



Community **Action** Partnership of Ramsey & Washington Counties

Minutes for a Regular Meeting of the **Board of Directors** of
Community Action Partnership of Ramsey & Washington Counties Board of Directors
Held on **Thursday, January 19, 2023**, at **6:00 pm** via **Zoom**.

Members Present:	<i>Nicole Frethem, LaToya Whitfield, Emma Corrie, Kasey Wiedrich, Curtis Johnson, Jillian McAdams, Luvidia Williams, George Stone, Mai Chong Xiong, Kiara White, Jessika Thomas-Powell,</i>
Members Absent:	<i>C. Herme</i>
Staff Present:	<i>Sonia Gass, Caitlin Duncan, Gina Iliev, Nicolee Mensing, Pamela Maldonado, Cheryl Butz, Kevin Adams, Feleshia Edwards, Hannah Nauen, Jake Johnson</i>
Guests Present:	<i>None</i>

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Board Chair, Nicole Frethem, called this regular meeting of the Board of Directors to order at 6:07 pm. A quorum was present. Nicole Frethem presided over the meeting and confirmed that all participants could see and hear one another. The Board recited the mission of Community Action. A roll call was taken by Caitlin Duncan.

1. Approval of the January 19, 2023 Agenda

Nicole Frethem reviewed the agenda for the meeting previously distributed to the members of the Board and asked if there were any questions.

VOTED: to approve the agenda of the January 19, 2023 board meeting distributed to each member prior to the meeting.

2. Approval of the November 17, 2022 Minutes

Nicole Frethem called on the committee to approve the minutes of the board’s prior meeting on November 17, 2022, which were distributed to each member prior to the meeting.

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2022 board meeting distributed to each member prior to the meeting.

3. Board Chair’s Comments

Commissioner Frethem welcomed new board members and introduced them to Sonia Gass, the Agency’s Executive Director, who is charged with creating cultural changes and evaluating the overall Agency. Commissioner Frethem noted that this year will focus on Board Member engagement. The Board is recruiting two private sector members and one consumer sector member.

4. Interim Executive Director’s Comments

Sonia Gass introduced herself to new members. She will be meeting board members one on one and reminded members to reach out to Caitlin to set up time. Ms. Gass is also reviewing the Agency's onboarding process as well as reviewing departments. She will be attending the NCAP Conference in New Orleans in February. Additionally, Ms. Gass has been working on Agency culture with "Sign On with Sonia" virtual all staff meetings. Negotiations for the Collective Bargaining Agreement are beginning. Finally, Ms. Gass updated the Board on the funding for the required match for the Community Housing Development Organization grant. The Agency will be using a mortgage rather than line of credit that was originally suggested.

II. SEAT NEW MEMBERS

1. Public Sector – Mai Chong Xiong

Commissioner Nicole Frethem introduced Commissioner Mai Chong Xiong. Commissioner Xiong gave a brief introduction to her background as a former Head Start kid who relied on county services. Additionally, Commissioner Xiong previously worked at CAP of Suburban Hennepin.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the board unanimously

VOTED: to seat Mai Chong Xiong to the Community Action Board of Directors

2. Consumer Sector – Kiara White (Policy Council Liaison)

Kiara White introduced herself. She was nominated as the Board Liaison by Head Start Policy Council. Ms. White expressed that she wanted to learn more about the agency. She provided some background information as a parent with kids that go to Head Start and she was born and raised in St. Paul. She grew up in Head Start and also volunteered and previously worked at the University Center. Ms. White spoke about wanting to bridge the gaps and help families and be the voice from a parents perspective and advocate for children.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the board unanimously

VOTED: to seat Kiara White to the Community Action Board of Directors

III. CONSENT AGENDA

The board briefly reviewed the items on the consent agenda and was invited to pull any items out for further discussion if desired. The items presented in the consent agenda have been reviewed by at least one committee, with the information provided to all board members prior to the meeting. No items were pulled for discussion.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the board unanimously

VOTED: to approve the consent agenda, which includes:

- **CY2022 Employee Retirement Plan Audit Engagement Letter**
- **FY2022 Agency Audit Engagement Letter**
- **Education Identity & Access Management Board Resolution (Ratification)**
- **Head Start Eligibility & Selection Criteria**
- **October & November 2022 Credit Card Statement**

IV. NEW BUSINESS / DISCUSSION FROM CONSENT AGENDA

No items were pulled from the Consent Agenda.

