

BCCAP Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

7.28.2021

Location: WebEx Meeting

Welcome & Call to Order

Madam Chair, Doris Minor Terrell welcomed board members and guest to the meeting of the Board of Directors (Start time – 4:39pm)

Introduction/Roll Call

Angela Whitaker, BCCAP Director greeted board members and guest along with an official roll-call.

Board Members Present

- Councilman
Robert Stokes, Sr.
- Chairwoman Doris Minor
Terrell
- Scott Gottbreht, PhD
- Francesca Jean Baptiste
- Councilwoman
Sharon Green Middleton
(arrived at 4:53pm)
- Manami Brown, MEd

Board Members Absent

- LaRhonda Medley
- Theodore (Theo) Jackson

*BCCAP Consultant Present:
CNA Consultant, Julie Jakopic

Voting on Previous Minutes

Angela Whitaker introduced the meeting minutes from the April 12, 2021 Board meeting. Chair Terrell called for a vote to accept the minutes. Member Baptiste seconded the motion to accept the minutes as presented. All Board members present voted to accept the meeting minutes.

Presentation Share

Angela Whitaker, BCCAP Director shared the Community Action Partnership Board Meeting Power Point beginning with CAP center overview

BCCAP Staff Updates

Leadership Updates shared by Angela Whitaker, BCCAP Director

- Ebony Alderman-McCauley joined the BCCAP Team in June 2021 as a CAP Center Manager. Ebony will lead the Eastern CAP Center with a focus financial education programs including VITA and FEC.

- Selena Gonzales-Jones joined the BCCAP team in May 2021 as the Eviction Prevention Program Director. Selena serves as the program lead for eviction prevention including: the back-rent program, housing stability initiatives, and EVP constituent services.
- In addition to sharing new staff members, Director Whitaker shared Paula Reynolds, Director of the Office of Home Energy Programs, has resigned after serving for over two years.

Director Whitaker opened the floor for questions and concerns before moving to next agenda item.

Financial Report – May 2021

- MEAP (Maryland Energy Assistance Program) beginning balance \$4,000,000, total transitions \$568,564 with a remaining balance of \$3,431,436
- Submitted year-end close out for the General Fund. BCCAP is projected to close within budget and with minimal underspend
- CSBG is projected to need to access historical/previous years' carry-over to cover FY21 expenses
- OHEP is projected to underspend due to staffing vacancies and no security costs this year. MEAP is also projected to underspend. All underspend must be returned to the state.
- CDBG is on-track for to maintain a balanced budget for FY21
- BCCAP has spent down roughly \$20 million of the allocated funding to support the eviction prevention program.

Director Whitaker opened the floor for questions and concerns before moving to next agenda item.

Programmatic Update: Eviction Prevention Program

Director Whitaker provided an overview of all current funding source updates from the Coronavirus Relief Fund 1, ERAP, CDBG-CV2, Homeless Solutions Program, CDBG-CV1, ESG-United Way Relocation Contract, CSBG as well as the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. In addition to the current funding sources, Director Whitaker also shared funding with the notified intent to award (funding not available) Emergency Rental Assistance Program2 (State/MDHCD), ERA2-3 (Federal/City), and the direct allocations to United Way (funding not available) from ERAP2.

Director Whitaker also shared that BCCAP has processed over 4,000 applications with the help of mandatory overtime.

The following big challenges regarding EVP were shared:

- Disproportionate demand pre-COVID
- Immediate surge in demand March 2020
- Applicants need high-touch support
- Multiple funding sources, requirements
- Document collection

Chairwoman Doris Terrell acknowledged the hard work of the team to support Baltimore families.

As a result of the challenges, Director Whitaker shared what is to come:

- Increased staffing so that application processing times can be decreased and to improve customer service. Recently adding 5 new hires to extend the workflow capacity.
- Build out housing stability focus to include:
 - Relocation assistance
 - Security deposit + rent forward funding
 - Shelter diversion partnership with Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services
- Launch partnership with the District Court and the Sherriff’s Office to develop eviction diversion strategies—an early step toward a more targeted response to those at immediate risk of eviction. Through this process our EVP Team can work with the Sherriff Department to receive a list of those facing eviction to speed up the process and not needing to wait for customers to contact the agency.
- Proactive communications so that tenants and landlords can monitor application processing
- Initial focus on low-barrier eligibility
- Court-ordered evictions despite moratoria
- Growing demand for support

Director Whitaker opened the floor for questions and concerns before moving to next agenda item.

Councilwoman Middleton made the suggestion to consider someone from the Sherriff’s department to fill the current opening on the Board. Baltimore Sherriff Anderson is an elected official and could designate a member of his team to be a member of the BCCAP Board of Directors. The suggestion was made for Major Sabrina Tapp-Harper.

