



## Kent County Community Action Governing Board

### Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 17, 2024

10:30 am

#### 1. Call to Order

- a. Chairperson Ysasi called an informational only meeting to order at 10:36 am, as quorum was not met.

#### 2. Welcome, Roll Call, and Introductions

- a. Present: Milinda Ysasi, Tony Baker
- b. Absent: Ivan Diaz, Lisa Knight, Lisa Oliver-King
- c. Staff: Gustavo Perez, Ashley Huey, Rachel Kunnath, Sherrie Gillespie, Rachel Pillar, Bobby O'Connor, Stephen Stratton, Jen Kozlowski, Elizabeth Snyder, Chad Coffman, Natalie Rodriguez

#### 3. Review and approval of April 15, 2024 Meeting Minutes --- **Action Item**

- a. Quorum was not met. Approval of the April 15, 2024 meeting minutes will be moved to the next meeting agenda.

#### 4. Director's Report --- **Information Item**

- a. Presentation of the 2023 Annual Report – Gustavo presented the highlights of the 2023 Annual Report, which is currently published on KCCA's website. He provided an overview of the number of individuals impacted by the services offered by the organization. Gustavo also emphasized the positive results from the customer satisfaction survey. A comprehensive report detailing the customer satisfaction survey findings will be presented at the next board meeting.
- b. Staff & Program Updates – Gustavo discussed recent developments in staffing and program initiatives. He reported the addition of a new Clerk II position and the formation of a clerical support staff project team to enhance departmental support. Meetings with HR ensured job descriptions align with current responsibilities. Staff members attended MCA Legislative Day in Lansing, where they engaged with legislators and promoted KCCA with informational materials about weatherization, housing, transportation, and senior services. Governor Whitmer was in attendance and Rep. Glanville was



recognized as Legislator of the Year. Gustavo outlined ongoing projects, including the development of a live data impact dashboard in collaboration with IT, and a community profile creation with MySidewalk that will be on KCCA's website, set to launch by the next Walk for Warmth event. Gustavo and County admin staff visited Haworth to explore updates for office space, while a recent team building retreat received positive feedback for fostering staff engagement, facilitated effectively by Floyd Booker.

- c. Monitoring Updates – The monitoring for the Organizational Standards was recently completed. KCCA met all 50 standards and had zero findings.
- d. Assistance Activities and Potential Conflicts of Interest – We had one employee apply for and receive rental assistance. If any board members need more information, they can see the program managers.

5. Financial Reports: *Org. Standard 8.7*

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

- a. One Time Funding Grants – Updates provided on CDBG and HOME grants; minimal changes reported.
- b. 12/31 Ending Grants – Updates were provided on the GRICB grant, with efforts underway to increase expenditure on this program. The FSS grant is also approaching its end by the end of this calendar years, with initiatives in place to utilize remaining funds.
- c. 6/30 Ending Grants – Progress was reported on spending down the HUD Lead grant, following the placement of necessary staff. The DOE grant, concluding this month, faced initial spending challenges but has seen increased production efforts by the team.
- d. 9/30 Ending Grants – It was noted that MEAP dollars have been exhausted statewide. Older MEAP funds nearing depletion were also discussed. LIWACA is concluding and will soon be removed from financial reports. SRMM and senior grants are expected to be fully expended, except for the Senior Millage transportation. The bottom three grants were initiated in April and are progressing.

6. Programmatic Report: *Org. Standard 5.9*

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

- a. Community Development – Chad discussed recent developments in community development initiatives. He noted the submission of the annual action plan to HUD, outlining the allocation of Community Development dollars for planned activities. It was highlighted that Kent County did not receive ESG funding this year, previously averaging around \$150,000



annually. Efforts in homelessness prevention continue through partnerships with nonprofits, with new projects slated to begin in July 2024. Chad noted that KCCA will be entering into 9 or 10 partnership agreements. Regarding the HOME program, there is currently one ADA compliant unit available at 36th and Jefferson, with contingency plans to transition it into a rental unit if unsold within a specified timeframe. Under the HOME ARP initiative, two partners will be launching programs focused on Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA). Updates were also provided on the KCLEAR program, with a recent announcement by KCHD and plans for a formal press release later this year. A trial launch of free lead inspections in Kent City, open to homeowners of any income level, was announced, with future plans to expand county-wide excluding Grand Rapids. Chad presented a map highlighting homes built before 1978, underscoring the community's need for lead remediation efforts. Jen was introduced, detailing her background and new responsibilities, and officially received the lead remediation map from Chad.

- b. **Emergency & Specialized Services** – Sherrie provided an overview of the awards that have been made year-to-date. Approximately \$1,500 remains reserved for monthly affordable payment plan participant payments under MEAP. Applications for SER assistance through MDHHS are paused for the next 3 months, prompting community members to seek utility payment assistance from KCCA, which will open intake applications to address this demand. The Low-Income Water Assistance (LWUA) program has disbursed 23 payments averaging \$649 each. The diaper bank program, in collaboration with the Health Department, has enrolled 120 families and distributed 131 packs of diapers, with plans to extend the program's duration. Upcoming distributions include TEFAP on 7/11 from 9 AM to 1 PM and CSFP on 7/19. The weatherization program has temporarily halted new applications with 80 projects currently in progress, reducing the time from initial contact to project completion to about 12 months from a previously longer duration. Year-to-date, 89 individuals have benefited from the weatherization program. Improvements in processes include enhancements to intake procedures, the addition of auditors, and efforts to expand contractor resources.
- c. **Senior Services** – Rachel provided an overview of Senior Services, highlighting recent developments and challenges. Funding requests for substantial increases were submitted to AAA, with anticipation of receiving a tentative award letter by 6/25 to determine next year's service capabilities. Efforts to revitalize the Meals Program post-pandemic have shown progress, attracting 17-25 daily participants at the congregate site, alongside a robust schedule of daily activities throughout June including exercise and computer classes. However, Home-Delivered Meals (HDM) continue to operate with a waiting list due to high demand and limited funding, despite ongoing efforts to recruit a qualified cook. Senior services staff have temporarily assumed kitchen duties



to manage the workload. In the OAA Program, social workers are handling increased responsibilities, though unit completions for the year have not yet met targets, and a waiting list has persisted since November. Plans are underway to expand the team with an additional full-time staff member. Operational expansions have been temporarily paused as the organization addresses staffing concerns in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program. There is a notable demand for utility assistance services. Efforts are also ongoing to recruit one more full-time driver to meet transportation demands. The team has maintained efficiency despite increased workload, and creative approaches are being explored to maximize funding utilization before the end of the program year.

**7. Information Items –**

- a. Gustavo discussed the potential HCV voucher transfer due to financial challenges. It was reported that HUD has notified the organization of a funding shortfall due to higher rent and increased payment standards, resulting in the program operating at a deficit. The administration plans to send a memo to the Board of Commissioners regarding transferring the program to another entity, such as GRHC or MSHDA. The decision to transfer will ultimately be made by the KCHC Board, emphasizing that it is purely a financial consideration despite the program being well-run. Efforts are underway to reassign HCV staff to other positions within the department to avoid job losses.

**8. Other Business –**

- a. Commissioner Ysasi asked about possible connections with Michigan Works! to help with some of the contractor shortages as well as some of KCCA's hard-to-fill positions. Gustavo said some preliminary conversations have happened, but that is something that could be investigated further.

**9. Public Comment – None**

**10. Meeting Adjourned**

- a. The meeting adjourned at 11:47 am

**Next Scheduled Governing Board Meeting**

**August 19, 2024**

**10:30 am**