1. **Employee Retention Bonus Extension**

Cheryl Butz provided background information on bonuses that have been given to all Community Action employees, including a hiring and referral incentive, frontline worker pay, retention incentive, and vaccination incentives. Ms. Butz also outlined how quality improvement funds were utilized to increase pay for certain positions. Head Start is requesting to use part of the remaining fund from the American Rescue Plan (ARPA) to provide an additional incentive of \$500 for each employee of Head Start. The remaining funds would be used for technology upgrades and classroom environment upgrades. This proposal was originally brought to the Finance Committee, who had asked for some more information and updates before bringing it to the full board for discussion. Commissioner Frethem gave the Board an overview of the discussion from the Finance Committee meeting.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the board

VOTED: to approve the Employee Retention Bonus Extension, with Jillian McAdams opposed and remaining votes in favor.

V. STUDY SESSIONS

1. Head Start Community Needs Assessment

A program must annually review and update the community assessment to reflect any significant changes including increased availability of publicly-funded pre-kindergarten- (including an assessment of how the pre-kindergarten available in the community meets the needs of the parents and children served by the program, and whether it is offered for a full school day), rates of family and child homelessness, and significant shifts in community demographics and resources. The program conducted an annual community assessment update in December 2022. The Senior Data/Business Intelligence Analyst collected the information from several external sources like the American Census Survey, MN Department of Education etc. to create the report. An overview of the significant updates was provided to Board Members.

2. Head Start Eligibility Training

Per Head Start Performance Standard 1302.14, a program must annually establish selection criteria that weigh the prioritization of selection of participants, based on community needs identified in the community needs assessment, eligibility category, and other relevant family or child risk factors. Hannah Nauen, the Head Start ERSEA (Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance) Manager provided training for the Board of Directors on program eligibility for Head Start.

VI. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Planning & Evaluation Committee Report

George Stone gave an overview of the Planning & Evaluation Committee, which was rescheduled for January 17, 2023. The Committee recommended the Head Start Eligibility & Selection Criteria for approval and Hannah Nauen gave overview of the changes this year.

2. Bylaws & Membership Committee Report

The Bylaws & Membership Committee did not meet this month.

3. Finance Committee Report

November 30, 2022 completes two months of the agency fiscal year. The Statement of Financial Position presents an increase in current assets and short-term liabilities at month end. The November cash balances are within the established agency guidelines. The agency is showing a loss for the two month period. Please note that the income and expenses for the building have been separated from this amount. The building is currently showing a loss for the two month period. The actual year to date expenditures variance (budget vs. actual) is about 17.4% more when compared to the budget.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the board unanimously

VOTED: to approve the November 2022 Financial Statements as presented at this meeting.

4. Head Start Policy Council Report

Luvidia Williams introduced Kiara White, who will provide the Head Start Policy Council Report in future meetings. Minnesota Head Start Association shared a report from the December quarterly meeting and asked for suggestions on what they'd like to see at parent-teachers conferences. Additionally, Policy Council also reviewed the ERSEA training and approved the selection criteria updates. Luvidia Williams was awarded a plaque for her 5 years of service.

5. Executive Committee Report

The Executive Committee approved the EDIAM approval.

VII. PROGRAM & DEPARTMENT REPORTS

All Program/Department Reports are included in the Board packet that was distributed to all members. Members were invited to ask questions on any of the reports.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS/INFORMATION

1. 2023 Board of Directors Calendar

Nicole Frethem reviewed the 2023 Board of Directors meeting calendar, which is available in the packet.

2. Next Board of Directors Meeting

Nicole Frethem reminded members that the next Board of Directors Meeting will be held on Thursday, February 16, 2023, at 6:00 pm.

IX. ADJOURN

Board Chair Nicole Frethem adjourned this regular meeting of the Board of Directors at 7:34.