

**METROPOLITAN ACTION COMMISSION  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES  
800 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, North, Nashville, TN 37201  
March 28, 2019 / 12:00 noon – 1:00 pm**

*Breaking the cycle of poverty in our community – one child, one person, one family at a time.*

Present: Kasey Anderson, Leslie Buggs, Benita Davis, Karen Doty, Osman Gabure, Jim Harbison, Joseph Mitchell, Russ Pulley, LaVoneia Steele, and Gwen Watson.

Absent: Melissa Campbell, Indira Dammu, Flo Kidd, Kathleen Murphy, Renee Pratt, and Zulfat Suara.

Staff/Others: Debora Benberry, Karen Crook, Cynthia Croom, Alex Dickerson (Metro attorney), Lisa McCrady, Rickie McQueen, Sherry Watson, and Robert Wright.

Dr. Steele called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m., and acknowledged §2.68.030 Metropolitan Code of Laws.

**REPORT FROM THE CHAIR**

**Motion:** Approve January 24, 2019, meeting minutes.

**Made by:** Benita Davis **Second:** Karen Doty **Motion Passed.**

**Motion:** Approve February 21, 2019, meeting minutes.

**Made by:** Gwen Watson **Second:** Russ Pulley **Motion Passed.**

Dr. Steele convened the following Committees with reports due no later than June 30, 2019:

By-Laws Committee: Osman Gabure (Chair), Karen Doty, Jim Harbison

Nominating Committee: Flo Kidd (Chair), Russ Pulley, Gwen Watson

Executive Director Evaluation: Leslie Buggs (Chair), Kasey Anderson, Benita Davis, Osman Gabure, Gwen Watson

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT** *as provided by Kasey Anderson, Chair, Personnel Committee*

The Personnel Committee along with Metro Attorney, Alex Dickerson, is reviewing the agency's substance abuse policy. A recommendation will be brought before the full Board at the next meeting.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT** *as provided by Dr. Cynthia Croom, Executive Director*

MAC Updates

Dr. Croom stated that the Mayor's Budget Hearing is scheduled for today at 3pm. During the hearing, Dr. Croom plans to inform the Mayor that the investment in the Head Start buildings last year enabled the agency to receive duration funding from the Office of Head Start. Additionally, Dr. Croom will mention in the importance of agency staff being included in the 3% Cost of Living Increase being provided to civil service employees, and the importance of a Head Start building being located in the southeast corridor of the county. Board members are invited to attend the Mayor's Budget Hearing.

The March 17, 2019, Wellness Conference was very well received and considered the best conference held to date. The issues resulting from secondary trauma was highlighted. Staff were given the opportunity to take the ACES assessment, and based upon the unanimous results received, it helped us to understand that we must continue to provide support to our team members.

Staff is participating in Weight Watchers at Work Program, with a collective loss of over 200 pounds to date.

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is funding two correlational studies. Vendors for the studies have been selected and contract negotiations will begin soon.

Head Start Updates

Notification was received from the federal Office of Head Start (OHS) that our application for duration funding was approved. Duration funding will allow an increase in service hours to 612 slots to begin July 1, 2019. Funding was approved at \$874,904, with \$531,946 currently received for start-up costs. Of that over \$400,000 will be available for playground updates and equipment purchases to enable us to be ready to begin increased services

On March 8, a letter was received from OHS stating that our next five year grant will be a part of the competitive grant process as our current grant cycle is scheduled to end in June of 2020. A phone call with the OHS regional office was held on March 22 to discuss the process for competition with the actual grant notification likely coming out in September with a due date in December 2019/January 2020. Contract negotiations take place in March 2020. Present for the phone call was Dr. Steele, Dr. Watson, Mr. Mitchell, Dr. Croom, and Dr. Fondren. Dr. Croom stated that based upon the phone call, she feels confident that re-funding will occur, particularly in that it was clear that the work of the Metropolitan Action Commission was appreciated by OHS and their desire that we continue to partner with them to provide Head Start services. Dr. Steele, Mr. Mitchell, and Dr. Watson shared their impressions of the phone call, particularly that OHS was expecting the agency to reapply for funding. However, to allow for the option to provide the same type of service but with fewer federal restrictions, Dr. Croom stated that the agency is exploring additional funding sources, particularly CCDBG (Child Care Development Block Grant) funding.

