



Southwest Michigan Community Action Agency

BOARD MEETING MINUTES



Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 6:00pm

SMCAA Main Office: 185 E. Main Street, Suite 300, Benton Harbor, MI 49022

PRESENT: R. Benjamin, C. Christopher, M. Franks, K. Lyons, G. Moore, G. Patterson-Gladney, M. Underwood, M. Warren, J. Wuerfel

ABSENT: None

GUESTS: None

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

PUBLIC: Amber Benjamin

The meeting attendees stood and recited the SMCAA mission statement.

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

AGENDA ACTION: Motion made by **C. Christopher** to accept the July 20, 2022 Agenda, seconded by **G. Patterson-Gladney**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

MINUTES ACTION: Motion to approve the May 18, 2022 Board Minutes was made by **M. Underwood**, seconded by **C. Christopher**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

OFFICERS' REPORT: The officers had nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS: **a. Fiscal Summary. D. Oleneack** presented the fiscal summary. This summary is 67% into the fiscal year and the agency is currently at a positive year-to-date balance. She noted that line item Food Commodities Purchased is over 100% expended, but there are additional funds available through a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from the City of Benton Harbor for a city food commodity. This funding came after the budget approval, and though the line item states 139% the Agency does have the funds.

There were no additional questions.

A. ACTION: A motion to accept and place on file the Fiscal Summary was made by **G. Patterson-Gladney** and was seconded by **M. Franks**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.



b. Programmatic Report. K. Smith Oldham presented the programmatic report. There were (140) households serviced with utility assistance and (63) households with rent assistance. (1,686) households received food commodities from CSFP, (3,378) households through TEFAP, and (355) households received assistance through SMCAA food pantries. Two families of (9) individuals stayed in the shelter for a total of (81) bed nights and four individuals were boarded in hotels for a total of (31) bed nights.

The FSS Program serviced (22) individuals due to one individual graduating from the program. There were (3) individuals served through DHHS's Rapid Rehousing Consolidated and (8) through Supportive Housing. Water Distribution at the SMCAA Self-Serve Station provided (36) households of (130) individuals received (211) cases of water from SMCAA's self-serve station. This is a slight increase from last month.

G. Moore asked what the MSHDA FSS Program consists of, and **A. Slack** responded that this is an income and asset building program. The 5-year program works with Section 8 households to encourage obtaining or maintaining employment, which in turn generates an escrow account for the household that may be accessed upon graduation to be used how the family sees fit. There are open slots currently, but SMCAA cannot accept applications for this program though; clients are forwarded to the Agency from MSHDA.

Weatherization completed (11) jobs in May, and the program ends June 30th. There as one Whole Housing Rehab projects completed, one household received a Minor Home Repair, and one household received minor home repairs through CARES funding.

G. Patterson-Gladney brought to attention a Fresh Food Program that the Van Buren Migrant Council is facilitating. **K. Smith Oldham** was not familiar with the program, and **G. Patterson-Gladney** said she'd forward the information to her for further exploration if SMCAA can assist in any way.

B. ACTION:

A motion to accept and place on file the Programmatic Report was made by **J. Wuerfel** and was seconded by **M. Underwood**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

c. Director's Report. K. Smith Oldham presented the Director's Report. Some of the highlights over the past month included:

Legislative: On May 10th, David Bradley announced that President Biden would support Community Services Block Grant HR 5129. The U.S. House of Representative passed the HR 5129 three days later. It is now at the Senate.

On May 19th, **L. Mills, Y. Vidt, A. Slack,** and **K. Smith Oldham** traveled to Lansing to meet with legislators in honor of Community Action Month. We met with Steve Carra, Pauline Wendzel, Brad Paquette's assistant, and Kim LaSata's

assistant. Michigan Community Action Association (MCA) also held a gathering and award ceremony in the Rotunda. One of SMCAA's volunteers, Marletta Seats, received Volunteer of the Year Award for her outstanding efforts to assist SMCAA with food giveaways during the COVID pandemic and the water distribution throughout the City of Benton Harbor.

New Charity Donor: SMCAA was approached by Enbridge, Inc. to sign up for another charity called Benevity. Benevity is a database that thousands of companies have for their employees to donate to a charity of their choice. **K. Smith Oldham** shared that the initial donation arrived in May for a total of \$306.00.

R. Benjamin corrected this statement saying this donation was from his employer, Microsoft, for a total of \$306.25. As a Microsoft employee, **R. Benjamin** is able to direct Benevity to make a donation to SMCAA. **K. Smith Oldham** thanked him for this correction and donation.

New Programs for City of Benton Harbor: SMCAA partnered with the City of Benton Harbor to utilize their CDBG ARPA funds for a food giveaway on May 24th. Upon working with the City's CDBG Director, Alex Little, **Y. Vidt** acquired buckets filled with cleaning supplies, personal hygiene kits, dairy product boxes, eggs, pork loin roasts and tenderloins, frozen whole chicken, and a variety of canned products.

SMCAA is also partnering with the City of Benton Harbor on their Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). SMCAA contracted with the City of Benton Harbor to use \$75,000.00 of our CSBG funding to help supplement their current program. Youth 16-19 years of age will receive mentoring and work experience through this program, which runs June 27 through August 26.

