

WCCA BOARD MEETING
May 19, 2020

The 54th Annual Meeting of the West Central Community Action Board of Directors was held May 19, 2020 at the WCCA Executive Office, Harlan, IA. President, Charles Parkhurst called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. Staff attending were: Keith Bruck, Lavennia Coover, Denny Lawson, Wendy Mueller, and Brittany Schoof.

ROLL CALL

Jeri Vogt, Crawford- Zoom
Donna Childress, Crawford- Zoom
Connie McGee, Crawford- Zoom
Dustin Sheldon, Fremont- Zoom
Walter Utman, Harrison- Zoom
Trista McLaughlin, Harrison- Zoom
Joan Martens, Harrison- Zoom

Carol Vinton, Mills- Zoom
Brandi Snow, Montgomery- Zoom
Lynn Grobe, Pottawattamie- Zoom
Bob Burnett, Pottawattamie- Zoom
Chris Ritter, Pottawattamie- Zoom
Charles Parkhurst, Shelby
Kris Olson Harmon, Shelby- Zoom

A quorum was declared.

Excused Absences:

John Hartkopf, Cass
Steve Barber, Cass
Cynthia Williams, Fremont
Coleen Driscoll, Mills
Tom Brouillette, Monona
Lynn Bieler, Monona

Tim Tropa, Monona
Rudy Kinard, Montgomery
Alan Armstrong, Page
Rose Maxwell, Page
Bryan Swain, Shelby

ADDITIONS OR AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions or amendments to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MARCH MINUTES

Walter Utman made the motion to approve the March minutes, Jeri Vogt seconded. Motion was carried.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

FY 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Everyone received a copy of the FY 2019 Annual Report in their board packet. This report highlights all the work West Central Community Action did last year. Wendy thanked Brittany for completing another great annual report.

APRIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

The April 23, 2020 Executive Committee meeting minutes and handouts to approve the FY 2020 CSBG Disaster Supplemental Recovery Application and the FY 2021 CSBG regular grant application were

included in the board packets. Both grants were submitted to DCAA on April 23rd. Brittany reviewed and presented the FY 2021 CSBG grant application at the March 17, 2020 board meeting. The FY 2020 CSBG Disaster funding will be used to assistance households that were affected by the March 2019 flooding in Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Monona, Pottawattamie and Shelby Counties. We will be providing \$82,407 in direct assistance to clients. We will also be reimbursing \$9,744 to the Fremont and Mills County food pantries as they were greatly utilized last year during the 2019 flooding. The remaining balance will be used for administrative and supply costs.

MAY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

The May 8, 2020 Executive Committee meeting minutes were emailed to the Board of Directors. The Executive Board of Directors and Policy Council Executive Committees approved the Head Start/Early Head Start One Time Activities Response to COVID-19 that was due May 15th. We will be receiving \$105,560 and will use the funds for Child Plus onsite training to enhance program processes that can be completed remotely in case staff are required to work from home in the future, Trauma Training, Infectious Disease Training, purchase PPE equipment, update food service equipment as we will be unable to serve children family style due to the virus. If funds are still available we would provide educational care packages to children who will be entering kindergarten. We are operating under the guidance that all funds will have to be spent by the end of the grant year January 31st.

PERSONNEL POLICY UPDATE APPROVAL

Everyone received a copy of Personnel Policies #401 Timekeeping, #508 Use of Equipment, #701 Employee Conduct and Work Rules, #703 Sexual and Other Harassment. Denny went through each proposed change. Kris Olson Harman suggested adding “bullying behavior” to #703 and everyone agreed with the suggestion. Personnel Policies #721 Risk Management and #722 Passenger Behavior are new additions to our manual. Wendy added that many of these changes were recommendations from the Risk Assessment that was completed in January. These changes have already been presented and approved by the Head Start Policy Council. Bob Burnett made the motion to approve changes and additions of the presented personnel policies and approve the entire WCCA Personnel Policy Manual. Kris Olson Harmon seconded. Motion carried.

FY 2021 ORGANIZATION BUDGET APPROVAL

2020-2021 Organizational Budgets was provided to all Board of Directors in their board packet. Keith included the previous year’s 2019-2020 budget to show a comparison. Keith stated this is a requirement for CSBG but is a great overview for the Agency. There is a slight increase from the previous year but we are receiving additional funding through the Cares Act. Carol Vinton made the motion to approve the Annual Agency Wide Organizational Budget for 2020-2021, Chris Ritter seconded. Motion was carried.

