kendrick Heinlein, Bernard Ayoola, Tricia VanderHaar, James Geisen, Kristina Colby, Daniel VanderMolen, Samarhia Giffel, Jessica White-Hatinger, Jean Ramos, Catherine Aldridge, Kim Moore
  - b. Absent: Christopher Smith, Hattie Patterson, Reyna Quintino
  - c. Staff: Gustavo Perez, Ashley Huey, Stephen Stratton, Bobby O'Connor, Sherrie Gillespie, Rachel Kunnath, Chad Coffman
3. Review and Approval of Minutes, July 18, 2024 --- ***Action Item***
  - a. Motion to approve the meeting minutes by Jessica White-Hatinger, support from Kendrick Heinlein. The motion carries unanimously.
4. A Public Hearing on the 2023 HUD Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) and Kent County's Housing and Community Development Needs  
*Chad Coffman, Program Manager --- Information Item*
5. A Public Hearing to accept any public comments for the KCCA Community Services Block Grant FY 2025 Community Action Plan  
*Sherrie Gillespie, Program Manager --- Information Item*
  - a. Chairperson VanderMolen opened a public comment period at 12:07 pm for agenda items four and five.
6. Director's Report --- ***Information Item***
  - a. Staff & Program Updates –
    - During a recent trip to Seattle for the National Community Action

Partnership, which gathered 1,800 participants from 48 states, Gustavo had the opportunity to connect with other public community action agencies. He participated in a director's caucus where attendees discussed the successes and challenges facing their organizations. Gustavo highlighted our kudos board and the fun committee, which contribute to fostering a positive culture within our agency. Additionally, we continue to review our job descriptions, having recently aligned them with the work being performed through a compensation study conducted by the County for MPP staff. Looking ahead, we plan to pursue incremental growth over the next couple of years as we enter our 2025 strategic planning cycle. This will involve assessing our organizational structure, identifying areas for growth, and improving the integration of our funding sources. We are combining the strategic planning processes for the CSBG and CDBG programs. Gustavo expressed enthusiasm about the partnerships we've developed with other county departments, noting that while some funding may not directly align with our work, it could benefit other departments, allowing for potential collaboration. Furthermore, Gustavo will be presenting at the upcoming Housing Kent board meeting, where a state of housing report will be discussed. He has also been actively involved in the Mobility Taskforce. In terms of staffing, we will be posting a position for a Weatherization Specialist I. Gustavo provided updates on the Weatherization (WX) program, including the need for more contractors and the current status of applications received.

- b. Assistance Activities and Potential Conflicts of Interest – None
- c. Monitoring Updates –
  - There was one recent monitoring, which resulted in zero findings, but one observation.

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

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

- a. 12/31 Ending Grants – GRICB is in the process of combining efforts with the new water grant, which serves similar clients and offers comparable services. Additionally, work is ongoing to wind down the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) programs, as the vouchers will be transferred to the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA).
- b. 6/30 Ending Grants – CDBG, HOME, ESG programs are continuing to spend older dollars down with projects. DOE is being braided with other weatherization grants to spend down on projects.
- c. 9/30 Ending Grants – Staff had devised a plan to get as close as possible to a \$0 balance for these grants. LIHEAPWAP has just over \$129,000 remaining, but the team exceeded the anticipated number of completed units for the year.

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

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

a. Community Development –

- Chad provided an update on his report, noting that the annual performance report has been finalized and is set for submission to HUD next week. He highlighted five active local government projects and detailed the activities for sub-recipients who have received pass-through funding. Additionally, he summarized the HOME investments, mentioning ongoing challenges in finding a buyer for the final townhome at 36th and Jefferson. If a sale does not occur soon, the property may need to be converted into a rental. The board engaged with several questions and suggested partner agencies that could potentially assist in making connections. Regarding ESG, Chad reported that we did not receive another grant from HUD this year, so we will be utilizing the remaining 2023 funds. However, the HOME ARP funding has garnered positive attention from HUD, and we are one of the few entities in Michigan actively using these funds. Chad also announced that the KCLEAR program will begin accepting applications on October 1 for homeowners outside the City of Grand Rapids, offering free lead inspections. This information will be available on the County's "Getting Ahead of Lead" website.

b. Senior Services –

- Rachel provided an update about ongoing activities in her program area. She expressed gratitude for the partnership with Kids Food Basket, which has contributed food used in recipes served at the congregate meal site. A new executive chef has been brought on board for the meals program, generating increased interest. Participation in the program is growing, with an average of 20-30 people served each day, and we are bringing in facilitators for activities and special events for program participants. The Home Delivered Meals (HDM) program is currently on a waiting list, but we are optimistic about achieving better outcomes next year. In August, we received additional funding from the Area Agency on Aging, which will aid our outreach and assistance efforts. This funding will allow us to expand staffing in the program; we had previously needed to keep a position open due to other staffing issues within the department. A temporary worker is set to start next Monday, which we hope will strengthen our position as we begin the new program year on October 1. All funds for senior emergency needs have been utilized, and we found a creative solution for a client in need using these resources. Additionally, it has been a significant quarter for the transportation program, which recently received upgraded cameras and new decals. Rachel highlighted how the department collaborated to reallocate CDBG funds designated for transportation to Emergency Services, allowing us to assist with utility needs during a critical time in the community.

c. Emergency & Specialized Services –

- Sherrie reviewed the grant awards and expressed her hope to present the final numbers for the program year at the November meeting. The unrestricted funds were instrumental in covering gaps when the SER program was shut down early. She noted that the diaper bank program, running in conjunction with the Health Department, has seen 210 enrollments. Regarding TEFAP, the last distribution was held at New Hope Baptist Church due to parking lot construction at our facility, resulting in the distribution of over 400 boxes of food. The next CSFP distribution is scheduled for tomorrow. Sherrie also noted a correction to the CDBG-CV award information on the report. The correct numbers are 10 payments with an average award of \$4,614.33.

9. Other Business

a. Walk for Warmth, Daniel VanderMolen –

- Daniel emphasized that this is an opportunity for the board to actively support the organization. The event is scheduled for February 22, 2025, with a fundraising goal of \$10,000. He opened the discussion on how to approach sponsorships and strategies for raising these funds. The next sub-committee meeting is set for October 1.

b. Board Attendance –

- Gustavo addressed the topic of board attendance, outlining the process for alternates and the expectations regarding attendance. He emphasized the importance of fostering board engagement during the strategic planning process.

10. Public Comment

- a. No public comment was offered, but the board members did provide suggestions on how to increase engagement during public comment periods in the future. Daniel VanderMolen closed the public comment period at 1:31 pm

11. Adjournment

- a. Motion to adjourn from Samarhia Giffel, support from Kim Moore. Meeting adjourned at 1:31 pm

**Next Scheduled Advisory Governing Board Meeting**

Thursday, November 21, 2024

12:00 PM