G. Moore asked if this \$75,000.00 is recorded on the Fiscal Summary. **A. Slack** replied that yes, it is due to it being part of the CSBG allocation.

City of Benton Harbor Water Distribution (WADIS): The water access location at the Boys and Girls Club on Nate Wells Senior Drive distributes bottled water on Tuesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. SMCAA is still distributing water at the self-serve on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

As of the end of May, (2,200) water service lines have been replaced or verified non-lead. The 2,900 current water customers in Benton Harbor have completed 2,300 "Right to Access" water service line Replacement Agreement forms.

Local Event: On May 24th, Staff attended the Benton Harbor Community Energy Assistance Fair at Michigan Works in Benton Harbor. It was not a well-attended event, but staff said (12) individuals came to the SMCAA table to learn more about our programs and services.

Agency Employee Award: The SMCAA Shelter Coordinator, **J. Weinrick**, was recognized as Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness (MCAH) 2022 Data Champion. This award celebrates champions who make a real difference in our communities and the lives of those experiencing homelessness.

Agency Award: SMCAA was recognized by Moody on the Market as one of the 2022 Best Places to Work in Southwest Michigan. Best Places to Work recognizes “the type of business that everyone would like to work at – they’re the businesses that are going above and beyond for their team and the community, setting the gold standard for others to aspire to.”

Speaking on donations earlier, **K. Smith Oldham** reminded the Board they are able to direct donations to SMCAA through Amazon Smile. When someone shops online through Amazon Smile, a percentage of every sale is donated to the Agency as long as it is the individual’s chosen charity. **A. Slack** said she’d share a link with the Board.

C. ACTION:

A motion to accept and place on file the Director’s Report with the New Charity Donor amount change from \$306.00 to \$306.25 was made by **G. Patterson-Gladney** and was seconded **K. Lyons**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

d. Fiscal Policies Updates and Cost Allocation Plan. D. Oleneack presented an update to the Fiscal Policies as well as the Cost Allocation Plan for the Board to review. (This fulfills Organizational Standards 8.10 and 8.12.) There were only minor changes, including changes to the procurement threshold, equipment threshold, purchase order requirements, ACH transfers, and updating the Fiscal Assistant title to Fiscal/HR Assistant. Most changes are to better align to OMB Standards. The biggest change was the new formatting of the policies, which **A. Slack** updated to reflect the Agency’s other policy documents.

G. Patterson-Gladney asked about the electronic transfers, specifically if there is a back-up plan should the Fiscal Director be unable to complete the tasks due to sickness or injury. **K. Smith Oldham** has brought the necessity of a finance succession plan to **D. Oleneack’s** attention. **D. Oleneack** said the process to get someone approved by the credit union for electronic transfers is complex. She stated that if something were to happen, **K. Smith Oldham** would need to contact the credit union for assistance. **G. Patterson-Gladney** and **K. Lyons** both stated they would like to see movement on a finance succession plan in the future.

As Treasurer, **K. Lyons** proposed that approval of these updates be placed on-hold until she has a better opportunity to review the document. She noted she does not remember reviewing the document two years ago. **K. Smith Oldham** noted the document looks very different from years past due to the format updates although the content is essentially the same. She also said that the Organizational Standards approval deadline had passed in June for this

document, which the Board could not vote on at that time due to not meeting quorum. **M. Warren** proposed a roll-call vote of approval where **K. Lyons** could abstain from approval until August's meeting and she had the opportunity to review the entire document. The Board agreed to this proposal.

D. ACTION: The question is on the adoption of the motion to approve the Fiscal Policies Updates and Cost Allocation Plan. A roll call vote was conducted: **R. Benjamin** - Aye, **C. Christopher** - Aye, **M. Franks** - Aye, **K. Lyons** - No, **G. Moore** - Aye, **G. Patterson-Gladney** - Aye, **M. Underwood** - Aye, **M. Warren** - Aye, **J. Wuerfel** – Aye. The ayes have it and the motion is adopted.

However, **M. Warren** welcomed **K. Lyons** to bring questions, comments, or recommendations to the next Board meeting should she have any following her review of the entire document.

e. Deliverable Fuel (DELFF) Planning Application FY22. As a requirement of the grant's application process, **K. Smith Oldham** presented the DELF FY22 application to the Board. The application process requires the Board to be informed of the funding request and proposed use of the grant, as well as the Board's approval of the grant. This proposal requests \$150,000 in funding to be used towards deliverable fuel costs.

There were no concerns or questions regarding this grant.

E. ACTION: A motion to accept and place on file the DELF Planning Application FY22 was made by **J. Wuerfel** and was seconded **G. Patterson-Gladney**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

OTHER: None

ADJOURNMENT: Hearing no other business, a motion to adjourn was made by **R. Benjamin** and was seconded by **M. Underwood**. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50pm.

NEXT MEETING: The next scheduled SMCAA Board meeting will be held at the **Cass County Administration Building**: 2nd Floor, 120 N. Broadway, Cassopolis, MI 49031 on **Wednesday, August 17, 2022 at 6:00pm**.

Respectfully submitted,
Ashley Slack
SMCAA Operations Manager

Reviewed and approved,
Gail Patterson-Gladney
SMCAA Board Secretary