

# SMCAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES

Wednesday – May 19, 2021

6:00pm

Microsoft Teams Phone Conference

*\*\* All Documents sent via email for this meeting.*

PRESENT: R. Benjamin, C. Christopher, D. Fernandez, M. Franks, J. Johnson, K. Lyons, G. Patterson-Gladney, M. Warren, J. Wuerfel

ABSENT: None

GUESTS: None

STAFF: G. Chadwick, D. Oleneack, A. Slack, K. Smith Oldham

The meeting attendees stood and recited the SMCAA mission statement.

QUORUM: The meeting, due to the coronavirus, was conducted via Microsoft Teams and the entire agenda's documentation was emailed to each Board member. Each member present responded they had received and had access to these documents for the meeting. **M. Warren** invited **K. Smith Oldham** to facilitate the Board of Director's meeting as calls were made into **K. Smith Oldham's** office phone.

A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order at 6:02pm.

ACTION: Motion made by **G. Patterson-Gladney** to accept the May 19, 2021 Agenda, seconded by **M. Warren**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

ACTION: Motion to approve the April 21, 2021 Board Minutes was made by **K. Lyons**, seconded by **R. Benjamin**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

OFFICERS' REPORT: The officers had nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: a. **Fiscal Summary for April 2021.** **D. Oleneack** presented the Fiscal Summary for April. She noted that both Cash and Grant Advance line items are higher than usual because MSHDA allowed agencies to ask for

two 25% advances for the CERA program. These items offset one another so there is minimal effect on our Net Assets.

**M. Warren** questioned why Bank Fees are at 447%. **D. Oleneack** explained this additional cost is due to the migrant stipend checks which were sent to incorrect addresses after workers had left their previous employers and/or moved out-of-state. **K. Smith Oldham** followed up saying some of the checks were sent in October or November 2020 but did not return to SMCAA until February 2021, so those checks were reissued as well as we attempted to get them to their recipients as soon as possible.

**K. Lyons** noted that both Client Services and Commodities Expense are over projected balances currently and asked if there was any need for concern. **D. Oleneack** responded that the Commodities Revenue is the same amount as Commodities Expense because this item, which is the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), is a simple in-and-out transaction. **D. Oleneack** said there is no concern with this program as we received more than enough funds to cover commodity costs. As for Client Services, **D. Oleneack** said this area appears higher due to the COVID Relief Fund (CRF) programs in 2020. Many of these programs began in August 2020 and ended December 31, 2020. There was a large amount of money being disbursed at that time which is reflected in this line item.

There were no additional questions from the Board.

**ACTION:** A motion to accept and place on file the April 2021 Fiscal Summary was made by **M. Warren** and was seconded by **D. Fernandez**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

**b. Programmatic Report for April 2021.** **K. Smith Oldham** presented the programmatic report. One family was serviced through our Hotel Assistance program for a total of (4) bednights. CSFP served (2,105) and (857) individuals were helped in our food pantries. Our shelter housed (2) families for a total of (273) bednights. Our emergency assistance also completed (2) home repairs and (1) auto repair in Berrien County.

FSS served (14) individuals. Rapid Rehousing serviced (4) out of our (14) slots and Supportive Housing serviced (9) out of our (11) slots. **K. Smith Oldham** noted that these two programs are less than usual, and that MDHHS Housing and Homeless Division had been in correspondence with SMCAA on why our slots have been so difficult to fill as of late. Both entities believe this difficulty stems from the overwhelming rental

assistance funding coming through the CERA program. Supportive Housing Dedicated Plus is losing (2) slots because of this hardship. Also, this program requires dual-diagnosis which is difficult in itself. However, our (2) lost slots will be going to another Community Action agency who already has clients to take the slots. **K. Smith Oldham** said she is happy with this decision as it will be a positive impact for those able to utilize the program, but she has spoken to MDHHS-HHD that once CERA ends, this area needs to be readdressed. She said even our Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) slots are seeing a decrease because the State is pushing for COVID-relief funding to be used first. With this requirement, she hopes our agency will not continue to be penalized and lose valuable slots because one day the COVID relief will no longer be available and housing slots for our typical programs will be a necessity.

Weatherization completed (3) jobs and LIHEAP completed (3) jobs. **S. Klank** has a number of jobs almost completed and we will see those numbers in the next couple of months.

There were no additional questions from the Board.

**ACTION:**

A motion to accept and place on file the Programmatic Report was made by **C. Christopher** and was seconded by **K. Lyons**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

c. **Director's Report for April 2021.** **K. Smith Oldham** presented the Director's Report. Some of the highlights over the past month include:

- The CERA Van Buren program began the third week in April. The CERA application must go through several steps before it is approved. Those steps involve the application being passed from the Assigner to the Reviewer and finally to the Processor. There are a lot of issues with the program's mandatory portal, and multiple agencies have been unable to access the portal and receive/review applications in the queue. As mentioned last month, we are seeing extremely high rental assistance needs. The CERA program can pay up to (10) months' worth of rent – meaning up to (7) months of arrearages and (3) months of future payment. CERA can also assist clients with utility arrearages up to \$2,300 depending on size of the household and its income. Even though our Agency received \$1.5 million, we anticipate only being able to take application for 3-4 months before we are out of funding.
- **Y. Vidt** has developed a good partnership with the general manager's assistant at Meijer in Benton Harbor over the past

several years. Meijer has been generous to us and has come to donate gift cards annually to our food programs. In April, the store went above and beyond -- SMCAA received a donation of \$3,400 in Meijer gift cards. **Y. Vidt** plans to use the gift cards to purchase food and personal hygiene products for the SMCAA pantries.

