

APPROVED MARCH 28, 2023

Montgomery County Community Action Board
Zoom Meeting
February 28, 2023

MINUTES

CAB Members in Attendance: Valerie Chatfield-Smith, Lisa Conlon, Erika Conner, Denise Fredericks, Jeffery Johnson, Will Kenlaw, Danette Lawrence, Evelyn Okutu, Lisette Orellana Engel, Myriam Paul, Timothy Robinson, Claudia Simmons, Mike Subin, and Zelda Wafer-Jones

CAB Members Absent: Elaine Carballo and Pamela Lockett

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

Guest: Betty Smith, Commission on Aging

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm.

Consent Agenda

Zelda moved to approve the consent agenda. Mike seconded the motion and all voted in favor. The consent agenda included the minutes from the January 24, 2023; meeting evaluations summary from January 24, 2023; Executive Director’s Report; Head Start Report; Head Start Low-Cost Extension for ARP funds Application and Budget; Contracts Report; Staff Liaison’s Report; Budget Report; TESS and Navigators Report; CAA Organizational Charts – staffing and structural; and CAB Testimony: HB 0108 - Human Services - Universal Basic Income for Transition-Age Youth – Establishment, HB111 - Maryland Medical Assistance Program, Maryland Children's Health Program, and Social Services Programs - Eligibility & Enrollment, SB160 - Human Services - TCA - Calculation of Benefits; SB420 - Human Services – Temporary Cash Assistance – Housing Allowance; HB547 - Family Prosperity Act of 2023; HB323 - Social Services Programs - Eligibility and Enrollment; HB1219 - Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023.

CAB Updates

Staff reported that the CAI would host the first of two testimony practice sessions on Saturday, March 4, from 12 – 3 pm at the Council Office Building. More volunteers were needed to serve on the “mock County Council”. Volunteers were also needed for the second testimony practice session, which would be held virtually on March 25 from 12 – 3 pm.

Staff shared that there are currently two vacancies on the CAB and three board members have surpassed their five-year term limits. The BCC liaison at the County Executive’s office will assist with recruitment efforts to fill the vacancies. Board members who have surpassed their term limits can remain as voting members of the CAB in good standing until new board members are appointed.

Executive Director's Report

Board members received a detailed written Executive Director's report with updates on the agency's programs, along with a budget update and statistical reports for TESS and the Navigation Unit. Sharon reported that the agency is working with PACS to pull data from the eCIM for TESS and Navigation clients to complete the FY22 CSBG annual report. This data will be combined with other data sources that Aizat is compiling (Head Start, VITA, contracts, CAB, CAI, etc.).

Sharon noted that there have been many changes within DHHS, including the departures of the DHHS Director, the Chief of Services to End and Prevent Homelessness (SEPH); and the Chief of Aging and Disability Service will be retiring. Community Action. In anticipation of this HHS director transition, CAA, along with other DHHS programs, has been asked to compile information about the agency's work. Sharon reviewed a structural organizational chart, reflecting the department, Community Action, and the board; a staff organizational chart noting the merit staff and broker positions within the agency and how they are funded; and a list of all current staff members.

Sharon reported that the new Self-Sufficiency Standard is moving forward and both the state and County reports should be available in the coming months. A new online Maryland SSS calculator is now available through MCAP. Sharon will participate in an MCAP webinar about the SSS on March 9.

The department is developing its strategic plan, which will focus on the social determinants of health. Sharon noted that the SSS and Community Needs Assessment may both be used. She noted that a community health assessment recently done by area hospitals featured the SSS. See p. 76. https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/about/community_health/downloads/chnais-report-2022.pdf. The agency is exploring hiring a broker to assist with developing its own strategic plan as well.

Head Start

Board members received a detailed written report with updates on the Head Start program, along with the budget and application for the Head Start low-cost extension for American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds. Charlene explained that the program received funding in 2021 through the ARP that was supposed to be used by March 2023. Much of this funding has not been used yet, which is why the County is requesting an extension. Charlene noted that ARP funds are being used for a community-based program to support three-year-olds transitioning out of Early Head Start. Funding supports staffing and program development. The requested extension would allow the program to continue to spend ARP funds through March 2024. Timothy moved to approve the Head Start low-cost extension request for ARP funds. Denise seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Contracts

Board members received a detailed written report with updates on the agency's contract partners. Aizat noted that the County Executive's budget will be released on March 15. Monitoring visits and reporting are underway for all of the agency's contracts. April 7 is the deadline to submit renewals to CMT for contracts that start July 1. Aizat reported that the County's new Office of Grants Management

is sending out applications to organizations for additional funding outside of the County. For County funding, the plan is to do everything the same as last year.

Aizat noted that Manna Food Center has received funding for the Farm to Food program. Staff are working with CMT and the budget team regarding the FY24 contract budget. Some contracts may move into the base budget and others may remain as non-departmental contracts for FY24. Contracts will be renewed if they are in compliance and were funded in FY23.

Open Forum/Announcements

Dr. Johnson and Claudia reported that they presented to the Wonders Board the previous night, sharing an overview of the board’s advocacy work related to ECE issues. The presentation went very well, and Wonders indicated that they would like to be a part of the mixed delivery system.

Lisette shared an update from the CAB Affordable Housing Committee, which will be developing some recommendations to share with elected officials. This led to a discussion about meeting with Councilmembers now in order to get ahead of the FY24 budget planning process. Staff will follow up to begin scheduling meetings.

Lisa shared that Head Start/PreK registration starts on March 1. Registration is available online and in person at Rocking Horse Road Center and at satellite locations across the County.

Adjournment: The meeting ended at 6:56 pm.