

Washtenaw County
Community Action Board (CAB)
General Session
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Monday, September 27, 2004 **Time:** 6:00 pm

Members Present: Michael DuRussel, Cyril Berry, Robert Brackenbury, Joseph Dulin, Juanita House, Christina Montague, Brenda McKinney, Hurley Myers, Suzanne Shaw and Donn Wolf.

Members Absent: Jim Beougher, Ron Brooks, Elette Collins, Harold Patterson and Rolland Sizemore.

Staff Present: Trenda Rusher, Jenny Bivens, Susan Sweet Scott, Deryl Beasley and Rana Alzoubi

1. Call to Order

DuRussel called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Shaw moved to approve the meeting agenda. Wolf supported. Meeting agenda approved.

3. Consent Agenda Items

A. Approval of the 03/22/04 and 05/24/04 Meeting Minutes

Wolf moved to approve both meeting minutes. Montague supported. Minutes from the 03/22/04 and 05/24/04 meetings approved.

B. Resolutions

- i. Resolution ratifying the approval of the grant application to the Area Agency on Aging 1-B for the Nutrition Program for the Elderly (also known as the Senior Nutrition Program) in the amount of \$892,988 for the period of October 1, 2004 through September 30, 2005.
Shaw move to approve the resolution. Montague supported. Resolution passes.
- ii. Request to approve the ETCS Group's FY 2005 CSBG application to FIA in the amount of \$791,948 for the period of October 1, 2004 through September 30, 2005.
Montague moved to approve the resolution. Berry supported. Resolution passes.
- iii. Resolution ratifying the County Administrator's signature on the ETCS Group's Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 LIHEAP application in the amount \$182,750 for the period of September 1, 2004 through August 31, 2005.
Berry moved to approve the resolution. Montague supported. Resolution passes.

Discussion

- DuRussel asked if any of the money was left over from last year. Rusher replied that some money was left over and carried over from last year.
- It was noted that all three resolutions were taken to the Executive Committee previously and have also gone through the Board of Commissioners already.

4. Report of the Chair – (DuRussel)

A. Announcements

- DuRussel reminded everyone that the Joint Annual Meeting will be on Monday, January 10, 2005. It will be at one of the area hotels.
- DuRussel noted a recent newspaper article on the Kroc Center. He reminded board members that the CAB wrote a letter of support regarding that project.
- Shaw noted that a lot of money has been dedicated to various areas in the City. She suggested that any money given to the City should be accounted for and that we should ask how the money was spent. Rusher replied that the ETCS Group has asked for line item detail regarding how money has been/ is being spent due to stipulations that come with that money.

B. MCAAA Updates

- Berry announced that we have a new Bureau Chief. He is working diligently on the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Deryl Beasley is the County staff responsible for that in Washtenaw.
- The next meeting is on October 24-25, 2005 in Detroit, MI.

5. Report of the Board of Commissioners

A. Announcements

- County taxes
 - State legislature agreed to the tax shift but it did not pass. We are at level funding next year. The County portion of taxes will be shifted ahead to the summer tax bill. 180 million dollars will be the amount of the shift. This will create a pool of funds statewide that will be available earlier.
 - Wolf asked if we had any plans to help people burdened by having to pay earlier taxes. McKinney answered that people will not be asked to pay more money, instead, they will just be asked to pay taxes earlier.
 - Rusher noted that the ETCS Group does have a relationship with the treasurer where we help with tax foreclosure. Brackenbury noted that we do not necessarily want to pay a persons tax for them; instead, we should find other ways to help them. One way is to provide counseling on how to budget. Shaw noted that at the Center for Independent Living, the County provided a budget management class recently.
 - There are some funds available to help people in emergencies and through a loan program called the tax foreclosure task force. Through the treasurer's office, there is one person who reaches out to the community.

