

SMCAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MINUTES

Monday – June 21, 2021

6:00pm

Microsoft Teams Phone Conference

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

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

ABSENT: R. Benjamin, M. Franks

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 6:00pm.

ACTION: Motion made by **J. Wuerfel** to accept the June 16, 2021 Agenda (Rescheduled for June 21, 2021), seconded by **M. Warren**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

ACTION: Motion to approve the May 19, 2021 Board Minutes was made by **J. Johnson**, seconded by **C. Christopher**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

OFFICERS' REPORT: The officers had nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: a. **Fiscal Summary for May 2021**. **D. Oleneack** presented the Fiscal Summary for May. We are two-thirds (67%) of the way through the

current fiscal year. She stated there are no immediate concerns and that the Agency is on-target with the set budget. There were no additional questions from the Board.

ACTION:

A motion to accept and place on file the May 2021 Fiscal Summary was made by **D. Fernandez** and was seconded by **G. Patterson-Gladney**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

b. Programmatic Report for May 2021. **K. Smith Oldham** presented the programmatic report. Ninety-eight (98) households received utility assistance in May. This is significantly higher than April's (19) households, and this increase is due to both Winter Protection ending and the promotion of the CERA program which offers utility services. Two families were serviced through our Hotel Assistance program for a total of (14) bed nights. CSFP served (1,790) individuals, TEFAP served (2,538) households, and (842) individuals were helped in our food pantries. **K. Smith Oldham** noted that **Y. Vidt** would like to see more attendance in our food commodity programs, but also commented that Van Buren County has seen an increase in numbers over the last year. Our shelter housed (2) families for a total of (77) bed nights. Our emergency assistance also completed (3) auto repairs 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. Our housing numbers remain low for two reasons: 1. The eviction moratorium remains in effect, and 2. The State continues to request that the CERA program be the priority when spending rent assistance funds.

Weatherization completed (4) jobs and LIHEAP completed (4) jobs within the same homes as WX. The current Weatherization program ends June 30th, so **S. Klank** has been busily working to complete jobs before the end of the month. SMCAA signed a contract with the City of Benton Harbor to be the third-party administrator for the city's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and will begin offering minor housing repairs to the city's residents within the month.

D. Fernandez asked for a refresher on the ESG-CV Hotel Assistance program. **K. Smith Oldham** explained that this program began as COVID assistance and was the State's answer to preventing the spread of COVID amongst homeless shelters – our Agency was asked to utilize hotel housing rather than open the Decatur shelter during the pandemic's high rates. **D. Fernandez** questioned how this program was continuing to be used. **K. Smith Oldham** answered SMCAA is still using the ESG-CV

funding for those who are facing homelessness and for those who need to quarantine.

D. Fernandez also commented that, in addition to SMCAA's auto repair funding through CARES, DHHS has transportation funding aimed to assist residents with employment necessities. If a person needs vehicle repairs in order to obtain or maintain employment, then there is a \$2,000 limit available through DHHS.

ACTION:

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

c. **Director's Report for May 2021.** **K. Smith Oldham** presented the Director's Report. First off, she thanked the Board for their flexibility in rescheduling the Board meeting from June 16th to the 21st. The flood that occurred in Administration's office has left **A. Slack** and her working out of boxes and from previously-unoccupied offices while the office is repaired. **K. Smith Oldham** expressed her appreciation to the staff's teamwork in assisting with the move during the midst of the flooding and how proud she was of the staff's quick response. Though the transitional period is less than ideal, there was no damage to Agency property.

Some of the highlights over the past month include:

- **Van Buren Food Commodities:** In July and moving forward, the Van Buren commodities will be disbursed at the Lawrence Township Hall. **Y. Vidt** is excited for this as it offers a great location for not only traffic flow but also the hall itself where we can store our commodity boxes on the days of our events. In addition to our usual commodities, **Y. Vidt** has also set up an extra food giveaway on July 21st at the VFW hall in Decatur. Decatur Human Services will be handing out our product, which will include both food and dairy products.
- **Policy Development Update:** **D. Oleneack, A. Slack, and K. Smith Oldham** met with our insurance agent last month to go over the Agency insurance policies before signing them. In the conversation our agent offered his team to look over our drafted Bylaws, Personnel Policies, Employee Handbook, and Emergency and Crisis Management Plan. Administration thought this would be a great idea to have another set of trained eyes on our developing policies and **A. Slack** forwarded the documents for review. The next steps are for the Agency's attorney to review the Bylaws, Personnel Policies, and Employee Handbook.

- **Website Update: A. Slack** has revamped our Agency website by giving it a new and improved look. She also has included a new media coverage page, award page, and client testimonial page.
- **Organizational Standard Update:** Out of the 14 items on the list handed out to the Board at the January 2021 meeting, only 5 items remain. Four of these will be completed through the policy review and approval.
- **CERA Program:** Staff continues to have problems with accessing the CERA portal and they have been working through a back door process which takes longer. **Y. Vidt** has sent emails to MSHDA on this issue several times and **K. Smith Oldham** set up an appointment with the grant manager and supervisor to discuss. There have been a lot of updates to the system, but we are still waiting for it to be completely functional. Even so, staff has been working hard to assist participants before the eviction moratorium ends on June 30th. SMCAA began servicing clients on April 20th and since then (79) Berrien County participants have received utility assistance totaling \$93,186.79 in assistance. In Van Buren County, (37) participants have received utility assistance and (44) participants have received rental assistance equaling \$253,928.00 in funding so far.
- **CA Month Feedback:** CA Month was promoted through a public press release, daily postings on our Facebook page, and meeting with our representatives in Lansing. We had very good attendance with our Legislative reps and we met with: Senator Kim LaSata, Rep Steve Carra, Rep Brad Paquette, Rep Pauline Wendzel and Rep Beth Griffin. The meetings were very positive with many of the reps asking, “What can I do for SMCAA?”

