



Minutes for a Regular Meeting of the **Board of Directors of
Community Action Partnership of Ramsey & Washington Counties Board of Directors**
Held on **Thursday, May 16, 2024**, at **6:00 pm In Person**

Members Present:	<i>George Stone, Thomas Och, Nicole Frethem, LaToya Whitfield, Mai Chong Xiong, Jillian McAdams, Curtis Johnson, Rachel Smith, Temmy Olasimbo, Emma Corrie</i>
Members Absent:	<i>Kiara White, Jessika Thomas-Powell</i>
Staff Present:	<i>Sonia Gass, Branden Block, Caitlin Duncan, Karri Kerns, Chris Herme, Tyler Pauley, Tom Moberg, Fidelity Goodlaxson, Sandra Pyles, Lindsay Kline</i>
Guests Present:	

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Board Chair, George Stone recited the Mission of CAPRW. George Stone called this regular meeting of the Board of Directors to order at 6:07 p.m. A roll call was taken by Branden Block. A quorum was present. George Stone presided over the meeting and confirmed that all participants could see and hear one another.

1. Approval of the May 16, 2024 Agenda

George Stone 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 May 16, 2024 Board meeting.

2. Approval of the April 18, 2024 Minutes

George Stone called on the committee to approve the minutes of the Board’s meeting on April 18, 2024, which were distributed to each member prior to the meeting.

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2024 Board meeting distributed to each member prior to the meeting.

3. Board Chair’s Comments

George Stone stated that he wants to further engage with staff and the community. George shared that Branden Block created a list of events and encouraged the Board to attend. George let Karri Kerns speak in greater detail about the male/father involvement event on May 21, 2024 at Phalen Park. George outlined the Policy Council HSAC Picnic at Cherokee Park. Karri Kerns provided further detail. George shared that more details are to come regarding the 2024 Culture Fair. George wants to make sharing of events and participation a regular occurrence.

4. Executive Director’s Comments

Sonia Gass spoke about a Head Start incident and how the issue was resolved and reported and updated the Board on the results of the Agency’s legal matters. Sonia announced that the agency is working with

CAP solar to explore putting solar panels on the main building, RBC, and Battle Creek. Sonia explained that with the installation of solar panels, there is a possibility of getting a new roof paid for by CAP Solar, the result of which is a large saving of Agency funds. Sonia shared that the Agency is applying for a grant for CAPRW to be a Community Resource Center. This would allow individuals to receive navigation and support at CAPRW. Sonia implemented a quarterly 4-hour Senior Leadership meeting to focus on team-building and training. Sonia attended a Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon, NAZ Gala, and the Cinco de Mayo parade. Sonia continues to meet with the Minnesota Department of Commerce regarding the Energy Conservation performance improvement plan. Sonia updated the Board on a Human Resources issue regarding errors made in employee's benefits deductions. The HR department is in the process of rectifying this issue.

II. 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. Nicole Frethem requested to pull items 1-4 to New Business; items 1—4 were subsequently pulled. 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.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the board unanimously

VOTED: to approve the consent agenda, which includes:

- **Grant Summary – Energy Assistance**
- **March2024 Credit Card Statement**

III. NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION FROM CONSENT AGENDA

Nicole Frethem spoke about the election policy that was worked on Jan, Feb. Mar. She talked about how to go about deciding which Board members get to go to conferences, etc. and ensuring equity in choosing the person via a tripartite board. Jillian McAdams asked who the Board asks to go to conferences. Nicole explained that staff. Jillian asked if there needs to be a policy about turnaround time. Nicole explained that it depends on the conference. Luvidia Williams asked if the Board can ask staff to go to trainings/conferences. The Board will bring requests to Sonia or Caitlin.

1. Board Election Policy

The Governance Committee Chair, Nicole Frethem, presented a draft of a procedure to elect Board Officers.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the committee unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Board Election Policy as presented at this meeting.

2. Conference Attendance Summary

The Governance Committee Chair, Nicole Frethem, presented a draft of a policy to determine which Board Members are able to attend conferences and events on behalf of the Board.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the committee unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Board Conference and Event selection Policy as presented at this meeting.

