

# Washtenaw County Community Action Board

## Zoom Meeting

Wednesday, April 28, 2021

5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

General Session/Regular Meeting

Meeting Minutes

### **Members Present:**

1. Comm. Justin Hodge,
2. Cherisa Allen,
3. Danyelle Reynolds,
4. Juanita House,
5. Shoshana DeMaria,
6. Jo Ann McCollum,
7. Linh Song
8. Mary Phillips-Smith,
9. Rhonda Weathers,
10. Comm. Ricky Jefferson
11. Linda Adams
12. Alyshia Dyer

### **Members Absent:**

1. Mark McBride,
2. Elizabeth Janovic
3. Jimmie Wilson

**Staff Present:** Teresa Gillotti, Morghan Williams Boydston, Caitlin Nagler

**Staff Absent:**

**Guest:**

#### I. **Call to Order**

- Chair called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

#### II. **Welcome and Introductions**

- Roll call of CAB board members
- Members present:
  - Cherisa Allen,
  - Danyelle Reynolds,
  - Juanita House,
  - Shoshana DeMaria,
  - Jo Ann McCollum,
  - Linh Song
  - Mary Phillips-Smith,
  - Rhonda Weathers,
  - Comm. Ricky Jefferson
  - Linda Adams,
  - Alyshia Dyer

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- Comm. Justin Hodge,

### III. Public Comments

- No public comments at this time

### IV. New member swearing-in

- New CAB member Trustee Linda Adams.

### V. Approval of Meeting Agenda

- A motion was made by Rhonda to approve the Agenda.
- Motion supported by Mary
- Roll call vote:
  1. Comm. Justin Hodge, yes
  2. Cherisa Allen, yes
  3. Danyelle Reynolds, yes
  4. Juanita House, yes
  5. Shoshana DeMaria, yes
  6. Jo Ann McCollum, yes
  7. Linh Song, yes
  8. Mary Phillips-Smith, yes
  9. Rhonda Weathers, yes
  10. Alyshia Dyer, yes
  11. Comm. Ricky Jefferson, yes
  12. Linda Adams, yes
- Motion carried.

### VI. Approval of March 24, 2021 Meeting Minutes

- Motion made by Shoshana, supported by Rhonda.
- Roll Call vote:
  1. Comm. Justin Hodge, yes
  2. Cherisa Allen, yes
  3. Danyelle Reynolds, yes
  4. Juanita House, yes
  5. Shoshana DeMaria, yes
  6. Jo Ann McCollum, yes
  7. Linh Song, yes
  8. Mary Phillips-Smith, yes
  9. Rhonda Weathers, yes
  10. Alyshia Dyer, yes
  11. Comm. Ricky Jefferson, yes
  12. Linda Adams, yes
- Motion carried to approve meeting minutes.

### VII. CAA / OCED Presentation

- Morghan presented agenda for CAA presentation

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- History of CAAs, Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 started community action policy, Community Action Plan, CAA, and Community Action Boards
- CAB boards, there's Public boards and Private boards
- This CAB is a public board, serving as an advisory body; provide input on policies and programs related to poverty
- Funding structure, CSBG is federal funding, categorical block grant
- Why be a CAA? Found this on website CAPSLO
  - CAAs equip low-income citizens with tools to be self-sufficient
- CAAs promote self-sufficiency, not dependency
- CSBG: Community Services Block Grant
- Not meant to be one size fits all
- CAAs located in areas of greatest need
- Local CAA for Washtenaw County: OCED
- OCED vision: Washtenaw County is stronger when all people are able to fully participate in our community and economy. To that end, OCED is committed to stepping out of traditional government roles to drive long-term system changes that increase equity and opportunity. Informed by data and resident voices, we deliver services, invest resources, shape public policy, lead initiatives, and amplify the impact of community partners.
- OCED directs CSBG funds to support key human services and homelessness programs
- CAB of Washtenaw County
  - 15 members, of 5 public, 5 private members, and 5 community members;
  - Meetings open to the public, work is open to the public
- Characteristics of a high performing CAB
  - Continues to adapt, refine mission
  - Advise on how to use resources
  - Engage community

### VIII. **SWOT Analysis**

- Led by Morghan
- Combined SOAR, SWAT, SWOT into one tool for analysis
- SWOT—strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
- SOAR—strengths, opportunities, aspirations, results
- Combined to form SWAT
- Tool to use to engage all levels of work; helps a team figure out goals, where are gaps
- Using Menti.com to do survey to start SWAT
- What are the strengths of the CAB?
  - Representative of county-wide constituency
  - Passionate members
  - People representing across the county
  - Local gov and community relationships
  - Members are on the ground-level in community
  - Diverse board, representative
  - Long-serving members
  - Connected to many agencies and organizations that are decisionmakers
- What are some aspirations for the CAB?

