

Advisory Governing Board

Thursday, November 21, 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: Tricia VanderHaar, Kristina Colby, James Geisen, Bernard Ayoola, Daniel VanderMolen, Samarhia Giffel, Jessica White-Hatinger, Chris Smith, Wende Randall, Kim Moore, Catherine Aldridge
 - b. Absent: Jean Ramos, Kendrick Heinlein, Hattie Patterson, Reyna Quintino
 - c. Staff: Gustavo Perez, Ashley Huey, Sherrie Gillespie, Rachel Kunnath, Stephen Stratton, Rachel Pillar, Chad Coffman
3. Review and Approval of Minutes, September 19, 2024 --- ***Action Item***
 - a. Motion to approve the meeting minutes by Wende Randall, support from Samarhia Giffel. The motion carries unanimously.
4. KCCA Advisory Governing Board 2025 Meeting Schedule Approval
Gustavo Perez, Director --- ***Action Item***
 - a. Motion to approve the 2025 Meeting Schedule by Wende Randall, support from Catherine Aldridge. The motion carries unanimously.
5. Director's Report --- ***Information Item***
 - a. Staff & Program Updates –
 - Gustavo informed the board that we are in the final stages of transferring our vouchers to MSHDA, with the transfer expected to take place in January, pending final approval from HUD. Clients can expect no disruption in their service delivery or housing payments. Efforts are underway to improve our staffing space, making it more functional, open, and welcoming, with a vendor managing the process. Additionally, several positions will be opening soon, and the team

continues to focus on maintaining a positive workplace culture through the fun committee and various training opportunities. The organization remains committed to investing in its staff and developing talent. The MCA legislative coordinator is working to secure funding that would increase CSBG funding. Gustavo also shared that we've been collaborating with the bureau for technical assistance in Weatherization, as some units fell short. Adjustments have already been made, and implementation is beginning. He also discussed the challenges related to staffing in Weatherization and the ongoing need for contractor.

b. Assistance Activities and Potential Conflicts of Interest – None

c. Monitoring Updates –

- Gustavo shared that we received a STAR rating of 4.41 from the Bureau of Community Action. However, there is limited information regarding the specific criteria used for the scoring, the guidelines followed, or how consistent the ratings are across other community action agencies. He is currently in discussions with the bureau to better understand how these scores are assessed and to address concerns about certain aspects of the ratings.

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

Rachel Pillar, Financial Analyst --- Information Item

- a. One-Time Funding Grants – Rachel provided a brief update of these grants, which have multiple years to spend out.
- b. 12/31 Ending Grants – GRICB funding is unlikely to be fully spent by the end of the year due to the additional water assistance grants we have received. The FSS funding, which spans both 2023 and 2024, is also being managed. Regarding the HCVPROG, 14% of the budget remains, with one more payment scheduled for December.
- c. 6/30 Ending Grants – grants have multiple years to be spent down on various projects. As for the Weatherization grants, there are plans in place to spend them down, but it is expected that they will not be fully spent by the end of the period.
- d. 9/30 ending Grants – These grants recently started so they still have high balances. Stephen noted a change regarding the transfers into the Senior Meals program, amounting to \$10,683.

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

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

a. Community Development –

- Chad provided a verbal update on several ongoing projects. He discussed the HOME grant, which is being used for affordable housing development, particularly the 36th and Jefferson townhome units. LINC UP recently signed a purchase agreement for the ADA accessible unit, allowing us to issue an RFP for an additional affordable housing

project with 10 units, specifically seeking 2-bedroom, 1.5-bath units. Regarding the CDBG, demolition of a building in Kent City is underway to make space for a community area and park, which is expected to become the future site of the public library. For the HOME TBRA, the Salvation Army has submitted its first report of activity, having helped house 10 families, while Community Rebuilders has started taking applications but has not yet used the funds for housing. Chad also shared that he has primarily been focused on the two lead grants we currently have. One is a capacity-building grant that will eventually transition into a remediation grant, while the other, funded by ARPA, has the capacity for lead remediation. There are currently 6 active projects involving lead remediation in homes. Additionally, Chad is working with community partners on contractor development and engaging in discussions regarding the County's procurement process.

b. Senior Services –

- Rachel provided an update on several program developments. She applied for a new grant through the Grand Rapids Community Foundation, hoping it will be a good fit for our programming, despite the odds. The grant is for \$20,000 over two years and would support case management and enrichment activities for Spanish-speaking older adults. This year, we applied for six new grants, securing three awards. One was declined due to a poor fit, while the other two, though smaller, contribute to the program's sustainability. Rachel highlighted that this has been the best program year in the history of the initiative, with goals and metrics exceeded, which is especially remarkable given the staffing challenges faced. It has also been one of the most robust years in terms of programming for seniors. For example, today, seniors participated in a field trip to Aldi with the Hispanic Center, learning about healthy foods, receiving gift cards, and taking a cooking class. The Home Delivered Meals program, which had operated with a waitlist for most of the year, is now at full capacity. The Outreach and Assistance program was within 30 hours of breaking its record for hours of assistance provided. However, there is currently a waitlist for the KCSM population, with 33 people waiting and up to 8 weeks of wait time. The Emergency Needs program has completed its first year, and Rachel shared positive feedback from the customer satisfaction survey, with clients feeling well cared for and supported by staff. The Transportation program has had its best year since COVID.

c. Emergency & Specialized Services –

- Sherrie informed the board that she had printed an addendum with the October numbers, which were not included in the meeting packet, for their review. She provided an update on emergency payments

made so far this fiscal year and shared details about several programs. The Diaper Bank program, operated in conjunction with the Health Department, has had 49 enrollments. The Food Distribution program included a TEFAP distribution on December 10th from 9 AM to 1 PM, and a CSFP event on November 22nd, where prepacked boxes of food were distributed to seniors. Additionally, over \$50,000 in funds were recently received to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables, and more for CSFP clients. When Chris asked whether clients could access multiple programs at once, such as Mela on Wheels, CSFP, TEFAP, and Home Delivered Meals, Sherrie confirmed that they could. While CSFP had been operating with a waitlist, that is no longer the case, and TEFAP boxes will be used to help meet the needs of CSFP clients.

8. Other Business

- a. Walk for Warmth, Daniel VanderMolen –
 - The event will be on 2/22/25. Daniel reiterated that they would need help from the board to raise funds.

9. Public Comment – None

10. Adjournment

- a. Motion to adjourn from Jessica White-Hattinger, support from Tricia VanderHaar. Meeting adjourned at 1:41 pm.

Next Scheduled Advisory Governing Board Meeting

Thursday, January 16, 2025

12:00 PM