

Fairfax County Community Action Advisory Board (CAAB)
Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, October 4, 2022, 7:30pm
Meeting held electronically due to the COVID-19 pandemic
By ZOOM video/audio platform

The virtual meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by Chair Michelle Jefferson, who proceeded with doing the member roll call.

Members in attendance with locations: Nermin AbdelWahab, Fairfax, VA; Mary Ann Floto, Northwest DC; April Hall, Reston, VA; Kevin Hickerson, Centreville, VA; Caroline Hockenberry, Vienna, VA; Morgan Jameson, Fairfax, VA; Michelle Jefferson, Fairfax, VA; Hari Kurup, Falls Church, VA; Maria Isabel Leiva Alfonso, Falls Church, VA; Michael Mahrer, Falls Church, VA; Marcia McDevitt, Reston, VA; Michele Menapace, Fairfax, VA; Alex Rodriguez, Herndon, VA; Heather Thomas, Centreville, VA; Alice Yam, Herndon, VA; Shari Zamarra, Fairfax, VA

Members in attendance who joined after roll call: Alicia Doe, Hawa Hassan, Ken McMillon

Absent: Michele “Cookie” Hymer Blitz, Isaac Orea-Montero, Whitney Richardson, Phil Rosenthal, Benjamin Zuhl

Guests: Supervisor Lusk

The motion that all members present were able to be heard was made by Michelle Jefferson, seconded by Michele Menapace, and passed with no objections. The motion to allow CAAB business be done via an electronic meeting due to the COVID-19 emergency was made by Michele Jefferson, seconded by Michele Menapace, and was carried without objection.

Minutes – September 6, 2022

The motion to approve the meeting minutes was made by Mary Ann Floto and seconded by Michele Menapace.

Workforce Development

Supervisor Rodney Lusk (Lee District) spoke to the CAAB about the Workforce Innovation and Skills Hub (WISH) which is intended to provide job opportunities for residents living along the Richmond Highway corridor. Participating in the workforce development trainings at the WISH Center will give residents a chance to earn a middle-class income and end generational poverty. Partnerships with Amazon, Dominion Energy, INOVA, and trade organizations will facilitate entry into apprenticeship/work opportunities. Participants in the training programs will be able to attain certification in their desired area of focus, increasing their ability to gain employment with one of the partnering organizations. WISH staff will provide case management services, working with clients for two years to understand challenges and obstacles in the job. Clients will have wraparound services (e.g. childcare, help with transportation, acquiring uniforms and equipment, etc.) to ensure they are ready to succeed. WISH will be working adults (approximately 250 adults to be serve) and youth – with a commitment to bring 100 youth into the program in the first year.

CAAB Member Information Sharing

- Chair Michelle Jefferson shared that Heather Thomas had been interviewed by NPR regarding food insecurity and that she also participated in a Round Table discussion with Secretary Fudge on affordable housing. Ms. Thomas provided more information; links below to the NPR story and the Fairfax County press release on the discussion with Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Secretary Fudge.
 - <https://www.npr.org/2022/10/02/1125571699/hunger-poverty-us-dc-food-pantry>
 - [HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge, Fairfax County Announce Allocation of Additional Rental Assistance Resources | Housing and Community Development](#)

