

APPROVED JANUARY 22, 2019

Montgomery County Community Action Board Meeting
November 27, 2018
1401 Rockville Pike, Room 3603

MINUTES

CAB Members Present: Isaac Osei Asare, Mary Bennett, Valerie Chatfield-Smith, Lisa Conlon, Lisette Engel, Gail Gunod-Green, Ron Jennings, Tiffany Jones, Will Kenlaw, Agnes Leshner, Pamela Luckett, Myriam Paul, Steve Ruffin, and Zelda Wafer-Alonge

CAB Members Absent: Jackie Dennard, Laura Irwin and Mike Subin

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

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda included the following documents: minutes from the October 23, 2018 CAB meeting, meeting evaluations summary from the October 23, 2018 CAB meeting, Executive Director's report, VITA summary report (email only), CSBG budget chart (email only), Head Start report, P card statements and grant updates (email only), Contracts report, Food Council report, Interfaith Hunger Forum report (email only), Staff Liaison's report (email only), CAB testimony for the FY19 Joint Delegation Hearing (email only), CAI workshop evaluations summary (email only), Executive Committee retreat report (email only), Advisory Committee on Consumer Protection report (email only), and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee report (email only).

Isaac requested that his name be removed from the October meeting minutes with regard to his participation in the Board's response to the OLO report on the County Council Grants process, due to his limited involvement. Agnes moved to approve the minutes with Isaac's edit and the rest of the consent agenda. Pam seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

CAB Updates

Laura announced that new CAB members, Will Kenlaw and Janice Freeman, had been confirmed by the County Council earlier that day. They are now both official voting members on the CAB.

Board members reviewed the CAB's response to the Kirwan Commission Early Childhood Education Working Group's recommendations. The statement had been edited slightly since the Board members previously received the document via email. Board members discussed who should receive the statement. The Early Childhood Coordinating Council is planning to submit its statement to both the County Council and County Executive and the CAB concluded that it should follow the ECCC's lead. Gail moved to submit the statement as it was written to the County Council and County Executive. Lisette seconded the motion and thirteen Board members voted in favor. One Board member abstained.

Lisette reported that she recently attended a listening session in Germantown with incoming County Executive Marc Elrich. She reported that attendance was very high for this session and other elected officials were present. Affordable housing was not discussed at this session, but landlord-tenant relations, environmental issues, support for small businesses, support for programs to help with immigration issues, and the development of a Pre-K/Child Care working group were all topics for discussion. A website has been developed where residents can submit comments and ideas to County Executive Elrich and his team during the transition period.

Board members discussed transition planning and the best way for the Board to engage with the new County Executive and County Councilmembers. Pam noted that in the past, the Board made appointments to meet with Councilmembers to explain the Board's role and its priorities. It is important to schedule these appointments soon because many different groups will want to meet with the new elected officials. Staff will schedule the meetings and the Executive Committee will discuss the outline for these meetings. Pam offered to help.

Leah reported that CAI is going well with 21 current participants this year. The second workshop would be held on December 1 and an alumni workshop was scheduled for December 6. Staff noted that at least three CAI alumni have been appointed to County BCCs. It was recommended that another poll be conducted to learn more about the ways in which the alumni are participating in the community.

Contracts and Food Council Updates

Aizat reported that Women Who Care Ministries received its contract and is working with the County to conclude the RFP for CASA de Maryland. YMCA has secured a bus for its afterschool program. KindWorks encountered some issues with its funds, but the fiscal team was able to resolve these issues. Aizat reported that there were some issues with data collection for the food contracts, but these have also been resolved. A question was raised about the amount of data the partners report. Aizat explained that what is required of each partner depends on the specific contract. Another question was raised about the impact of data collection on participation. Some people may not want to participate in programs if they have to share personal information. The Board can track participation rates to see if there are downward trends. Aizat reported that Crossroads, for example, has seen a drop in its numbers. The organization set-up an ambassador program to let people know about the proposed public charge rule and its impact on services.

