

**METROPOLITAN ACTION COMMISSION
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES
800 2nd Avenue, North, Nashville, TN 37201
April 23,2020 / 12:00 noon – 1:00 pm**

Attachment 1

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

Present: Leslie Buggs, Kathy Floyd-Buggs, Jim Harbison, Sharon Hurt, Jeffery Moses, Berthena Nabaa-McKinney, LaVoneia Steele, and Zulfat Suara.

Absent: Kasey Anderson, Benita Davis, Karen Doty, Osman Gabure, Flo Kidd, Joseph Mitchell, and Renee Pratt.

Staff/Others: Marvin Cox, Cynthia Croom, Phara Fondren, Lisa McCrady, Rickie McQueen, Derrick Smith (Metro attorney), Brian Ward, and Robert Wright.

Dr. Steele called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. and acknowledged §2.68.030 Metropolitan Code of Laws.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

Motion: The items on the meeting agenda constitute essential business of this Board, meeting electronically is necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of Tennesseans considering the COVID-19 outbreak, and any rule that conflicts with Governor’s Executive Order 16 permitting electronic meetings be suspended..

Made by: Jim Harbison **Second:** Kathy Floyd-Buggs **Motion Passed.**

Motion: Approve February 25, 2020, meeting minutes.

Made by: Kathy Floyd-Buggs **Second:** Zulfat Suara **Motion Passed.**

Dr. Steele convened the following committees

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

Nominating Committee: Flo Kidd (Chair), Kathy Floyd-Buggs, Renee Pratt, Zulfat Suara

Executive Director Evaluation Ad Hoc Committee: Leslie Buggs (Chair), Kasey Anderson, Benita Davis, Osman Gabure, Berthena Nabaa-McKinney

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

As a result of Covid-19, we can expect to see an increase in both Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) and Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) funding. At this time, CSBG has increased its eligibility to 200% of the poverty guideline and HEAP has increased to 175% of the poverty guideline. Head Start eligibility remains at 100%. However, Head Start is encouraging all programs to apply for summer bridge funding that can be used to provide summer services to children who will either transition to kindergarten, or who have an IEP.

Dr. Croom thanked the nutrition team and other agency team members who are working the front lines to ensure that daily meals are provided to Head Start and MNPS families. The state funding agency for USDA meals, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), has approved agencies to expand services to include any child 18 years or younger. Additionally, to assist us being able to serve meals to the entire household, the agency is using local dollars and has also partnered with Second Harvest Food Bank. Meal distribution has transitioned from Monday through Friday to Tuesday through Thursday with five days of meals being provided on Thursday to ensure the family has food until the following Tuesday. In addition to providing daily meals, once a month 575 large food boxes are provided to Head Start families.

Community Programs staff are working from home (except Ms. Gill, Family Development Coordinator, who alternates days) as applications are uploaded to email and staff were issued Metro phones on which they could contact customers. Head Start teachers and advocates were issued agency phones so they can contact Head Start children and families. The administrative team is alternating days working from home, except Mr. Cox, who is working daily due to the volume of applications being received.

Mayor Cooper is expected to submit the FY 2021 budget to Metro Council on Tuesday, April 28.

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

The February 2020 financial report reflects a positive or zero fund balance. Head Start/Early Head Start in-kind report was reviewed with the matching requirement at 82%. Credit cards statements were presented and

reviewed. CACFP meal counts and invoices based on 18 days were reviewed. It was noted that due to a credit limit on Ms. McQueen's card, some travel expenses were also charged to Dr. Croom's and Mr. Wright's cards.

The March 2020 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 information will be provided at the May 2020 meeting.

Motion: Approve February 2020 and March 2020 Finance Reports.

Made by: Leslie Buggs **Second:** Jeffery Moses **Motion Passed.**

ITEMS REQUIRING BOARD ACTION

Head Start Waiver

Currently, there has been a cost savings due to Head Start closing classrooms due to Covid-19 Safer at Home. As such, the agency will submit a request to the federal Office of Head Start for waiver of a portion of the required match for FY20. The majority is the match is met through local funding. Therefore, should the waiver be granted, the funds previously designated for the Head Start match will be returned to Metro to assist with the current Metro-budget situation.

Motion: Approve submission to the Office of Head Start for waiver, not to exceed \$600,000, to the required match for FY20.

Made by: Jim Harbison **Second:** Kathy Floyd-Buggs **Motion Passed.**

Community Services Block Grant and Community Services Assistance Program Rent/Mortgage Cap Increase

Currently, the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) rent assistance is capped at \$400 and the mortgage assistance is capped at \$750.00. Additionally, the Community Services Assistance Program (CSAP) rent assistance is capped at \$400 and the mortgage assistance is capped at \$760. In response to the recent requests for rent/mortgage assistance, the agency is requesting to increase the cap for both rent and mortgage assistance to a maximum of \$2500 with the amount split between CSBG and CSAP, when possible.

Motion: Approve increasing the CSBG cap for rent or mortgage payment assistance to \$2500 and increasing the CSAP cap for rent or mortgage payment assistance to \$2500. When possible, payment amount will be split between Community Services Block Grant and Community Services Assistance Program.

Made by: Sharon Hurt **Second:** Jim Harbison

Discussion: Mr. Moses expressed concern that someone with a \$2500 mortgage or rent payment had substantial income prior to the Covid-19 Safer at Home. Dr. Croom responded that since the Covid-19 Safer at Home, many citizens who normally would not need or be eligible for CSBG/CSAP services have now experienced a loss of income through no fault of their own, and the higher rent and mortgage amounts reflect a population of individuals who had not previously applied for assistance. However, in order to receive rent or mortgage assistance, the individual/family must still meet all requirements of the program, which includes a loss of income through no fault of their own, and the entire household income must not exceed 200% of the poverty guideline. Mr. Harbison stated that since Covid-19 Safer At Home, Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency is now seeing an unprecedented amount of mortgage foreclosures as many 2-income families have now become either 1-income or zero income families.

Motion Passed with one Abstention (J. Moses)

Ethics/Conflict of Interest Acknowledgement Form

Motion: Approve that all Board members are required to read and then signed the Ethics/Conflict of Interest Acknowledgement Form, and that form is submitted to the agency as a matter of record.

Made by: Jeffery Moses **Second:** Leslie Buggs **Motion Passed.**

Grants, Contracts, Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)

Motion: Approve the FY21 Summer Food Services Program grant application and subsequent contract.

Approve the CSBG Amendment #1 for FY20-22 to increase the budget by \$329,099.38 for a total of \$1,668,199.38, and to change the end date to September 21, 2021.

Approve the Head Start COLA and Quality Improvement increases available for FY21.

Made by: Berthena Nabaa-McKinney **Second:** Kathy Floyd-Buggs **Motion Passed.**

Job Descriptions - none

PROGRAM REPORTS

Media/Public Relations – There has been media coverage on Channels 4 and 5 regarding the agency’s rent and mortgage assistance programs. Billboards will soon go up giving information about the Home Energy Assistance Program. Currently, there are six food distribution locations – North Head Start, Cumberland View community, 6th and Shelby community, Millwood Drive, Aldi’s on Murfreesboro Road, and Hickory Manor Apartments in Antioch. Meals are distributed each Tuesday, Wednesday, and on Thursday, meals and food boxes (provided by Second Harvest) are given to cover five days. No written report.

Community Program – No report.

Head Start/Early Head Start – No report.

Policy Council – Report attached.

Administrative Services and Operations – No report.

Human Resources – No report.

OTHER BUSINESS – None.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by:

Joseph Mitchell, Board Secretary