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- Would like to see CAB participate with MCA more and engage more with OCED programming.
- Also want to see more CAB input in public comment at BOC meetings
- Keep on emerging community needs
- More action group work between meetings
- That we be more recognized in the community
- More public participation
- Integrate more consumer voice into our decision-making
- Evaluation of our impact
- To reach as many people that we possibly can. Keep lines of communication open so all feel free to come to us
- Build relationships with schools in our county
- Reflections of shared concerns of individuals and their future. Striving for common values for all members of community
- What are some weaknesses of the CAB?
  - Unless we set specific tasks, we don't end up doing much
  - Having meetings every other month make it hard to take action, execute tasks
  - Not present in school systems
  - Could be better attached to immigrant populations
  - Building a bench of prospective members
  - Not enough outreach
  - Not knowing what each other are doing in the community through other commitments
  - We need an elevator speech, how to talk about the work?
  - CAB doesn't have a public facing presence
  - We could tap into existing external community support systems, such as faith community
- What are threats to the CAB?
  - Lack of funding
  - Political will and leaders might not be aligned with CAB's work
  - Resources that exist and operate in silos
  - Limited meetings, less time to move work forward
  - Lack of coordination with other CAAs/CABs
  - Lack of communication and coordination within CAB
  - Lack of integration with local nonprofits
  - Maintaining the status quo instead of re-imagining new approaches to addressing poverty and inequities
  - Not taking advantage of time sensitive advocacy needs
- How can OCED do better to support the CAB?
  - Snacks
  - Be open about departments and staff needs so CAB members know things we can step up to do
  - More transparency about opportunities for us to support community action that OCED can't do
  - More timely information
  - Provide each member an in depth understanding of what CAB is/does/represents

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- Help us connect with our communities
- How can CAB better support OCED with building resilient communities?
  - Provide us with resources (like literature) for us to share as we are at community events
  - Orientation of program processes including tracking cases
  - Let OCED know about more emerging needs, especially in communities that might not trust government
  - Make OCED aware of grassroots efforts to support our residents
  - Be available as speakers whenever OCED needs testimonials to support programmatic choices
  - Participate in community events
  - Get diversity in community feedback and share information in different spaces
- Anything else we missed, any gaps?
- Danyelle said what do we want/need to set goals and fulfill goals? What trainings and resources?
- Justin, helpful to talk about things we can do, and can't do, as a public CAB
  - Teresa said, this is an advisory body; CAB can help us set direction and goals, advise on programs, and help us communicate needs and programs up to BOC; this is one of the only true community boards within County gov, so the CAB can use that to communicate community needs to BOC
  - Justin said, he would love to have CAB members attend BOC meetings and give public comment
  - Ricky said, OCED can tell CAB when Teresa is presenting at a BOC meetings and CAB can provide advocacy and public comment; also for any presentation at BOC where public comments would be useful
  - Teresa, CAB members could present at BOC meetings also, about what CAB has been discussing and working on
- Morghan asked, what is there that people making public comments can do wrong?
  - Justin said, if you get on BOC meeting via Zoom, make sure to get on in time for public comment period,
  - Ricky said, the only thing you can do wrong is not speak up
  - Ricky said, also its hard to ignore a group of 20-30 people that join a meeting for public comments about a particular issue
- JoAnn said, how do we make sure we have a united front, we're all on same page? This is important
- Danyelle said, what do we need as a board to start filling gaps
- Shoshana said community action supports self-sufficiency, not dependency; and we need to do more for youth; wants to partner with more youth groups; says our youth know what is happening in community
  - Would like to see more organizations come in to advise us how to engage with youth in our community, on important community issues
- Alyshia said, could we have a youth spot reserved on the board?
- Justin said, for training, can we participate in MCA conference? It looks like it is remote this year, takes place in August, can we attend that?
  - Also said, if CAB members want to do public comment at BOC meeting for more funding for trainings, to attend conference

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- Cherisa said, CAB should take more time to get to know each other and what we do in the community; make sure people know about CAB and what our goals are
  - Would be good to get involved in the schools, let them know what CAB does
  - Start internally, within CAB, we need to get to know each other; and get to know OCED staff also, what we all do in our work and in community
  - Need to understand people's strengths, know what meetings people can go to and participate in
- Shoshana said, pandemic has played a role in this, we used to get together in person and socially, we will be able to get to know each other better
- Cherisa said yes that's true, but we still have room to get to know each other now and learn how to share our work with each other and with community
- Mary agrees with Cherisa, maybe there should be a casual meeting of CAB members to get to know each other
- Linda said, I'm really about communication, worked in school system for years, and is all about connecting with community youth and teaching them while they're young; also want to bring in seniors who can help educate, connect with senior centers
- Morghan said, yes that is a gap, CSBG helps fund a lot of our senior programs, like SNP, and we can connect CAB with more info on SNP and use that connection and communication more
- JoAnn said she liked the MCA Legislative Day at the Capitol, in Lansing, it was good to get work done and meet with legislators, and also get to know fellow CAB members
- Justin brought up that national community action website has some good info, mentioned that May is Community Action month
- Teresa said there could be more opportunity for remote webinar trainings, more affordable
- Morghan said, Caitlin and I will send those free webinar opportunities out to group
- Next steps, discussed by Morghan
  - We'll get together and figure out how to digitally vote and prioritize items from SWAT analysis
  - Will bring results back to group by May CAB meeting
  - Add a Goals/objectives section to agenda, for each meeting
  - We'll also send info to the CAB about when there's an important advocacy opportunity at a BOC meeting our other opportunity
  - CAB members can email group, email listserv about new programs and advocacy
  - Maybe bring committees back, prioritize that, if CAB wants to

### IX. **Public Comment**

- No public comment at this time

### X. **Adjourn**

- Meeting adjourned at 7:03 pm.