- Ms. Thomas and Alicia Doe have both been selected to serve on the 3rd Annual Capitol Area Food Bank's Client Leadership Council. They will be participating throughout the year. Ms. Thomas also mentioned that the White House recently held a conference around food insecurity.
 - <https://health.gov/our-work/nutrition-physical-activity/white-house-conference-hunger-nutrition-and-health/conference-streaming/>
- Shari Zamorra shared that Fairfax Presbyterian will be building 10 townhomes on their property – 8 will be for Habitat homeowners and 2 with Home Stretch. The proposal for housing at the Government Center is progressing (291 units) with the developer having been selected. Hawa Hassan asked for more information on the Habitat project – Ms. Zamorra indicated she would connect Ms. Hassan with the project.
- Nermin AbdelWahab shared that she has been able to review the eviction data for Fairfax – it appears that current number of evictions are higher than 2019 and as if the protections put into place during the pandemic had not existed. Ms. AbdelWahab also shared that Legal Services of Northern Virginia will most likely file for a declarative judgment from the Supreme Court around the CARES Act properties. She will share the information on the CARES Act properties in Virginia if the suit is successful.
- Ramona Carroll encouraged CAAB members to attend the Consolidated Community Funding Advisory Committee's public hearing on Tuesday, October 11. She also shared that the Emergency Food Strategy Team and the Fairfax County Food Council with Supervisor Gross submitted input to the White House's food insecurity conference. She will share the input that was submitted with the CAAB.
- Mary Ann Floto shared that the United Way is hosting three pop up fairs. Services that are offered include rental assistance, employment services, voter registration and legal services. She will send the info flyer so that it can be shared with CAAB members.
- Ken McMillon shared that he will be hosting Inside Scoop with Ben Zuhl once again.

Follow up to 4th Quarter CSBG Program Reports

After a review of the 4th Quarter CSBG program reports at the September meeting, the following items were followed up by staff from the Department of Procurement and Materials Management.

- The Cornerstones program indicated that nearly 80% of their clients met the program outcome; however, data provided seemed to contradict this statement (with only 64% of clients achieving outcomes).
- The Multicultural Center indicated that several of their clients were able to complete ESL classes and had received work permits. DPMM staff will follow up with the program to request information on the number of individuals who achieved these outcomes.
- The Multicultural Center also indicated that increase in food costs and gas prices is proving to be a challenge for the program. More information is requested from the program so that the CAAB can better understand the problem.

Responses to the above questions are attached to these meeting minutes (page 3).

Membership and Elections

The CAAB is currently at 27 members. The AARP has named Ann Macpherson as their representative; she has previously been the AARP representative. There are 2 regional representatives to fill (one of them is the Head Start slot) and the remaining slot is in the private provider sector. Ms. Thomas is working to fill both of the regional representative slots. Ms. Jefferson thanked the Membership and Elections committee for all the work they do to have a full Board.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm. The motion to end the meeting was made by Ms. AbdelWahab, seconded by Ms. Thomas, and was carried without objection.

Follow Up to FY2022, Q4 CSBG Outcome & Narrative Program Report Questions

Multicultural Center

- Under Program Achievements, what are the number of clients who completed ESL and the number clients who received their work permit to find employment?

During Q4, three clients completed their ESL classes, and three others received a work permit that allowed them to find employment. These numbers are significant given the slow processing times for the immigration office these days.

- *Due to the increase in food cost and gas prices clients who were able to come to the office for services have opted out to remote services instead to save money. Why is this a challenge?*

The start of remote services is always slower, compared to in-person services, as there is a learning curve related to the use of technology for meetings. Some of the case management services offered to clients are also easier to provide in person, particularly when clients are not literate in their primary language and/or not technologically savvy. Moreover, clients might not have reliable access to the technology needed for private and secure meetings, from only having access to their phone with limited data that limits meeting times, lack of earplugs for private conversations, having meetings in public spaces or in a parking lot as they rely on public access to WiFi, to having to wait for their children to arrive home to use their computer for a meeting, or not showing for an appointment because their line was cut due to lack of payment, among others. In summary, clients who need case management services are already struggling financially to meet their basic needs, and recent spikes in the cost of living have an immediate impact on their ability to receive services, and alleviate their initial financial struggles.

Cornerstones Kids & Parents Engage (KAPE)

At the time that the program needed to submit program outcomes they did not have all the information needed from students' schools/parents to fully report results. However, by the time the CSBG narrative report was due, the program data was more complete and the number of students achieving the outcome was higher.

The final number for KAPE for FY2022 was 53 students achieving the outcome of improved academic performance out of 67 students served, or 79%. This explains why the narrative indicated that nearly 80% of students (the projected percentage rate of achievement) achieved the outcome.