3. Bylaws Update: Head Start Policy Council Liaison

Nicole Frethem presented a proposed change to the terms and appointment of the Head Start Policy Council Liaison to align with Head Start Policy Council's Bylaws.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the committee unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Bylaws revision regarding Head Start Policy Council Liaison as presented at this meeting.

4. Bylaws Update: Compensation and Reimbursement Policy

Nicole Frethem presented proposed changes to the Board reimbursement policy to also allow for advances. This is in line with the Agency's financial policies and procedures.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the committee unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Bylaws revision for Board member compensation and reimbursement as presented at this meeting.

5. Budget Timeline and Assumptions

Tyler Pauley spoke about the Budget timeline and assumptions. The Budget Book will be presented to the Board in September.

6. Legislative Agenda

Andy Vue spoke about the legislative agenda, workforce training funds, and Head Start Association funds increasing. Andy talked about initiatives that are community-led and not just leadership led. Nicole Frethem would like to see a more detailed plan at the next meeting. Sonia suggested bringing in Board members to develop the next legislative agenda. Emma Corrie asked if we have legislative priorities in the House or Senate currently; we do not at this time but plan to in the future.

7. FY23 CSBG Annual Report

Fidelity Goodlaxson shared about the FY2023 CSBG report. The report that we submit to the state and federal government has 4 modules: Admin, Community Level, Affordable Housing and Individual and Family Level Work. The work of leadership championed this funding progress. We choose NPIs (national performance indicators), and as long as we are within 20% of our NPIs in either direction, it is acceptable for funding purposes. We focus on doing well and not just trying to get big numbers. Fidelity talked about demographics of those we serve.

IV. STUDY SESSIONS

1. Program Overview: Energy Assistance

Sandra Pyles spoke about Energy Assistance and challenges that were faced when coming on board: Low staff morale, unspent funds, and underperformance. Sandra overhauled the department by asking the state for a chance to make improvements. Through 1:1s, regular staff meetings and trainings, and gratitude sessions, and quarterly in-person meetings with food, Sandra has managed conflicts and reformed her department. Every position has been filled, marketing campaigns have been implemented, and staff were realigned to do what they are interested in and can do well. The result is success: All funds are spent, and the number of people served well exceeded the number of

people prescribed by the state. The Department of Commerce sent information to show that we are making so exceptional progress. Online applications processed have nearly doubled. The approval time of an application dropped significantly. The Department of Commerce even said they no longer need weekly meetings. The staff survey is showing staff are satisfied. Sandra spoke about a team project to create a piece of art, bring the Energy Assistance department even closer. Luther Thao in Energy Assistance has been with CAPRW for 28 years and spoke about his positive experience, especially since Sandra came on board.

2. Strategic Plan Overview

Caitlin Duncan and Lindsay Kline presented information on the strategic planning process. Community Needs Assessment survey responses have doubled compared to the previous survey, but BIPOC communities still need more engagement. A plan to engage the board in the process was laid out and the Board was asked to meet in July to complete planning sessions, including a cost/benefit analysis, mission/program alignment, and SWOT analysis. Lindsay spoke about needing all of these pieces to be in place to be successful such as the Board participating in strategic development. Lindsay spoke about “Generative Mode” which is thinking outside of the box and how things can be done differently.

V. PROGRAM/DEPARTMENT & FINANCIAL 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.

VI. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Finance Committee Report

Thomas Och, Board Treasurer, presented the March 2024 financial statements to the Board and members were invited to ask questions.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the committee unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Financial Statements of March 2024 as presented at this meeting.

2. Head Start Policy Council Report

3. Executive Committee Report

4. Governance Committee Report

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS/INFORMATION

1. 2024 Board of Directors Calendar

George Stone reviewed the 2024 Board of Directors meeting calendar, which is available in the packet.

2. Next Board of Directors Meeting

George Stone reminded members that the next Board of Directors Meeting will be held virtually on Thursday, June 20, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session at this meeting.

IX. ADJOURN

Board Chair George Stone adjourned this regular meeting of the Board of Directors at 8:01 pm