6. Report of the Executive Director

A. Local/State/Federal Updates

Local

- Parkridge Community Center
 - The CAB approved the contract with the City of Ypsilanti and staff is finalizing the contract for \$50,000 to provide youth activities at Parkridge Community Center. The contract is currently in the signatory stage. Gerald Monford is working at the Parkridge Community Center currently and is working on Community Action there. This money will keep the center open until the end of February.
 - The idea of the partnership is to coordinate our agency funds with efforts through the County, Parkridge, the Michigan Works! Office, City of Ypsilanti, Pfizer,

EMU, and other corporate sponsors. We are looking to augment social enrichment and education services through Youth Leadership Training and Educational Programming.

- The Mayor has sent a special thank you email to Rusher and would like to have a photo op with the appropriate county personnel and CAB members when the check is given.
- Montague asked if the money was for programs or for staffing. Rusher replied that it is for both. She added that it is money used to match other moneys donated, from Pfizer for example. Rusher noted that the dollars that we give are tracked specifically through the contract. Rusher added that staff requested a meeting with the City regarding the budget and requesting information on how this money will be spent.
- McKinney asked if the money was for maintenance, Rusher noted that our money should not be used for maintenance. Rusher added that the City falls under governmental auditing just as the County does. House noted that she works closely with the Center through the neighborhood association and pointed out that the youth do not currently have a lot of structure. She added that they need this badly. Rusher noted that Deryl Beasley is the ETCS Group's liaison to the Ypsilanti Gateway Area.
- Monitoring Visit
 - The ETCS Group is preparing for its two year on-site monitoring of its CSBG dollars which will run the week of December 13, 2004. FIA staff will be at Towner to look at Board of Director membership and meetings; agency procedures; financial procedures, client file and eligibility review on weatherization, LIHEAP, MPSC emergency services, TANF, ROMA and EITC.
- Business and Community Awareness Initiative
 - Renaissance Strategies has now met with the WDB and CAB members, as well as County Administration to begin to work on Branding for the ETCS Group, its services and Boards. We should receive some deliverables within the next couple of weeks.
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)
 - The last distribution of surplus food on Thursday, August 19 was a success. Staff packaged grocery bags for over 600 needy residents in the County with the help of many volunteers.
 - The trucks were unloaded at 6:30 am and food was individually packaged for homes until about 10 am. Food was distributed between 10 am and 5 pm. Jenny led the team on this with several community volunteers and ETCS/County staff.
 - We passed out recipes on how best to get nutritional value from the commodities.
 - We also began filming our customers, with permission, to help with a DVD on "The Real Deal on Poverty in Washtenaw County: Making the American Dream Come True". Rusher expressed special thanks to the members of our Boards who gave helping hands: Cyril Berry, Donn Wolf and Suzanne Shaw.
- Global Engine Manufacturing Alliance (GEMA)
 - The ETCS Group, through the Michigan Works! Service Center, is recruiting for GEMA; flyers are attached. These are manufacturing jobs starting at \$30/hr. Deryl Beasley is our County contact lead for this project.
- All About You Barbeque
 - Staff is finalizing a new initiative with FIA to provide career exploration and development, mentoring and other support services for 50 youth aging out of Foster Care. This will work to provide a cushion for these youth you may otherwise face

homelessness and poverty after leaving foster care. The WDB contributed \$60,000 with a FIA match of the same amount.

- We are kicking this off with a youth “All About You Barbeque” on October 5, 2004 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm at 555 Towner Street.
- Young people will be channeled towards higher education opportunities through FIA’s TIP program.
- Shaw asked if we could look into funding room and board in addition to tuition. Rusher noted that housing is a part of the program. Bivens added that FIA has some independent living programs that address housing issues for foster care individuals who have aged out of the system.
- Rusher announced that Jim Beougher will be leaving FIA and the CAB for a job in Maine.
- Stephanie Gordon has left ETCS Group to pursue other opportunities. Rusher asked that board members join her in wishing her well in her future endeavors. She asked that they direct any Weatherization, CDBG and related issues to herself or Aaron Kraft. Aaron Kraft has been moved into her position in the interim. The ETCS Group is working to fill his position as he transitions into her former position.
- The Housing and Energy Programs are excelling and there is a waiting list for individuals now. McKinney noted an individual who we were helping who was disappointed because we ran out of money. Rusher noted that we are allowed a cap on money that is spent. McKinney pointed out that the resident was very pleased with the roof that the ETCS Group replaced for her.

