

Washtenaw County
Community Action Board
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Monday, May 24, 2004

Time: 6:00 pm

Members Present: Cyril Berry, Robert Brackenbury, Ron Brooks, Elette Collins, Joseph Dulin, Juanita House and Rolland Sizemore Jr.

Members Absent: Jim Beougher, Michael DuRussel (excused), Christina Montague (excused), Brenda McKinney, Hurley Myers, Harold Patterson, Suzanne Shaw and Donn Wolf (excused).

Board Liaison Present: Steven Gulick – Workforce Development Board (WDB)

Guests Present: Diane Davidson, Francine Alexander and Paul Saginaw - Washtenaw Housing Alliance (WHA)

1. Call to Order

Vice Chair Berry called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm. There is not a quorum at this meeting; therefore, all voting must be ratified at the next full board meeting where there is a quorum.

2. Review of the Agenda

The agenda was reviewed by everyone present for informational purposes.

3. Review of the Minutes

The March 22, 2004 meeting minutes were reviewed for informational purposes by all present.

4. Report of the Chair – (Berry for DuRussel)

A. Announcements

- The Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) hosted its annual Recognition Luncheon last Friday, May 21, 2004 at the Crowne Plaza in Ann Arbor. The Luncheon was very well attended including foster grandparents and their families, teachers, principals, political dignitaries and community residents. Staff noted that this was the largest turnout that we have had in recent years.

B. MCAAA Updates – The National Community Action Days were announced by Berry.

5. Report of the Board of Commissioners – (Brackenbury and Sizemore)

A. Announcements

- County Commissioners are waiting for the State budget to be passed.
- The County is continuing to work on the jail overcrowding issue. There is a lot of concern about the increase of crime on the east side of the county. The Commissioners met for a working session to discuss this issue last week and will meet again in a couple of months; Sizemore invited Berry to attend along with other board members who are interested.

6. Report of the Committees

A. Head Start – (Collins)

- The President of the Head Start Policy Council spoke at the Annual Conference that Collins attended recently. A focus of the conference was motivating children and their parents.
- Rusher asked if there was any discussion regarding the Fatherhood Initiative at the Conference. Collins replied that she could distribute the information that she received at the Annual Conference if anyone was interested. Rusher indicated that she would like work to continue on that initiative as part of the Board's Strategic Plan.

7. **Report of the Executive Director** – (Rusher)

A. Local/State/Federal Updates

Local

- Discussions initiated by County Administrator Bob Guenzel are underway for an expansion of the Harriet Street Service Center to include more parking, more room for customers, employers and collocating the ETCS Group under one roof. Washtenaw Community College (WCC) has agreed to participate in the expansion and be a tenant. In addition, WCC has agreed to offer approximately \$60K in scholarships annually until 2009. Staff feels that this is a brilliant and novel partnership that our Workforce Development Board has with WCC. Larry Whitworth, WCC President, would like to partner with us on a youth project similar to one in Pittsburgh geared at encouraging youth with culture and the arts programming coupled with entrepreneurial activities. Sizemore added that we all need to work together to accomplish things; we need to work with our partners.
- The ETCS Group's audit is complete and we had no findings or recommendations; they had an absolutely clean audit. Rusher passed a copy of the audit conducted by Stewart, Beauvais & Whipple for Board members to review.
- Staff has been asked by Ypsilanti Police Chief George Basar to assist with officer recruitment and assist the City with a career advancement plan. Staff is planning a law enforcement career and job fair. In addition, Chief Basar suggested a Public Safety and Security Committee be established in the Chamber to engage more businesses in community partnerships. Keith Peters, Ypsilanti Area Chamber President, would like to emphasize a workforce/economic and community development component strategy to allow for access to funds and career paths for students.
- On Thursday, May 20, the ETCS Group and other volunteers distributed packed grocery bags for over 600 needy residents in the County. Rusher thanked board members who participated including Suzanne Shaw, Cyril Berry and Janie Jones from the Workforce Development Board. The trucks were unloaded at 6:30 am by volunteers who packaged it until about 10:00 am. Food was distributed between 10:00 am to noon.
- Staff is working with Diane Davidson providing input into the 10 Year Plan to eliminate Homelessness in Washtenaw County. She will present the plan later in today's meeting.

State

- The special 30-day 8-member task force that Rusher was appointed to has completed its work to revamp Work First and forwarded recommendations to Directors Hollister and Udow on Friday, April 30. They are recommending a name change – Skills and Work; Skills to Work; or Workforce Connections – focusing on education and skills before work for welfare recipients. In addition, the task force recommended the formation of a Workforce Action Network, modeled after the Children's Action Network initiative.
- The ETCS Group had state monitors in April for our Senior Programs. We had no findings or non-compliances.