- TCF Bank reached out to **K. Smith Oldham** and requested SMCAA to apply for a mini grant. The Weatherization issue of older stock houses was discussed and we were encouraged to apply for this program. A few days after applying, SMCAA's Weatherization Program received a mini grant of \$5,000. This funding will assist with some of the costs preventing our clients' homes from being weatherized, such as bringing knob and tube electric up-to code, repairing hot water heaters, and removing vermiculite.
- We received our exit interview with M. Judge from BCAEO for the monitoring of the Weatherization, MEAP, CSBG Emergency Services, and Summer Fuel Program (from FY2019) files. The Weatherization files were good and **S. Klank** was complimented on the files' flow. MEAP received suggestions on how to better enter information into our FACSPRO database. The CSBG-ES files were good. A file in the Summer Fuel Program received a finding for a disallowed cost of \$733. A staff member miscalculated a client's net income rather than the gross income. This calculation was also made for a 30-day program when Summer Fuel required a 3-month look back. All staff members have since been informed of this criteria and trained on guidelines from the Community Service Policy Manual (CSPM).
- May is Community Action Month. This month is used to talk about Community Action and the impact SMCAA has on its service area. Management has been meeting with a number of State representatives and Senator Kim LaSata this week. We have been discussing what Community Action Month is and how our Agency has been servicing the community, especially since the pandemic began. A press release to local media outlets was sent on May 6<sup>th</sup> and **A. Slack** has been actively working to post Community Action data and information on Facebook and our website.

**K. Smith Oldham** ended her report with a challenge. She challenged each Board member to talk about Community Action and what SMCAA does with at least (2) people by the end of the month. She also asked if anyone on the Board has a quick quote to share, **A. Slack** would like to add those words to our social media. Just a quick statement about why

the Board supports SMCAA or an impact that has been witnessed through Community Action would be great.

**K. Smith Oldham** also announced that SMCAA had received another award. SMCAA received the United Way of Southwest Michigan's 2020 Impact Cabinet's Choice Award. This award recognizes the hard work done by the agency during the COVID-19 pandemic. Rep. Pauline Wendzel also sent a note to the agency congratulating us on being this awardee. **G. Patterson-Gladney** gave the agency and all its employees "major kudos" for this accomplishment.

There were no additional questions from the Board.

**ACTION:**

A motion to accept and place on file the Director's Report was made by **R. Benjamin** and was seconded **K. Lyons**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

**d. Presentation on Logic Models/Annual Report.** **A. Slack** presented a training video she developed on Logic Models and the Annual Report. This training video discussed how and why SMCAA sets benchmarks, collects data, observes outcomes, and reports progress. As the agency's certified ROMA Implementer, **A. Slack** also included basic information on Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA). The training's topics included:

- The purpose of performance measurement and management
- What is a logic model
- How is a logic model used for performance measurement and management
- What is the annual report
- How does SMCAA and the State use the annual report

**K. Lyons** commented that the video was well done and gave good information. She also asked if **A. Slack** might be able to send some logic models to her in order to look over a few and get a better understanding. She said the graphics on the computer were small due to all the information on them, but that she enjoys this sort of data and would like to explore them more. **A. Slack** thanked her and said she would send some to her through email.

**G. Patterson-Gladney** asked what of the Annual Report needs to be sent to the State on a quarterly basis. **A. Slack** replied that the entire report is sent to the State quarterly as the State pulls the report directly from FacsPro each quarter. However, the quarterly reports are more inclined

to assist agencies on evaluating programs' progress versus projections and reassess when necessary. The final Annual Report should be as close to our projections – whether original or reassessed – as possible.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

OTHER: **K. Lyons** asked if the June meeting will be in-person. **K. Smith Oldham** replied that it will not be in-person yet as the agency continues to follow CDC and MDHHS guidelines. She is hopeful that in-person meetings may occur before the end of the year though. She also asked **D. Fernandez** for updates he may know of at the State-level. **D. Fernandez** stated that the Office of the State Employer is leaning strongly towards July 12, 2021 being the reopening date of all DHHS offices. This is not confirmed, but there are strong indicators for this date. DHHS offices are currently working to make all public spaces safe and protocols are being established. However, he did also note that the majority of DHHS positions are being given the option to continue telecommuting.

ACTION: Hearing no other business, a motion to adjourn was made by **R. Benjamin** and was seconded by **M. Warren**. The meeting was adjourned at 7:02pm.

NOTE: **The next SMCAA Board Meeting will be held via Microsoft Teams (with a phone call-in number as well) on Wednesday, June 16, 2021 at 6:00pm.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Ashley Slack, SMCAA Operations Manager

Reviewed and approved,

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Gail Patterson-Gladney, SMCAA Board of Directors' Secretary