We received notification that our appeal to OHS for under-enrollment of Early Head Start was successful and we will not experience a reduction in Early Head Start slots/funding. The appeal hearing was before Dr. Bergeron, national Head Start Director, at which time she learned that we requested and were denied a waiver. She asked her staff person why we were denied a waiver. At which time, the response the person's response was that technically we should not have been given a waiver, but we should have been instructed to simply write a professional development plan and to then put the Early Head Start teachers that we are training into the Early Head Start classrooms. Dr. Bergeron then complimented the agency on the fact that we are training parents to become teachers and then helping them to get jobs.

**FINANCIAL REPORT** *as affirmed by Benita Davis, Treasurer, and presented by Robert Wright, CFO*

The January 2019 financial report reflects a positive or zero fund balance. Head Start/Early Head Start in-kind report was reviewed with the matching requirement at 83%. Credit cards statements were presented and reviewed. CACFP meal counts and invoices based on 22 days were reviewed of attendance.

The February 2019 financial report reflects a positive or zero fund balance. Head Start/Early Head Start in-kind report was reviewed with the matching requirement at 84%. Credit cards statements were presented and reviewed. CACFP meal counts and invoices based on 19 days were reviewed. Mr. Wright noted that both the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) and Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) have transitioned to a federal fiscal year so those funds will carry to September 30.

**Motion:** Approve January 2019 and February 2019 Finance Reports.

**Made by:** Russ Pulley **Second:** Gwen Watson **Motion Passed.**

**ITEMS REQUIRING BOARD ACTION**

Head Start / Early Head Start 2019/2020 Selection Criteria

Newly appointed Content Area Manager, Debora Benberry, highlighted changes to the Head Start / Early Head Start Selection Criteria and the Selection Criteria and Prioritization Clarification and Definitions handout. Changes included the new federal poverty guideline, the decrease in points for children

receiving services for special needs as that criteria is already covered by 170 points received for children with an IEP or IFSP; parents without a high school diploma or GED saw an increase from 30 points to 50 points; loss of health insurance was added; families without health insurance increased from 30 points to 40 points; Families in Crisis increased in from 30 points to 50 points; and Abuse/Neglect and Substance Abuse were combined into one category.

**Motion:** Approve Head Start Selection Criteria as presented.  
**Made by:** Gwen Watson **Second:** Joseph Mitchell **Motion Passed.**

**Grants, Contracts, Memoranda of Understanding**

**Motion:** Approve the submission of the Head Start / Early Head Start application for funding and subsequent receipt of grant.  
**Made by:** Russ Pulley **Second:** Benita Davis **Motion Passed.**

**Motion:** Approve receipt of the Head Start / Early Head Start duration funding in the amount of \$874,094, with \$531,946 in start-up funding received now.  
**Made by:** Russ Pulley **Second:** Joseph Mitchell **Motion Passed.**

**Media/Public Relations** – Report attached.

**Community Program** – Mr. Cox shared that within the federal CSBG Reauthorization through HR-1695, efforts are underway to raise the income level from 125% of poverty to 200% of poverty. Mr. Cox will continue to keep the board updated. Report attached.

**Head Start/Early Head Start** – The 2018 Head Start / Early Head Start Self-Assessment was based upon a SWOT analysis. Program Goals and subsequent Objectives were reviewed. Report attached.

**Motion:** Accept the 2018 Head Start / Early Head Start Self-Assessment.  
**Made by:** Joseph Mitchell **Second:** Leslie Buggs **Motion Passed.**

**Policy Council** – Report attached.

**Administrative Services and Operations** – No report.

**Human Resources** – Report attached.

**OTHER BUSINESS** - none

Meeting adjourned.  
Minutes submitted by:

Zulfat Suara  
Board Secretary