



Southwest Michigan Community Action Agency

BOARD MEETING MINUTES



Friday, December 16, 2022 at 11:00am

Boulevard Hotel: 521 Lake Boulevard, St. Joseph, MI 49085

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

ABSENT: M. Warren

GUESTS: None

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

The meeting attendees stood and recited the SMCAA mission statement.

QUORUM: A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order at 11:00am.

AGENDA ACTION: Motion made by **G. Patterson-Gladney** to accept the December 16, 2022 Agenda, seconded by **J. Wuerfel**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

MINUTES ACTION: Motion to approve the October 19, 2022 Board Minutes was made by **K. Lyons**, seconded by **G. Moore**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

OFFICERS' REPORT: **C. Christopher** had nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: **a. Fiscal Summary. D. Oleneack** presented the fiscal summaries for October and November, which represented 17% through Fiscal Year 2023. Per the Board's request, she also included a summary of grant revenue for each month.

There were no questions.

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

b. Programmatic Report. K. Smith Oldham presented the programmatic report for October and November by reporting the number of clients assisted through each Agency program and/or service. Specific notes of interest:

- There is no additional funding for utility assistance being reported or forecasted from the State.



- Due to the completion of the COVID Emergency Rental Assistance (CERA) program, the need for rent payment assistance has grown. The shelter is currently full.
- SMCAA will begin a new Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program in Spring 2023. She will bring more information on this in the future.
- SMCAA's contract with MSHDA for the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program will end December 31, 2022. The Agency took on this program per MSHDA's request, but with new program guidelines and increased agency capacity requests, SMCAA will end its contract as planned.
- The Weatherization Coordinator developed a pre-application form for clients to begin their eligibility determination process. This form went live on the SMCAA website November 9th and received 60 submissions by the end of the month.

There were no questions.

B. ACTION:

A motion to accept and place on file the Programmatic Report was made by **K. Lyons** and was seconded by **G. Patterson-Gladney**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

c. Director's Report. **K. Smith Oldham** presented the Director's Report, which discussed recent and upcoming Agency events, office changes, the upcoming Single Audit, staff training opportunities and successes, and specific information on current Agency programming.

J. Wuerfel asked if there is any word from the State on additional utility or rental assistance coming from unused American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. **K. Smith Oldham** said there has been no word.

J. Wuerfel asked about the City of Benton Harbor Water Distribution (WADIS) Program and if there will be a decrease in programming in the near future. **K. Smith Oldham** responded that MDHHS has released information that water distribution will end at the Boys and Girls Club on December 27th. This means that SMCAA will become the sole location for water distribution beginning January 4, 2023. SMCAA will continue to service the community in a self-serve format and with the same schedule: Monday, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Friday from 10:00am to 2:00pm. There has been no end date set.

K. Lyons questioned the process of eliminating the WADIS water cases as discussed in previous meetings. **K. Smith Oldham** said that MDHHS and SMCAA have contracted with a local faith-based organization to remove identified excess cases. This organization will continue this work into the near future. There has been no end date set.

G. Moore asked for more information pertaining to the new statewide database and its selection. **A. Slack** explained she sat on a committee with representatives from BCAEO and other departments from the State of

Michigan that reviewed five vendors. The final selection was unanimously voted on by each member of the committee. The new database, empowOR, will be fully implemented at SMCAA on October 1, 2023.

There were no additional questions.

C. ACTION: A motion to accept and place on file the Director's Report was made by **K. Lyons** and was seconded **J. Wuerfel**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

d. FY22 STAR Report. K. Smith Oldham shared the annual FY22 State Technical Assessment Report (STAR) from BCAEO. SMCAA received an overall score of 4.62 out of 5, meaning the State sees the Agency in good standing. The Agency increased and/or maintained its score in each category from FY21.

K. Lyons asked what criteria is collected for the Agency to receive each categorical score. **K. Smith Oldham** commented that the report contains only the three-page document distributed to the Board. She would like to welcome BCAEO's Director Kris Schoenow to next year's meeting where the STAR Report is presented in order for all questions to be answered.

No motion necessary.

e. MI-HOPE Board Resolution. As a requirement of the grant application process, **K. Smith Oldham** presented the MSHDA MI-HOPE Board Resolution to the Board. The application process requires the Board to be informed of the funding allocated to SMCAA and the Board's acceptance of the grant funds. SMCAA received \$500,000 in funding from MSHDA MI-HOPE.

In reference to the MI-HOPE program, **R. Benjamin** suggested SMCAA present about the Agency and its programs and services to the Cass County Commissioners. He received feedback at his last commission meeting that SMCAA could have a stronger presence in the county, and he would like the Agency's resources to be shared, especially as newly elected commissioners begin in January 2023.

There were no questions.

E. ACTION: A motion to approve the MI-HOPE Board Resolution was made by **J. Wuerfel** and was seconded **R. Benjamin**. Unanimous approval; motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

OTHER: **R. Benjamin** thanked the Board and Agency staff for all their hard work and dedication to the community. His term as Cass County Commissioner ends on December 31st, so this is his last meeting. However, he stated he would like to remain involved with Community Action and be informed of future volunteer opportunities to continue supporting our mission. **C. Christopher, K. Smith**

Oldham, and **A. Slack** wished him the best and expressed their gratitude for the helpful input and continuous support he has offered during his tenure as a Board member.

ADJOURNMENT: Hearing no other business, a motion to adjourn was made by **J. Wuerfel** and was seconded by **G. Patterson-Gladney**. The meeting was adjourned at 11:59am.

NEXT MEETING: The next scheduled SMCAA Board meeting will be held at the Southwestern Michigan College Foundation Room: 58900 Cherry Grove Road, Dowagiac, MI 49047 on **Wednesday, January 18, 2023 at 6:00pm**.

Please note that extensive notes for each agenda item were prepared and distributed to every Board member prior to this meeting. Full minutes with these notes have been prepared and reported to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' Bureau of Community Action and Economic Opportunity, per CSBG guidelines.

Respectfully submitted,
Ashley Slack
SMCAA Operations Manager

Reviewed and approved,
Gail Patterson-Gladney
SMCAA Board Secretary