

**Michigan Commission on Community Action and
Economic Opportunity
Thursday, June 3, 2021**

10:00 am – 12:00 pm – VIA ZOOM

Commission Meeting Minutes

Members: Jill Edwards-Sutton (Chair), Carolyn Bloodworth, Joelle-Jude Fontaine, Miguel Rodriguez, Bob Scolnik, and Theresa Thompson
Staff: Kris Schoenow, Paula Kaiser VanDam, Janice Harvey, Melanie Sanford, Chong-Anna Canfora

Guests: Josh Rivera, MDHHS
Mike Larson and Nancy Lindman, Michigan Association of United Ways (MAUW)
Susan Newhof

Absent: Kelly Garrett, Tiffany Mayers, Matt Purcell, Luke Shaefer, Jessica Taylor, Milinda Ysasi

- I. Welcome and introductions
 - Chair Edwards-Sutton called the meeting to order via Zoom at 10:05 am.
- II. Approval of March 26, 2021 Meeting Minutes – Chair Edwards-Sutton requested a motion to approve the minutes from the March 26, 2021 MCCAEO meeting. Carolyn Bloodworth made the motion to approve the minutes; Miguel Rodriguez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- III. ALICE Report – Mike Larson and Nancy Lindman, MAUW
 - Mike and Nancy shared a presentation on the new ALICE Report, which was released in March 2021.
 - ALICE – Asset, Limited, Income Constrained, Employed
 - See Power Point presentation
- IV. Commission Report: Improving FIP Participants’ Transition to Self-Sufficiency – Josh Rivera, MDHHS
 - Josh shared a PowerPoint Presentation outlining MDHHS Family Independence Program (FIP) spending, time limits, caseloads and effect of time limits.
 - Michigan’s maximum monthly benefit is \$403 (Ohio is \$406 and Wisconsin is \$608) with the average payment of \$343.
 - Rent costs have risen while FIP grant amounts and spending on cash payments have declined.
 - Families are receiving the child tax credits this year. Goal would be to make them permanent which will help to reduce the child poverty rate.
 - Michigan received a small increase in TANF (\$19 million) which is a non-recurring short-term benefit.

- SNAP – increased benefits, emergency allotments will bring everyone up to maximum benefit, minimum is now \$95.

V. Commissioner Discussion

- Kris shared information on Water Assistance Program which was modeled after the federal LIHEAP program. Michigan received \$36 million and will work with CAAs to assist with the program. The main purpose is to address water arrearages.
- Paula shared information on CERA (COVID Emergency Rental Assistance). The program provides assistance for rent and utilities.
- Next steps: Focus group to discuss how residents managed the pandemic with the supports they received.
- Susan Newhof shared that information from community assessments with CAAs:
 - Show positive/negative effects, what they learned and what they would do different; learned they assisted more people and more effectively by going virtual.
 - CAA partnerships with community agencies were more positive during COVID pandemic; growing the list of community partners will benefit them in the future

VI. BCAEO Update and Action Items – Kris Schoenow

- Kris shared an overview of recent ALICE report. According to the report, the three trends impacting people is increasing costs, low stagnating wages, and increasing number of people identified as ALICE. CAAs have adapted to the changing environment and responded to the immediate needs of low-income population.
- American Rescue Plan funding will tie low-income wage earners to the funding and provide emergency services, basic needs and stabilize families.
- CAAs are hoping to get back to wrap around services instead of emergency services.
- There are 27 CAAs in Michigan; for every CSBG dollar received, an additional \$14.55 in state, local, and private funds are leveraged making CSBG a crucial investment in the fight to end poverty in our communities. CAAs served 143,790 people who were living in over 70,000 families.
- CAA Network Impact Study with Social Finance: MDHHS-BCAEO, CAA Network, and Social Finance will collaborate and coordinate to develop the impact study on how poverty and the causes and conditions of poverty are being addressed in communities across Michigan. The study will also identify strong connections and relationships between low-income individuals and the interventions to self-sufficiency to build impact models.
- BCAEO expects a large DOE Weatherization stimulus grant that will be coming. The expansion this summer will help the network transition to the increase in stimulus funding. BCAEO is working with CAAs to prepare for the increase in funding.

VII. Public Comment - None

VIII. Adjournment – Chair Edwards-Sutton recognized the MCCAEO Commissioners whose terms will be up in June as this was their last meeting. Meeting was adjourned at 11:59 am.