The annual contract partners meeting, which all Board members are invited to attend, is scheduled for December 4. Aizat and Melissa are scheduling site visits. Board members are invited to participate in the site visits, which the Contract Management team will also attend.

Aizat reported that the Food Council is going to be a stand-alone nonprofit and will have its own Board starting January 1. A retreat will be held in February. Aizat participated in the Interfaith Hunger Forum, which was held to engage interfaith groups in the Food Security Plan. Aizat noted that many residents are now going to faith-based organizations for services.

Head Start Updates

Charlene discussed the gap in services between Early Head Start and Head Start. Most children who had been served by Early Head Start do not receive a spot in Head Start due to the very limited number of three-year-old spots. Head Start and Early Head Start are working with the state to develop one or two three-year-old classes located in or near Early Head Start programs. Since the income limits for the state's child care subsidy have increased and many families who had received the Working Parents Assistance Program are now eligible for the state subsidy, part of this plan would include using WPA funds to support three-year-old classes. These classes would be offered by Family Services, CentroNia, or the Lourie Center. Charlene noted that she has spoken with MCPS about moving the current three-year-old classes to areas with a greater need for these classes.

Charlene reported that the state is supporting the process of accreditation for the 28 Head Start classes that are working to become accredited this year. MSDE will provide grants to hire consultants to assist these classes.

Charlene noted that funding may be available for an extended summer Head Start program.

Executive Director's Updates

Sharon reported that the African American Health Program recently reached out to the Board to request its support in applying for a federal grant for a maternal home visiting program. The grant proposal required establishing a Community Action Network, to serve as the advisory committee for the grant. As the governance structure required a formally established entity with bylaws, and AAHP does not meet this requirement, Arlee Wallace, AAHP Director, met with the Executive Committee in November, requesting that CAB endorse a draft framework; CAB reviewed a structure to serve as the advisory committee, engaging representatives from AAHP, partners, community, and HHS. Although the EC approved the proposal, the application did not move forward, due to other resource issues. Sharon noted that the CAB submitted a letter of support to the County Council for a special appropriation to the AAHP.

Sharon will be speaking at the Women's Legislative Briefing during a workshop about economic justice. She reported that the Commission for Women's Status of Women report will be released in January. Sharon was asked to review the report and may be able to submit feedback.

Sharon reported that the agency had been told that it would receive additional CSBG funding due to a federal increase to the State. Subsequently, she was informed that it will not receive the funding proposed, but would be flatlined at the FFY18 award level. Sharon indicated this was due to the state's funding formula which is used to determine how much CSBG funding each CAA receives; the State's DHCD director indicated this may be revisited in the future.

The CSA III at the TESS Center has returned from parental leave. She expressed hope that the CSA vacancy at TESS will be filled soon. Sharon discussed challenges facing the TESS facility, with ADA limitations identified by the county, a lease that ends in 2020, and new development occurring due to the Purple Line. She noted that raising rents and lack of appropriate space is a challenge facing other community-based organizations in Long Branch. General Services is working

with DHHS Facilities and her team to identify alternate locations for TESS, which currently occupies a 5,000 square foot, storefront space. She and the TESS team have been working to develop a Program of Requirements reflecting current uses and needs.

Sharon reported that 118 people have signed up for VITA volunteer training. Sharon is working with CAFE Montgomery to request funding for EITC outreach and an expansion grant for CAFE. Ultimately, United Way has expressed interest in creating a Financial Empowerment Center, so the Coalition is seeking funding to support strategic planning to move this along.

Sharon led a training session about the CSBG Organizational Standards. She explained that the Standards are divided into three thematic groups: maximum feasible participation, vision and direction, and operations and accountability. A new crosswalk explains the intersections between the CSBG Organizational Standards and the Head Start Performance Standards. Sharon reported that the agency is working on its Self-Assessment right now, which evaluates how the agency is meeting the Standards and what steps must be taken to address any areas of concern. Board members will receive the Self-Assessment for review when it has been finalized.

Announcements

Board members were reminded that the Head Start/Pre-K Stakeholders Recruitment meeting was the following morning from 9 – 11 am at the MCPS Head Start/Pre-K office.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.