K. Smith Oldham commented that the State has asked for CAAs to begin in-person Board meetings because the Executive Order concerning the Open Meetings Act was lifted. **A. Slack** has secured a room for our July 21st meeting at the Van Buren Conference Center. **K. Smith Oldham** asked if any members do not yet feel comfortable meeting in-person to either let **A. Slack** or her know so a virtual component may be implemented at the conference center. Otherwise, we are all looking forward to seeing one another in-person for the first time since February 2020!

The Michigan Community Action Association’s summer conference will be held August 10-12th. The conference is virtual and will have a few sessions of interest to the Board. **K. Smith Oldham** showed a short power point created by MCA on topics of interest for Board members. She stated if a Board member would like to attend the conference to let

A. Slack or her know so he/she may be registered through SMCAA. **K. Lyons** requested the power point by forwarded to the Board members to look over at their leisure to determine if anyone would like to participate.

Also, **K. Smith Oldham** invited the entire Board to a staff appreciation luncheon that administration will be holding on July 30th at 1:00pm. The luncheon will be held at the Van Buren Conference Center and will recognize the entire staff for their hard work during the last year. Acapulco Mexican Restaurant will be served along with dessert. **A. Slack** will send a follow up invitation email to the Board and anyone available to attend is asked to RSVP to that email.

K. Smith Oldham ended her report with a Weatherization client's thank you note: "I want to thank you for all your hard work in getting us through the weatherization program. We have experienced a more comfortable home and lower bills. This program is a huge asset for folks like us, restoring our ability to save energy, increase the value of our home, and live in a more comfortable environment."

ACTION:

A motion to accept and place on file the Director's Report was made by **G. Patterson-Gladney** and was seconded **J. Johnson**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

d. Emergency and Crisis Management Plan. **A. Slack** invited **J. Johnson** to present the plan as a member of the Risk Ad Hoc Committee. **J. Johnson** noted that **G. Patterson-Gladney**, **G. Chadwick**, and **A. Slack** volunteered for this committee. The committee began with an Emergency Response Plan, which **K. Smith Oldham** brought to the Board for approval in February 2019, and a Risk Management Policy, which **A. Slack** developed following the 2020 Risk Assessment. After our Ad Hoc meeting in April, **A. Slack** restructured the two documents and merged them into one: the Emergency and Crisis Management Plan. The plan was then provided to the Agency's insurance risk management team to review. The insurance team returned with no recommendations and stated the plan fulfilled all required criteria for such a document.

J. Johnson walked the Board through the plan's table of contents, pointing out the main topics throughout the plan. She thanked **A. Slack** for her diligence in developing the plan and for her fellow committee members who helped organize the plan and attempting to foresee risks to SMCAA before they happen. **G. Patterson-Gladney** also thanked **J. Johnson** for presenting the plan to the Board and for **A. Slack's** hard

work over the past several months researching and developing the plan and answering all questions brought by the committee.

This document does not need to be approved by the Board, but the committee would like the Board's blessing for the Agency to begin implementing it. The Board expressed their satisfaction with the plan, with **D. Fernandez** stating the committee came up with an outstanding product.

In addition, **K. Smith Oldham** commented that the Agency has already been thinking of ways to tighten security at its facilities. The shelter had security cameras installed at the beginning of 2021, and cameras for the main office have been scheduled to be installed as well. As **J. Johnson** noted during her presentation, the Agency is trying to prepare for unprecedented occurrences before they happen.

e. **Overview of FACSPRO CARES Reports.** **K. Smith Oldham** created some reports from FACSPRO to show the Board what sort of information can be provided on specific programs. She used the CSBG and CSBG-CARES programs in her demonstration. Both monthly and annual allocation versus obligation reports were presented with a breakdown of household types assisted and the vendors awarded by SMCAA.

PUBLIC COMMENT: **M. Warren** stated that she is receiving more information in 2021 than she has since being appointed to the Board. She thanked **K. Smith Oldham** and said to keep up the great work. **J. Johnson** echoed her appreciation, saying that the Agency has been working extremely hard and it shows.

OTHER: **A. Slack** thanked **J. Johnson** for bringing to her attention that the monthly Board meeting RSVPs to Microsoft Teams were being bounced back. **A. Slack** looked into this issue and discovered that Teams had created a nonexistent email account. She worked with the Agency's IT company and this should not happen again in the future, but she did apologize to any Board member who may have RSVP'd in the past without his/her response actually reaching their intended destination.

ACTION: Hearing no other business, a motion to adjourn was made by **J. Wuerfel** and was seconded by **J. Johnson**. The meeting was adjourned at 6:52pm.

NOTE: The next scheduled SMCAA Board meeting will be held at the **Van Buren Conference Center:** 490 S. Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, MI 49064 on **Wednesday, July 21, 2021 at 6:00pm.**

Respectfully submitted,
Ashley Slack, SMCAA Operations Manager

Reviewed and approved,

Gail Patterson-Gladney, SMCAA Board of Directors' Secretary