Federal – There were no changes in the Federal update.

- B. Presentation: 10 Year Plan on Homelessness – (Diane Davidson, Francine Alexander and Paul Saginaw)
- This is the third phase of the Housing Board to look at how to end homelessness through permanent housing.
 - Sizemore asked if the Board noticed a difference in the demographic ratios in the County. Davidson replied that she did not bring the census data but that the difference was small.
 - Brackenbury asked if the number of homeless people in the County had increased due to the construction of the Delonis Homeless Shelter. Saginaw replied that it was a myth that the Shelter would bring more people into the County. Davidson added that of the people they surveyed, a large percentage of them were from Washtenaw County. Of those who were from outside of the county, most were here because they moved here and became homeless afterwards.
 - There will be an all day Community Forum on September 21, 2004 at the Washtenaw Community College's Morris Lawrence Building; everyone is invited to attend and should let Davidson know if they are interested.
- C. Ypsilanti Gateway Community and Economic Development Corporation (YGCEDC) – (Beasley)
- The Hamilton House is completed and staff has received a number of calls regarding purchasing that home.
 - The Monroe House is also complete and staff is trying to market that as well.
- D. Program Updates
- Business Services – (Beasley)
 - Beasley has prepared a letter to mail to our customers informing them of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).
 - Beasley is also working with the ETCS Group staff to develop a customer service satisfaction survey.
 - Emergency Services – (Bivens)
 - The ETCS Group served 570 families on Thursday, May 20, 2004 along with the help of volunteers. The next distribution will be on Thursday, August 19, 2004 at 555 Towner in room 107.
 - The ETCS Group is assisting low-income households with electric, gas and water bills through the Winter Warmth Program. Staff has served 168 households to date as of December 8, 2003. The program will end September 30, 2004.
 - 33 households have been served through the Deliverable Fuels Programs. Expending those dollars has been difficult; staff has tried flyers, mailings and newspaper advertisements. The ETCS Group will write the funding source to find out if people who have been serviced can be helped again this year.
 - Thought the County funds, the ETCS Group has served 155 households to date as of January 1, 2004.
 - Housing and Energy – (Gordon)
 - Through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the ETCS Group has completed one housing rehabilitation project and has eleven in progress.
 - The Weatherization program offers assistance to low-income households with energy efficiency measures; the ETCS Group has served 134 homes through this

program. The new program year begins April 1, 2004 and runs through March 31, 2005. The budget for the new program year is \$286,638 for 95 units.

- The ETCS Group has served eight households and has five projects in progress under the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) Client Education /Energy Program. The program dates are from December 1, 2003 through August 31, 2004.
- Senior Services – (Rusher)
 - The Senior Nutrition programmatic assessment took place in February. Staff was please to announce that the report is in and no compliance items were found.
 - All home delivered meal clients received a pack of five emergency meals to be used in the event of an emergency when other meals cannot reach them.
 - The Nutrition funding was amended for FY 2004 with an increase of \$7,687 to the budget. The total State/Federal Funding was increased to \$619,408.
 - A new center for seniors is opening in Ann Arbor called the Lightfoot Day Care Center. We are awaiting completion of the health inspection to begin services there. Staff training is scheduled to take place there in early June.
 - All congregate clients were surveyed twice this program year and the most recent survey results are just in. The response was high and the overall satisfaction with the meals is good and showed improvement from the first round of surveys. The socialization factor of congregate dining was also a positive factor among most of the participants.
 - The Foster Grandparent Program is at its highest level of recruitment with 82 active volunteers. A waiting list has been implemented due to the high volume of individuals interested in the program.

E. 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) for the period of October 1, 2004 through September 30, 2005 in the amount of \$892,988.

- This item will be taken to the next full board meeting where there is a quorum for voting action.

8. Report of the Officers

A. Workforce Development Board – (Rusher for Wolf)

- The Communications and Marketing Committee of the Workforce Development Board met last week to make a recommendation on whom to hire for the business and community awareness initiative. They recommended Renaissance Strategies and Rusher included their detailed proposal in today's meeting packet. Rusher pointed out some of the things that they will be doing over the next few months.

9. Other Business/Announcements

There was no other business or announcements at this time.

10. Next Meeting Dates – All meetings are at 304 Harriet St. at 6:00 pm with dinner at 5:30 pm

- Monday, July 26, 2004 – CANCELED
- Monday, September 27
- Monday, November 22

11. Adjourn

Vice Chair Berry adjourned the meeting at 8:03 pm.