

**Michigan Commission on Community Action and
Economic Opportunity
Friday, March 11, 2022
10:00 am-2:00 pm
Michigan Nonprofit Association Community Room,
330 Marshall Street, Suite 200, Lansing, MI 48912**

Commission Meeting Minutes

Members: Jill Edwards Sutton, Carolyn Bloodworth, Joelle-Jude Fontaine (virtual), Shamayim Harris, Justin Hodge, Tiffany Mayers, Miguel Rodriguez, Ashley Slack, and Ravi Yalamanchi
Staff: Chong0Ana Canfora (MCA), Kris Schoenow, Janice Harvey, Melanie Sanford, Ben Gulker, Courtney Lousma (virtual)

Guests: Susan Newhof, Christa Jerome, Sherrie Gillespie, Greg Pittman, Harley Coleman, Lisa Bolen, Lori Johnson, Michelle Williamson, Pamela Coleman, Sandy Klank, Mia Harnos, Kyle Welter, William Lane, Jack Behrens

Absent: Kelly Garrett, Theresa Thompson, Milinda Ysasi

- I. Welcome and introductions
 - Chair Edwards-Sutton called the meeting to order 10:19am.
 - Roundtable introductions by in person attendees
- II. Get to know you icebreakers
- III. Approval of September 28, 2021 Meeting Minutes – Chair Edwards-Sutton requested a motion to approve the minutes from the September 28, 2021 MCCAEO meeting. Carolyn Bloodworth made the motion to approve the minutes; Justin Hodge seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- IV. Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) Presentation Ben Gulker/Melanie Sanford (BCAEO) *(see PowerPoint presentation)*
 - LIHWAP Program Purpose: Create residential utility relief program to provide direct payment assistance for water and wastewater arrearages, designed to help households retain water service to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19.
 - Federal program with \$640M in funds available. Program runs: 12/1/21-9/30/23
 - Participating CAAS- 22. All counties in MI are served with this program.
 - Partnership with MDHHS and CAAs
 - Program Eligibility: citizenship, income (150% of FPL or less)
 - Allowable services (\$650 Cap per household per fiscal year): Arrearages, fees.

Future Considerations/Discussion

- Urban (metered) vs Rural (well/septic)

- Water affordability- sustainability
 - Client education
 - Rainwater Collection
- Flint water arrearages concern
- Bigger relationship to allow CAAs to provide folks additional services
- Punitive nature of program
 - Arrears rule is a federal requirement
- Short term vs long-term funding
- Repairs vs arrearages
- Convening water providers annually
 - Whose role? Government/local?
 - Kris: Poverty summit?
- Chong-Anna - meeting immediate needs is good. How can this body partner with CAAs to move the needle to meet the needs of residents. How can we examine the circumstances that create the ongoing problem.
- Justin Hodge – partner with Poverty Solutions to look at the data.
- Shamayim Harris – partner with nonprofits that are serving in communities; more intimate/less intimidating.
- Joelle-Jude – they have to be in arrearage to get help; get them help before that (arrears is a federal requirement)
- There is one-time funding in September 2023 but there is not a replacement for this one-time funding. Long Term: Commission could look at recommendation for future funding

V. Summary of the Poverty Task Force Report/Discussion

1. Recommendation to ensure an optimal approach in utilizing temporary aid to needy family (TANF) funding is implemented in Michigan
2. Improving the transition to self-sufficiency for participants in the Family Independence Program (FIP) by increasing the time limit and funding amount
3. Water Assistance Program and Weatherization Assistance Program which provides energy savings to low-income households as well as improved health outcomes

VI. Review of Commission Draft Letter of Support

- Letter can be sent to Director Hertel, and Poverty Task Force
- Report to legislators may come later in the year
- MCCAEO Chair signs the letters
 - Currently in the middle of chair transition from Jill Sutton to new chair

VII. BCAEO Update and Action Items – Kris Schoenow

- Moving June 2nd meeting to June 16th to MMCAA in Farwell, MI.
 - Weatherization in Action
- BCAEO is prepping for FY23
- Social determinants of health- Pilot Program/Plumbing repairs
- CSBG-D
- Antiquated Data System – finding a data solution system; working with DTMB,

- CAAs, and BCAEO staff
- Expansion of Weatherization
 - Funding to hire employees
 - Drug testing for employees in the program?
 - Paying contractors for training
- See Kris' 3-11 BCAEO Report.

VIII. Public Comments –

Shamayim Harris:

- Ideas for community action- Motor City
 - Supplying Cars to help single moms
 - Help with transportation; repairs, insurance
 - Melanie Sanford: CSBG Grant (Community Needs Assessments and transportation issues)
- Weatherization help/pre weatherization
 - Deferral reduction
- Solar efforts for self sufficiency
 - Miguel Rodriguez: Consumer's energy solar fields

Greg Pittman (MOCAP):

- Would like to acknowledge the fact that MOCAP is still operating, has not stopped operating, and is continuing to serve families in Muskegon County as they have been during the entire QIP and de-designation process
- Expresses surprise that this de-designation was not brought up during meeting given documents prepared in BCAEO report
- Expresses gratitude toward federal government for the OCS review of the de-designation of MOCAP
- Believes that the review OCS doing is a rare occurrence/ "unusual" step, and they (MOCAP) are to continue to receive funding during this review
- Heartened and gratified that the state is not to discontinue funding as they are an eligible entity
- Wanted to make that part of the record for the state commission
- Kris Schoenow stated that the comments were noted for the record.

Kris Schoenow: Community Needs Assessments show biggest need in 18 months has been housing.

IX. Adjournment – Meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm.