

APPROVED OCTOBER 22, 2019

Montgomery County Community Action Board Meeting
September 24, 2019
1401 Rockville Pike, Room 3603

MINUTES

CAB Members Present: Isaac Osei Asare, Meredith Bowers, Lisa Conlon, Lisette Engel, Janice Freeman, Ron Jennings, Jeffery Johnson, Tiffany Jones, Will Kenlaw, Agnes Leshner, Myriam Paul, and Zelda Wafer-Alonge

CAB Members Absent: Valerie Chatfield-Smith, Laura E. Irwin, Pamela Lockett, Steve Ruffin, and Mike Subin

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

Guests: Beverly Coleman, Candace Groudine, and Danette Lawrence

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

Consent Agenda

Will moved to accept the consent agenda and Agnes seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The consent agenda included the following documents: minutes from the June 2019 CAB meeting, meeting evaluations summary from the June 2019 CAB meeting (email only), Executive Director's report, Head Start report, P card statements (email only), Contracts report, Food Council report (email only), Staff Liaison's report (email only), VITA report (email only), FY20 Year-At-A-Glance (email only), CAB FY19 Accomplishments (email only), Advisory Committee on Consumer Protection – July and August OCP Complaints (email only), and the CAB report for the quarterly meeting with the DHHS Director (email only).

CAB Updates

The Board reviewed the agency's 2019 Community Needs Assessment. This year's CNA was a very detailed report that included information and summaries from various government agencies and nonprofit organizations. CAAs complete a CNA every three years. The report guides the agency's planning. Sharon explained that with the CSBG Organizational Standards, the agency realized that it needed a more in-depth report. Staff reviewed and analyzed numerous reports from other agencies and determined what information would be helpful to include in the CNA. Staff collected local and national data, and this helped us sharpen our focus on the agency's work. The CNA includes information about critical community issues, priorities, and recommendations, along with the agency's services and the Board's advocacy work. An initial draft was presented at the annual CAB retreat in August. Board members recommended including information about immigration and making this a key priority.

Sharon noted that one issue we continue to encounter is data collection. We do not have a good way to collect data from various sources. Developing the CNA also helped staff to look at the agency's service delivery model. The 2-Gen model, which will be piloted in Long Branch, is included in the CNA.

The Board members had very positive feedback, noting that the CNA provided an excellent overview of the Board's, agency's, and County's work. Since the Board members requested additional time to review the full report, it was recommended that an extension be given and the Board members vote to approve the CNA over email. Lisa moved to set a deadline of September 30 for all CAB members to review and vote electronically to approve the CNA. Lisette seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

The Board members discussed the idea of establishing a committee to help develop a CNA executive summary to be completed by the end of November. The committee will determine what to include in the executive summary. Lisa, Meredith, and Myriam volunteered to serve on this committee (Lisette joined the committee following the meeting). Ron moved to establish a CNA committee to develop an executive summary. Agnes seconded the motion and all voted in favor. The Board briefly discussed how the CNA can be used as an advocacy tool in the future.

Meredith provided an overview of the Montgomery Moving Forward Early Childhood Education matrix. MMF is tracking the county's ECE initiative and trying to determine its recommendation for the entities to oversee the ECE system. MMF would like to explore the public-private partnership option to oversee ECE in the County. They have invited representatives from all sectors to participate in their discussions and planning sessions. MMF asked system builders to complete a matrix of different aspects of their organizations and how these aspects relate to the ECE initiative oversight. Sharon provided a brief overview of CAA's response to the matrix. The response included information about various aspects of the agency's work, including its structure, budget, governance, advocacy, and staff capacity. Meredith explained MMF's next steps, which will review the stakeholders' responses, and this will help determine its recommendation.

Board members received an update on the CAI. A planning meeting was held prior to the CAB meeting and Board members selected the 23 participants for the 2019 – 2020 program. Participants represent different areas of the County, different backgrounds and ages, and different interests. The orientation session will be held on October 16. A CAI alumni workshop focusing on the new County grants process would take place on September 26 with Council Grants Manager Carolyn Chen as the guest presenter and Myriam facilitating.

Executive Director's Updates

Sharon reported that the agency's triennial review took place on September 10. This is a very in-depth process that involves submitting numerous documents and having reviewers from DHCD conduct a site visit. The reviewers looked at agency records, interviewed staff and the Board, and received a demonstration of the EICM to see how it is serving TESS clients and how they are linked with and served by the DHHS integrated service system. Sharon noted that two of the three reviewers had not conducted a triennial review at a public CAA before. They were interested to

learn about the agency's structure and the many layers of oversight within County Government. The agency will receive a report back with feedback on the review.

It was noted that Aizat had already received some initial feedback on the Pathways to Excellence review and will share additional feedback with the full Board.

Board members received a written summary of the 2-Gen initiative in Long Branch and Sharon provided an overview. An AmeriCorps Member is placed at TESS to help implement this initiative. He will help recruit and train volunteers to provide services at TESS. The agency is working with colleagues in Children, Youth, and Families who have oversight of other 2-Gen initiatives. This will help to better understand what is already being done and best practices.

Sharon shared some updates on the agency's budget. CAB had advocated in the spring for County funds to cover the cost of one contract monitoring position (previously 44% covered by the CSBG). Recently, the agency learned that the position will be moved off of the grant and the agency will be able to resubmit a new budget. The advocacy priority now is to maintain the same level of CSBG funding for personnel costs to assure the program's operating budget funded by CSBG is maintained. The CAB may consider this equity challenge in its future advocacy efforts as the County automatically increases the personnel budget for other offices but does not do this for grant-funded positions.

Sharon also reported that the agency is hoping to have NON positions (contractors) added to TESS. Since the United Way grant will cover the CASH Fellow this year, the agency is also looking for additional funding opportunities for the EITC outreach previously funded by UW.

Head Start Updates

Board members received the Head Start grant audit via email.

Charlene reported that since the Head Start program is in its fifth year of the grant cycle, staff will develop the next five-year grant application. There is a Community Assessment Matrix that will be used to show how the program is aligned with what is happening in the community. Charlene reported that a key priority for this grant cycle is additional spots for three-year-olds. A CAB committee will be formed to help prepare the grant and review the Community Needs Assessment. Charlene noted that she is open to ideas for what to include. It was recommended that one key issue to address is children with special needs.

It was noted that there are still openings in PreK classes while Head Start is at capacity. Lisa reported that this is an ongoing issue regarding the location of PreK/Head Start classes. We have classes without children and children without classes.

Charlene reported that Deann Collins has been promoted. There may not be a new director until 2020.

Zelda reported that the Head Start Parents Policy Council will host a retreat for parents and children. Parents will learn more about the Policy Council and how it works. The goal is to increase participation by parents and families.

Lisa reminded CAB members that the annual Community Providers' Forum is on September 27. The session would include a resource fair and a discussion of how the providers can work together.

Contracts

Board members received charts and graphs reflecting increases over the last eight years in the number and total amount for the agency's contracts. In FY 13, there were 32 contracts at 21 organizations totaling over \$2.6 million. In FY20, there are 53 contracts at 31 organizations totaling over \$4 million.

Aizat reported that Catholic Charities had to complete a budget modification following the hiring of two new employees. There is some discussion about merging the weekend backpacks program into one contract. Aizat reviewed the list of FY19 contracts and their outcomes. She explained that each of the contracts had certain data points that they tracked during the year. At the end of the year, they submitted final outcomes reflecting their progress, which makes up part of the National Performance Indicators in the CSBG Plan and Annual Report.

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