



Fairfax County Community Action Advisory Board

Fairfax County Community Action Advisory Board (CAAB) Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, March 5, 2024, 7:30pm Fairfax County Government Center Rooms 9&10

Members in Attendance: Nermin AbdelWahab, Michele “Cookie” Hymer Blitz, Maria Isabel Leiva, Michael Mahrer, Marcia McDevitt, Phil Rosenthal, Shari Zamarra, Michelle Jefferson, Caroline Hockenberry

Members Participating Remotely: Sandra Barksdale, Reston; Ken McMillon, Falls Church; Heather Thomas, Centreville; Elizabeth ‘Liz’ Benson, Falls Church; Felicia Webster, Dallas, TX

Absent: Matthew Bell, April Hall, Kevin Hickerson, Michele Menapace, Benjamin Zhul, Mary Ann Floto, Morgan Jameson, Hari Karup, Ann Macpherson, Alice Yam, Alex Rodriguez, Hawa Hassan, Alicia Doe

Minutes – February 2024

The motion to approve the meeting minutes was made by Phil Rosenthal, seconded by Marcia McDevitt and passed without objections.

Fairfax County FY25 Advertised Budget

Katie Horstman from the Department of Management and Budget Division presented an overview of the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget. Town Hall meetings are posted on the County’s Budget website to sign up through the Clerk’s office. The Budget hearing will be from April 16-18th for community members to provide feedback on the advertised budget. Michelle Jefferson, Heather Thomas and Maria Leiva Alfonso will provide comments to the Board of Supervisors at the Budget Hearing on Tuesday, April 16th. CAAB members will speak on the four priorities of the CAAB – housing, health & social/emotional behavioral development, support services, and education & cognitive development. The budget will be adopted on May 7th and will go into effect on July 1st.

Caroline Hockenberry mentioned that summer camp used to be available to parents with children on free or reduced lunch at the community centers and asked how summer camp fees tie into the budget. Phil Rosenthal stated that it is important to be cognizant of tax increases affecting the community most in need.

Michael Mahrer asked when CCFP programs are approved for funding since the budget is approved on May 7th. Katie Horstman said it will be a tight turnaround.

Program Report

Susan Al-Suqi presented the CSBG FY24 2nd Quarter narrative report and program outcomes. Based on the spending for quarters 1 and 2, it looks like programs are on track to spend the full CSBG/TANF funds awarded for FY2024. Nermin AbdelWahab made a motion to accept the second quarter report, seconded by Marcia McDevitt and passed without objections.

Membership and Election Committee Report

Shari stated that the Membership and Elections committee needs to be re-elected and the By-Laws need to be edited. The committee consists of Heather Thomas, Shari Zamarra, Ben Zuhl, Kevin Hickerson and Ken McMillon. There are plans to edit the By-Laws before the next meeting.

CAAB Member Sharing

Michele "Cookie" Hymer Blitz shared information about the Housing Symposium at George Mason University. There is a bill to provide some relief for those facing eviction. The bill has passed the house and senate and will go to the governor's office. Another bill is going to the governor's desk for inmate profit sharing from exorbitant costs to make phone calls and to buy items. There is also concern about the Connector strike.

Marcia McDevitt mentioned that 115 individuals come through Reston CARES in an hour, but due to the Connector strike, there are less than 80 people showing up.

Heather Thomas shared that she will be one of the guest panelists at the Housing Symposium at George Mason University's Harris Theatre.

Michelle Jefferson mentioned creating an ad hoc Housing Committee. Marcia McDevitt motioned to form a committee, seconded by Nermin AbdelWahab, and passed without objections. Michelle Jefferson stated that this housing committee is to make a difference for the people the CAAB serves.

Shari Zamarra stated that she met with United Way and learned a lot about what they do. United Way might be sending a new representative to join the CAAB.

Meeting adjourned at 9:17pm.