

APPROVED JUNE 24, 2025

Montgomery County Community Action Board
Virtual Meeting
April 22, 2025

MINUTES

CAB Members in Attendance: Beverly Coleman, Lisa Conlon, Denise Fredericks, Jeffery Johnson, Will Kenlaw, Pamela Luckett, Evelyn Okutu, Timothy Robinson, DaVida Rowley, Claudia Simmons, Mike Subin, Kemmesha Thomas, and Helen Winder

CAB Members Absent: Rachel Bonas, Erika Conner, Summer Cook, and Luz Cuenca,

CAA Staff: Shantá Johnson, Charlene Muhammad, Aizat Oladapo, and Leah Goldfine

Guests: Jessica Blasic, MCPS; David Mullins, Renters Alliance; and Dourakine Rosarion, DHHS Office of Community Affairs Acting Chief

Call to Order: The meeting was officially called to order at 5:37 pm.

Consent Agenda

Timothy moved to approve the consent agenda and Kemmesha seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The consent agenda included the March 2025 Minutes; March 2025 Meeting Evaluations Summary; Executive Director's Report; Head Start Report; Contracts Report; CSBG Annual Report; Staff Liaison's Report; Budget report and P Card update; TESS and Navigation reports; VITA report; CAB legislation tracking list; CAB testimony submitted since March CAB meeting: SB666 - Maryland Community Action Agencies – Funding, SB828 - Protecting Sensitive Locations Act, SB977 - Maryland Data Privacy Act, and County Council FY26 Operating Budget hearing testimony; and the Working Families Income Supplement sign-on letter.

Head Start Data Update

Board members received a detailed written Head Start report with updates on the Head Start Program. Jessica Blasic shared a presentation about the Head Start School Readiness Data. Jessica noted that a new Early Learning Assessment will launch in the fall of 2025. This fall, the program utilized Eureka Math, Core Knowledge Language Arts, and Children Explore Their World. The ratings for most categories were very good. A few highlights included an overall rating of 89.3% of four-year-olds being able to sequence events and 87.8% being able to retell a story. For math, 63.2% of four-year-olds could match numerals and 68.9% could complete object counting. For three-year-olds, the ratings were very high in three categories of language and literacy and very high for counting to ten and counting sets of five (91% and 90%, respectively). The data show that African American students are out-performing other students in nearly all areas. Board members asked about this and Jessica noted that this is likely due to being able to disaggregate the data and additional training for teachers. She also noted that

many of the scores shared with the CAB, particularly in math, are expected to grow later in the school year.

Jessica followed up on a question that was asked at a previous meeting about the number of Head Start-eligible children currently enrolled in PreK, which has higher income eligibility guidelines. Jessica shared that there are 853 Head Start-eligible children in PreK, or 39%.

Contracts

Board members received a detailed written report with updates on the agency's contract and grant partners. Aizat shared an overview of the FY24 CSBG Annual Report.

- Module 1 describes the agency's administrative efforts. We focused on onboarding our new Executive Director, Shantá Johnson, data tracking for Head Start parents receiving VITA services, and direct services through TESS, nonprofit partners, the CAB, VITA, Navigation, diaper distribution, and our ROMA efforts.
- Module 2 includes expenditures, capacity, and funding resources.
- Module 3 is for community-level work, and we therefore did not respond to this section.
- Module 4 is for individual and family-level work, along with services for these indicators and demographic information. Aizat noted that determining the unduplicated number of residents served is difficult because we do not have a way to track where residents go for all of the services they receive. Furthermore, many of our partners cannot collect all of the data included in the CSBG.

For our contracts, Aizat noted that we will be using the old system for renewals this year.

CAB Updates

Board members received a written report from the staff liaison to the CAB, with updates on the Board's work since the last meeting. Board members also received the updated legislative tracking form, the CAB's written testimony submitted since the last meeting, and the CAB's Working Families Income Supplement sign-on letter. Staff noted the CAB's advocacy, including the board's testimony at a recent budget hearing. Staff also highlighted the CAI, with 27 participants on track to graduate the following month. Volunteers were needed to serve on the Nominating Committee to help develop the EC slate for FY26.

Executive Director's Report

Board members received a detailed Executive Director's report with updates on the agency's programs, along with performance reports from TESS and Navigation, a VITA report, and a budget and P Card report. Shantá shared that VITA closed out the tax season, having completed 2,391 returns, with a \$7 million impact. She noted that there were many great partnerships for VITA this tax season. VITA will offer free tax help during the post-tax season from June 24 – October 30, 2025. Appointments will be for returns dating back to 2019.

Shantá shared that Navigation is expanding and will include Lighthouse staff. Dr. Johnson noted that he met with Dr. Bridgers and there may be changes coming to Community Action.

Head Start Report

Charlene shared that we are moving forward as if the County will receive the Head Start grant and the program will continue in July. With regard to registration, we are very close to where we were at this time last year.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:51 pm.