
Kent County Community Action Governing Board
Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 26, 2024
11:00 am

1. Call to Order
 - a. Commissioner Ysasi called the meeting to order at 11:01 am.
2. Welcome, Roll Call, and Introductions
 - a. Present: Milinda Ysasi, Tony Baker, Lisa Oliver-King,
 - b. Absent: Ivan Diaz, Lisa Knight
 - c. Staff: Gustavo Perez, Ashley Huey, Sherrie Gillespie, Kali Wickenheiser, Chad Coffman, Rachel Kunnath, Bobby O'Connor, Stephen Stratton
3. Review and approval of April 15, 2024 Meeting Minutes --- **Action Item**
 - a. Motion to approve the meeting minutes by Tony Baker, support by Lisa Oliver-King. The motion passes unanimously.
4. Customer Satisfaction Survey Results
Gustavo Perez, Director --- Information Item
 - a. Rachel and Sherrie provided updates on the customer satisfaction survey results. Sherrie covered the emergency services portion, detailing specific questions and their results, and also reviewed the Weatherization survey, which received a perfect score for services received. Rachel Kunnath discussed the senior services survey, noting that over 1,000 hours of assistance were provided and emphasizing the importance of addressing needs across various domains. She highlighted some client comments and explained the differences in scores across various program areas, including OAA, congregate services, and transportation, and identified possible reasons for these discrepancies.
5. Director's Report --- **Information Item**
 - a. Staff & Program Updates – Gustavo provided updates on staff and program developments, starting with his recent attendance at the MCA Summer Conference in Port Huron with several staff members. The conference offered

valuable insights into the activities of community action agencies across the state. Next year's summer conference will be hosted in Grand Rapids, with plans to involve local partners as presenters; exact dates will be shared with the board once finalized. Gustavo will be leaving for the national community action conference in Seattle tomorrow, where he aims to learn from other agencies nationwide and explore ways to enhance program integration. The following year's conference will be held in Detroit, with hopes of increased staff participation. Recently, a new executive chef was hired, and efforts are ongoing with HR to refine job descriptions, marketing, and recruitment strategies. The upcoming Strategic Planning cycle will focus on organizational structure, community presence, and other key areas. Gustavo also mentioned an RFP for a vendor to address fair housing impediments and noted the influx of funds for repairing and preserving Kent County's housing stock. The goal is to integrate these funds into existing programs while taking a holistic approach to home updates, including weatherization, lead removal, and appliance upgrades. Gustavo has been evaluating potential grants, particularly those that support staffing and administrative costs, and has been working with Housing Kent and other stakeholders to align community dollars effectively.

- b. Monitoring Updates – We recently underwent Organizational Standards monitoring and achieved a 50/50 score, meeting all standards. Gustavo expressed his gratitude to the team for their efforts. Additionally, Sherrie's program area underwent monitoring and received a perfect score, with only one recommendation for improvement.
- c. Assistance Activities and Potential Conflicts of Interest – None

6. Financial Reports: *Org. Standard 8.7*

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

- a. One-time funding grants – These grants will be utilized over the next 2 to 6 years as projects arise.
- b. 12/31 ending grants – HCV funds are expected to be fully utilized by the end of the year. However, the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) funds are lagging and may not be fully spent. Additionally, the GRICB funds may remain unspent due to overlap with similar grants for the same services.
- c. 6/30 ending grants – The grants ending on June 30 are in the early stages of their grant periods. The Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) has been fully spent. The HUD Lead Reduction program has just been launched.
- d. 9/30 ending grants – Most of these grants are either fully spent or will be quickly spent out. The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) has an additional year remaining. The LHCD partnership will be discontinued.

7. Programmatic Report: *Org. Standard 5.9*

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

- a. Community Development – Chad reviewed the highlights of the Community Development program, which operates on a July-to-June cycle. We are currently awaiting the 2024 grant agreement from HUD, expected in September. The report details new local government projects and highlights HOME activities on page 2. There is still one townhome available for a family with an ADA accommodation, but finding a suitable buyer has been challenging. The deadline for selling the home has been extended, although it must be sold within 9 months. We did not receive ESG grant funding this year but have begun awarding tenant-based rental assistance grants starting in July. A free lead inspection program is set to launch in October, and we are preparing to issue a bid for a property using KCLEAR and CDBG funding.
- b. Emergency & Specialized Services – Sherrie reported on services provided through June, noting that the Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP) funds have been fully expended. Following the closure of the State Emergency Relief (SER) program through MDHHS, the team identified alternative funding sources to continue utility assistance. Sherrie also corrected her report, stating that the MEAPSTSUPP program assisted 46 households, not 426 as previously mentioned.
- c. Senior Services – Rachel provided an update on funding and program activities. The Kent County Senior Millage did not grant all of the requested funds, as the ask was more ambitious than previous requests. Rachel has applied for a grant through AARP, aimed at expanding existing programs, though it is a nationally competitive grant. One of our goals is to control expenses while maximizing revenue. We have partnered with Kids Food Basket, utilizing surplus food from their farm for our congregate meals program. Despite being awarded additional funds to expand the OAA team, we were unable to fill the new position due to factors beyond our control, which has affected our ability to deliver some committed services.

8. Information Items – None

9. Other Business – Walk for Warmth is schedule for 2/22

10. Public Comment – none

11. Meeting Adjourned

- a. The meeting adjourned at 12:17 pm

Next Scheduled Governing Board Meeting

October 21, 2024

10:30 am