CSBG CARES ACT SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING APPLICATION APPROVAL

Wendy stated that under the CARES Act, the Community Services Block Grant or CSBG received \$1 Billion to be distributed to Community Action Agencies. We received our contract last week and we will be receiving \$747,627. As part of the CARES CSBG application we have to provide a supplemental needs assessment regarding COVID-19, to assess the challenges communities and families are facing. The needs assessment allows the agency to make the most informed strategic decisions possible regarding funding. A copy of the needs assessment executive summary was included in the board packet. Based upon the findings and after talking with outreach staff, WCCA is focused on assisting clients with their basic needs of food and shelter. WCCA will use a majority of the CSBG CARES

funding to establish a rent/mortgage program for households up to 200% of the federal poverty guideline and provide additional funds to our six food pantries to help with food insecurity. WCCA will also update technology components to assist in connecting with clients in various methods, such as ipads, computers and Zoom. Funding will also be used to purchase PPE to help keep staff safe while working with the public. We will also hire two part-time employees for the Crawford and Page County outreach offices to assist with clients. The remaining funds will be used for various administrative costs. The CARES CSBG funding plan aligns with our mission and vision. We are requesting board approval to submit the application and CSBG plan once it is received from DCAA. Walter Utman made the motion to approve submitting the CSBG CARES Act plan and application that is aligned with WCCA's mission and vision once it is received. Brandi Snow seconded. Motion was carried.

CCR&R FY 2021 FUNDING REQUEST APPROVAL

We are in the process of preparing our budget and training plan for FY 2021. This renewal is in the third year of the five-year grant cycle. We are projecting to receive \$724,462.00 in federal and state program funding. We were informed that CCR&R programs will be receiving a 5% increase for FY 21, which amounts to an extra \$35,223 for a total grant award of \$760,685.00. Additionally, there are three Pay for Performance Measures available to the host agencies. The Pay for Performance measures and funds are: 1- 95% or above of submitted QRS applications require no follow-up. Incentive pay is 2% of the base contract amount or \$20,834.00. 2- 95% or above of all completed Registered Child Development Home and Child Care Assistance Applications are submitted without additional follow-up. Incentive pay is 2% of the base contract amount or \$20,834.00. 3- Adding regulated child care programs within the region to the Department of Human Services baseline count taken July 1st each year. Incentive pay \$25,000.00 for the Gold Standard. If we meet all the Pay for Performance Measures in our contract we could receive an additional \$66,668.00. We employ 9 CCR&R staff positions to provide resources, education and advocacy to support quality child care. We deliver the following two core services in a 17 county area in Southwest and West Central Iowa. 1- Provider Services: Technical assistance, consultation, coaching, and training designed to improve the quality of environments. Targeted consultations will include provider registration; regulatory requirements; infant and toddler care; recruitment and retention strategies; and the Iowa Quality Rating and Improvement System with an emphasis on onsite services. 2- Community Services: Provide outreach and partnerships with businesses and community organizations. We will also provide data to community partners as to the available capacity of child care, the expense and the technical assistance available from CCR&R. We are requesting board approval to submit the FY 2021 CCR&R budget and training plan by June 1, 2020 to the Iowa Department of Human Services. Chris Ritter made the motion to approve submitting FY 2021 CCR&R budget and training plan. Brandi Snow seconded. Motion was carried.

HEAD START TRANSPORTATION WAIVER APPROVAL

Lavennia Coover presented the Head Start Transportation Wavier. We are requesting a transportation waiver for both the child safety restraint system and bus monitoring requirements. Trista McLaughlin made the motion to approve the Head Start Transportation Wavier. Chris Ritter seconded. Motion carried.

HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM UPDATE

Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms are closed for the remainder of the school year. The Office of Head Start provided guidance that all Head Start/Early Head Start staff will continue to get paid until the end of the school year which is May 22nd. Early Head Start staff will continue to get paid until June

30th as they are open year round. Staff are continuing to check in with families weekly and provide educational materials. Most staff are teleworking with a few coming into the office off and on to complete tasks. Program Instruction 20-03 was included in the board packet. It discusses the FY 2020 Head Start Supplemental Funds in response to COVID-19. It provides: Funding for One-Time Activities in Response to COVID-19 that was approved May 8th. Also, funding for existing Head Start grantees to offer Supplemental Summer Programs (\$500 million). Wendy stated that after further evaluation and communication with staff it is not going to be feasible to have a summer program to serve children transitioning to kindergarten in the fall. Plus with the uncertainty of COVID-19 we are unsure if we would even be able to have classes. We have decided to not apply for the Supplemental Summer Program funds. Office of Head Start will be conducting the Focus Area 1 (FA1) monitoring review by phone during the week of 6/1/2020. Lavennia and her staff have been working on the questions and will be prepared for the review. On March 10th, Kathy DeGeorge Evans from the Iowa Department of Human Services made an unannounced visit to Harlan due to a complaint that was received concerning a child in the Harlan Head Start Center. Lavennia explained the situation of the complaint and it was unfounded. Wendy added that the complaint had nothing to do with our staff it was strictly on a child behavior. However, Kathy DeGeorge Evans did find that the classroom was out of sorts and uncleanly, requiring action. Head Start closed shortly after her visit due to COVID-19. Lavennia explained what resolution will be taken once staff return and the classroom reopens. Kathy was going to provide Lavennia with a referral but has not heard back to date. We have received all the school contracts back for the 20-21 school year. Early Head Start classrooms are in the process of planning for re-opening. They will be surveying parents on if they are planning to send their children back into the classroom. We are working on guidelines and are tentatively looking at staff returning in July and reopening with children mid-July. Brandi Snow commended Lavennia and her staff on planning to reopen to provide services to children and families.

CORPORATE RESOLUTION

Keith Bruck stated with Nancy Pash retiring and staff being off due to COVID-19, we needed to add additional check signers to our accounts. Amanda Blum and Ivy Nielsen have been added as check signers.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS VACANCY UPDATE

Wendy stated we still need board members in Cass, Fremont, Mills, and Page counties. Molly and Wendy have reached out to a potential board member in Montgomery County. Her name is Pat Berendes and she has agreed to become a board member and will be the private representative for Montgomery County. Pat will be seated at the August board meeting

JUNE AND JULY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

Wendy stated she does not feel we will have anything needing approval in June or July. The Executive Committee meeting can always be scheduled if needed. Walter Utman made the motion to not have a June or July Board of Directors meeting. Carol Vinton seconded. Motion was carried.

STAFF REPORTS

The Directors present had nothing new to add to their reports.

FISCAL REPORT

Keith had nothing new to add to his report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

- Wendy sent out a COVID-19 survey to all employees on April 15th, regarding how West Central was responding to the pandemic. A copy was included in your board packet. We had a good response with 95 employees participating in the survey. Wendy thanked all staff who took the time to complete the survey.
- Included in the board packet is a letter from DCAA regarding our onsite LIHEAP program audit that was conducted on February 20th. There were no findings and no response is required. Wendy thanked Ivy Nielsen, Amy Lugsch, and the entire LIHEAP staff for their hard work and attention to detail to ensure that all program requirements are being maintained. There is also a LIHEAP program notice, which states that agencies can now allow applicants who are unable to qualify for the program using standard verification periods, to use a 30 day look ahead period for households who have recently lost their jobs due to COVID-19. It also allows agencies to increase the amount of crisis funds we can pay from \$500 to \$1,000. LIHEAP will be receiving additional crisis funds due to the CARES ACT. The State of Iowa received 4.2 million dollars and the new contracts should be issued soon. The funds will be used to provide crisis money to clients facing disconnect notices. There was also a press release announcing that LIHEAP has been extended to June 30th to further assist clients.
- The WIC FY 21 grant application was submitted in April. We will have the annual WIC audit on May 22 via zoom. Included in the board packet was a letter from the state regarding the WIC mid-year progress report. Strengths included: our community partnerships and increasing our referrals to the WIC program and working through the current COVID-19 pandemic while still trying to hire additional staff. They recommended that we cross train staff, which Amanda has already implemented and also look at alternative evaluation methods to decrease staff time and decrease human errors. Thank you to Amanda and her staff for a job well done. A letter from the Iowa Department of Public Health was included in the board packet. They reviewed our agency audit and it complies with their standards and there were no findings associated with funding from the Iowa Department of Public Health. There is also a summary of the May 5th WIC virtual clinic assessment conducted by Charles Lorinser, who is our WIC State Program officer and our responses to the visit. Overall the report is really good with our participation the past three months being consistently above the state average and the kept appointments is higher than the state average. The report stated that participants were treated with respect and that staff do an excellent job of creating positive report with the participants. Information is documented properly as well. WIC staff are working in the admin office and servicing all clients by phone. The waiver for seeing clients in person was extended until June 30th. We have been ordering supplies and protective equipment for staff so they will be ready to return once it is safe to see clients in person.
- The Department of Labor released the new funding opportunity for the SCSEP program and applications are due June 15th. As you know we will not be applying and our contract ends June 30th. Ivy and Wendy had a conference call with Chris Garland and Susie (SCSEP Program Officer) on May 15th to discuss the transition phase of the program. It was a great call and Wendy thanked them for their understanding and willingness to work with us during this transition phase. We both want as little of disruption as possible to participants. Ivy calls all participants every other week to check in with them to see how they are doing and if they have obtained unsubsidized employment. Ivy has been on several calls with Senior Service and they are working on a 4 phase plan to bring