State

- CSBG State Plans
 - The CSBG State Plans were due in August and the Executive Committee approved them as well as the County Commissioners for submission to the State in a timely manner, by the end of last month. There was only a three week turn around time on the plans. Plan focus depicted by the Executive Committee included:
 - i. CSBG- same as last year with focus on (Resolution Attached)
 - a. Continued support to Gateway Board and its activities for housing and youth activities in the Ypsilanti Gateway. Emphasis on community and economic development will be underlying strategies.
 - b. Working with Faith-Based organizations, including POWER, Salvation Army, and the Ministerial Alliance.
 - c. Assisting with the applications of EITC- Earned Income Tax Credit to make sure qualified customers are getting their tax credits if eligible. We are coordinating with Michigan Works and Extension Services.
 - d. Implementing ROMA (Results Oriented Management Accountability) per State and Federal requirements
 - e. Continued collaboration with Michigan Works!
 - f. Supporting overall youth initiatives to eliminate the causes of poverty.
 - g. To work with the Washtenaw County Human Services Collaborative Council and the Poverty Task Force to providing sensitivity, awareness and education on poverty in our county. This included involvement with the County’s Blueprint to End Homelessness.
 - h. Enhanced services for our aging population.
 - ii. LIHEAP- same programming as last year; increased funding available. The resolution attached is attached
 - iii. CDBG/HOME- The County has awarded ETCS monies for the New Year to continue housing rehab projects (\$329,000 + \$50,000).

- Deliverable Fuels
 - Like the City of Detroit, and other urban areas in the state, the ETCS Group volunteered to have a portion of their deliverable fuel allocation diverted to other rural areas. This reduced our funding from \$107,262.28 to \$42,262.28. \$65,000 was returned to the State for re-distribution. Every effort was made to assist every needy family in Washtenaw County with propane gas and wood. Detroit turned back almost 100% of its allocation. Greater need was noted in the Upper Peninsula and the CAA's in the North were very pleased at our collaboration on this.
- MCAAA Annual Meeting
 - Berry and Rusher attended the MCAAA Annual Meeting and Conference in July. Lots of information and program assistance for Housing, Weatherization, and ROMA were available. The next meeting is October 25 through the 27.

Federal - No Changes

B. Ypsilanti Gateway Community and Economic Development Corporation

- Beasley reported that we have sold the house on Monroe Street. We are having a difficult time selling the Hamilton House. Anyone who knows someone who is looking for a great place to live should contact Beasley. Construction on Worden Street is scheduled to begin in about 30 days. This project is being done in partnership with the University of Michigan - School of Architecture.

C. Program Reports

- Emergency Services – (Bivens)
 - Bivens talked about the last food distribution. It begins to be distributed at 10:00 am. Food arrives at 6:30 am and staff, with the help of volunteers, packs the food in bags for families. The food is government surplus food. Dulin asked if we could get some food from Food Gatherers. Bivens noted that we partnered with them, and that they were at the distribution passing out fruits, vegetables and yogurt. A person was also present who demonstrated how to prepare meals with the surplus food. We will continue to work with Food Gatherers to provide food to citizens.
- Summer Food – (Bivens)
 - This year's program is completed. Bivens noted that we would like to get more schools involved next year because nutritious meals for youth are very important. We want to serve as many people as we can.
- Senior Services – (Sweet Scott)
 - The congregate meal site in Chelsea has been relocated to the Senior Center in the Washington Street Education Center of Chelsea Schools. The operation is in partnership with the Senior Center. Chelsea School District Food Service is the caterer.
 - Home delivered meal service will continue to be coordinated by County Staff at the Faith in Action building.
 - All home delivered meal clients received a five (5) pack of emergency meals to be used when other meals cannot reach them. These will be distributed in November 2004.

7. Next Meeting Dates

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 22, 2004.

8. Adjourn

DuRussel adjourned the meeting at 7:25 pm.