

APPROVED MARCH 23, 2021

Montgomery County Community Action Board Virtual Meeting

February 23, 2021

MINUTES

CAB Members Participating Online or Via Telephone: Agnes Leshner, Candice Groudine, Danette Lawrence, Erika Conner, Jefferey Johnson, Lisa Conlon, Lisette Engel, Meredith Bowers, Michael Subin, Myriam Paul, Pamela Luckett, Samuel Sharper, Tiffany Jones, Valerie Chatfield-Smith & Will Kenlaw.

CAB Members Absent: Laura Irwin and Ron Jennings.

CAA Staff: Sharon Strauss, Charlene Muhammad, and Aizat Oladapo

Guest: Verna Washington, MCPS Supervisor for PreK/Head Start (Guest Presenter) & Timothy Robinson (Prospective Board Member)

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

Consent Agenda

Lisette moved to approve the agenda. Mike Subin seconded the motion, and all voted in favor. The consent agenda included: Draft of the January CAB meeting minutes; the February Draft Agenda; and written reports from the Executive director, Head Start manager, Contract partners' manager, TESS manager, and VITA program specialists.

Head Start:

Verna Washington shared a powerpoint presentation with metrics from Head Start's Early Learning Assessment framework, highlighting children's progress during this year in various domains. Members asked questions and requested that additional reporting be made available to further differentiate the data. It was noted that virtual instruction has created challenges, requiring the program to adjust, with teachers and the team becoming very creative to use "Zoom" to engage children and parents. Lisa Conlon responded to a question asked by Mike Subin about how Head Start and Linkages to Learning's work together. The draft Annual Report previously submitted to the Board for review was highlighted, focusing on the program goals, including for family wellbeing.

Action items:

School Readiness Goals: Dr. Johnson moved to approve the Head Start program and school readiness goals. Mike seconded. Through a roll call, Tiffany Jones asked for each member to approve, with all voting in favor.

Annual Report: Dr. Johnson moved to approve the Head Start Annual Report. Agnes seconded. Through a roll call, Tiffany Jones asked for each member to approve, with all voting in favor.

Charlene provided highlights:

- **Enrollment-** 584 (526 4-year old's, 58 3-year old's) Head Start children enrolled for FY2021 program year. 64 Head Start slots remain to be filled.
- **Head Start CARES Funding-** The Head Start program manager facilitated meeting with HHS budget team, Early Childhood Services (ECS) and CAA regarding the HHS portion and allocation of Head Start CARES and Quality Improvement funding. HHS Budget team is requesting budget projections for FY2022. School Health services has submitted their portion of the budget to CAA. ECS will finalize and submit their budget to CAA. CAA will consolidate all budgets and upload for the budget team who will establish cost centers for each.
- **Head Start BASICS Pilot-** Members of MMF and Head Start program manager met with Dr. Ron Ferguson, founder of the Boston BASICS, regarding the development of a preliminary implementation timeline and budget for the county's Head Start BASICS pilot. The county's pilot will be launched up focusing on Head Start families at three elementary schools: South Lake, Washington Grove and Summit Hall.

Advocacy Update:

- **MCAP's (virtual) Feb. 24 Advocacy Day:** Tiffany, Sharon, Valerie and Aizat will participate in from 10:30 to noon, with members of the Montgomery Delegation, focusing on shared advocacy priorities, the role of the Board and agency services
- **Early Childhood Advocacy and Collaboration:** Meredith provided an update of the state legislation which CAB has supported, led by Montgomery Moving Forward.

CAB Leadership Update and the CAI

- Pam discussed the most recent Workshop #4, which she led, and members discussed the most recent Brown Bag. It was agreed that the virtual format has challenges when compared with in person. CAB discussed ways to continue engaging the COVID class of 2021, and how to increase participation and attendance. Members are interested in mentoring CAI participants, with the goal of providing 1: 1 support to help them to fulfill their requirements and provide more support.

Executive Director's Update

- Sharon shared a proposal from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to engage groups and residents, including the CAI through a climate change project, working with the Racial Equity officer, minority health initiatives in HHS Office of Community Affairs and partners. climate change and its impact). One concept is to train "Ambassadors" to engage diverse and low-income residents within the community, with the goal of amplifying the voices of people most affected by environmental inequities
- TESS Facility- Sharon described the alternate facility in Long Branch and plans to relocate.
- EITC Outreach and VITA: The multilingual campaign is underway, with Ride-On, the website and a text campaign. Virtual services are more complex and there is high demand.
- CSBG Updates- Sharon described delays in executing the FY21 CSBG Discretionary Agreement (VITA) for approval, and in securing the amended FFY20 grant agreement.

Contract Partners

- Aizat reported that due to the pandemic monitoring visits are being done virtually and have begun. A Monitoring visit reports is required for renewals and a visit to review the scope of work is done for all base budget contracts. Community Grants for \$30,000 or less do not require monitoring visits and reports are optional.
- Manna Food and Women Who Cares Ministries received additional funding.
- Reviewed and completed the FY22 Community Grants Shifted to Base Budget worksheets and the FY22 Community Grant Department Review Template.

Food Council

- The Food Council is currently recruiting for two open positions: Food Security Programs Manager (FSPM) and Policy and Advocacy Manager (PAM).
- The Food Council is creating an organization-wide logic model in collaboration with the consulting firm, Sharp Insight. Aizat said the group is incorporating its first round of stakeholder input into a logic model, hoping to finalize it by March. She noted that it overlays with the Food Council's racial equity and strategic planning processes to inform an overarching strategic vision for the MCFC.
- She shared that the Food Council's Annual Retreat took place on Wednesday, January 27th. Topics included an operational overview of the Food Council's work, 2021 Strategies and the development of the Logic Model, a Racial Equity discussion.
- Continued Biweekly Covid update providing Food assistance providers with information for the community at large.

Members were reminded of upcoming dates:

Community Advocacy Institute

- Saturday, March 6th, 12 – 2 pm: Workshop #5- Advocacy Review and Testimony, Practice Session #1 (Meredith)
- March 11th 12 - 1 pm: Brown Bag (Mike)
- Saturday, March 20th 12 – 2 pm: Workshop #6 – Advocacy Review and Testimony, Practice Session #2 (Zelda)

CAB Meetings

- Tuesday, March 9, 2021, 6 pm: Executive Committee Virtual Meeting
- Thursday, March 23, 2021, 6 pm: CAB Full Board Virtual Meeting

Adjournment: Pam Luckett made a motion to adjourn, which Lisa Conlon seconded. Members approved the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:06pm