participants back into the workplace. Ivy has been contacting host agencies to see if they are open and what precautionary measures are in place.

- Weatherization staff are completing online trainings and assisting with other programs when needed. We have been ordering PPE equipment so staff will be ready to go back into homes when allowed. The State has sent out a draft of safety precautions for home entry for the Weatherization program. At this time we have received no further instruction from the state on when a reopening could occur.
- Brittany and Wendy had our exit interview with Greg Pieper and Lori Easter, CSBG State Program Managers on May 4th regarding our 3 year CSBG audit and organizational standards. A big congratulations goes out to Brittany for having a clean audit with no findings. The state program managers commented that everything was organized, all documents were in order and they had no issues or concerns. They also stated that our By-laws were excellent and easy to follow. They also liked our board minutes that Brittany composes. Wendy also thanked Keith and the management staff for providing the documentation for the CSBG audit. We will be receiving the letter at a later date. Everyone received a copy of the letter from DCAA regarding CSBG increasing the eligibility to 200% of the federal poverty guidelines from 125%. This is for all CSBG grant awards. This increase will allow us to assist more households in need.
- Outreach offices are continuing to receive numerous monetary food pantry donations. We are very appreciative of all funds we have received. The number of food pantries we are distributing has doubled in most areas. We are so thankful that we can provide the necessary items for families in need. Kelly and Wendy have been grocery shopping weekly to help supply the food pantries with essential items. Outreach offices are still locked at this time and the plan is to open by appointment only on June 15th once we have the necessary safety equipment in place. The clothing rooms will not reopen at this time. Outreach staff are working hard to assist clients by phone and mail.
- Included in the board packet was a letter from Iowa Department of Human Rights approving our FaDSS budget extension that we requested. We now have until September 30th to expend all grant funding. Denny, Brittany, Keith and Wendy conducted FaDSS Director interviews on May 5th and 6th. We interviewed 6 qualified candidates and offered the job to Mindy Williamson. She is currently the WCCA Disaster Case Management Coordinator. She started on May 18th and will work with Molly until her retirement on June 30th. FaDSS staff continue to telework and are conducting virtual visits with their participants.
- FEMA Case Management services will come to an end on June 30, 2020. We have notified all Long-Term Recovery Groups, published a press release in all six counties with a FEMA declaration, and informed the Emergency Managers. Anyone still needing case management services will be referred and managed by our outreach staff.
- WCCA continues to be proactive in getting information out to all staff and clients regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. We are also posting information on our Facebook page. We have implemented new Pandemic office setting guidelines for all staff and will be adding additional equipment to ensure staff safety when meeting with the public. Staff who are currently telecommuting (CCR&R, FaDSS and HR) may return to the office on June 1st if they would like. The remaining staff will slowly integrate back into the offices starting July 6th using a stair step approach. We will continue to provide information and make decisions regarding closures as necessary. The Harlan Administrative office continues to have staff working. We all have separate work areas and are practicing social distancing. We are cleaning common spaces frequently.

Chris Ritter made a motion to adjourn at 7:02 p.m. Walter Utman seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lynn Bieler
WCCA Board Secretary