Programmatic Update: Energy Assistance

Director Whitaker provided the following program FY21 Metrics

- Actual total applications received YTD 31,153
 - Includes re-applications
 - Unduplicated number of applications YTD 27,055
- This number includes customers who are denied and reapply
- 10% increase in applications YTD from last program year
- Roughly 2,000 applications in the “90-day Curing Period”

Director Whitaker opened the floor for questions and concerns before moving to next agenda item.

Programmatic Update: BH2O/Water4All

Director Whitaker provided the following program updates:

- Effective July 1, Baltimore City launched a new water discount program, Water4All, to create more equitable access to water assistance for more residents, and to protect customers from service cut-offs or liens on their properties when they are unable to pay their water bill.
- Water4All replaces the current BH2O water assistance program.
- Since 2019, BCCAP has partnered with DPW to administered the BH20 program.
- In FY21, BCCAP approved **3,898** BH20 applications.
- BCCAP will continue to serve as the customer support/application processing partner for the new Water4All program.

Director Whitaker opened the floor for questions and concerns before moving to next agenda item.

Partnership Update: United Way of Central MD

Director Whitaker shared the following partnership updates:

- United Way of Central Maryland
 - The Strategic Targeted Eviction Prevention (STEP) program
 - Landlord bundle process. Eligible landlords are processed quickly through the program. The landlord becomes the driver of their application and collects required documents from their tenants to submit one complete application and the payment is processed in one lump sum.
 - \$16 million will support this program from the State Emergency Rental Assistance Plan.
 - Relocation Services
 - In some cases, tenants are not able to stay in their unit so the goal is to ensure that a tenant is relocated and not pushed into a shelter.
 - Utilizing the Homeless Services grant for case management as well as additional funding as needed from the MOCFS-BCCAP CDBG-CV2 & CSBG-Cares Act Supplemental grants.
 - Total funding for the program is \$328k.

Director Whitaker opened the floor for questions and concerns before moving to next agenda item.

Partnership Update: Maryland Emergency Food Grant Franciscan Center

Director Whitaker shared the following partnership updates:

- Partnership Goal: BCCAP and the Franciscan Center entered into a partnership agreement to provide meals to residents experiencing homelessness at the Potee encampment & in the Charles Village area.
- At program close-out, 3,033 meals were served at the Potee encampment and in Charles Village.

- Funding Amount/Funding Source: \$10K-special grant from the Maryland Department of Human Services.

Director Whitaker opened the floor for questions and concerns before moving to next agenda item.

Partnership Update: PCs For People Digital Giveaway

Director Whitaker shared the following partnership updates:

- Partnership Goal: To build relationships with the immigrant community by providing 100 families with free laptops and 12-months of FREE WIFI service to families in Southeast Baltimore.
- Funding Amount/Funding Source: WIFI service free from AT&T; \$12,500 from BCCAP to cover the costs of 100 refurbished laptops (\$125 each per laptop)
- To date, the SE CAP Center has distributed 78 computers to families.

Director Whitaker opened the floor for questions and concerns before moving to next agenda item.

Strategic Planning Goal Review

Director Whitaker reviewed the 6 goals along with their priority strategies:

- Goal 1: Increase access to safe, affordable housing
 - Develop a referral system for families who require legal services related to their rental housing
 - Develop eviction and shelter diversion programs
 - Expand the BCCAP staff to support housing stability initiatives
 - Develop formal partnerships with agencies providing access to affordable housing
- Goal 2: Strengthen service delivery by expanding intensive case management and connecting families to the range of services for which they are eligible
 - Increase the number of staff qualified to deliver case management services
 - Develop an internal system to make and track referrals to other services and programs
 - Implement a robust case management service model
 - Expand BCCAP staff use of online software and databases to more easily connect families with additional resources and other agencies
- Goal 3: Build infrastructure to expand financial education and entrepreneurship
 - Increase the number of BCCAP staff certified as tax preparers
 - Raise awareness about city, state and federal funds and programs for individuals, families and small businesses
 - Increase the number of BCCAP staff certified as financial counselors
 - Develop partnerships with agencies supporting entrepreneurial skill development and opportunities
- Goal 4: Engage with and support communities and populations which have previously been underserved by BCCAP
 - Hire bilingual staff, with an initial focus on those with Spanish-language ability

- Identify and collaborate with community-based organizations which support our target populations
- Implement outreach and communications campaigns to reach new mothers, young families, immigrants and the Latinx community
- Goal 5: Expand our network of government, business and non-profit partners
 - Strengthen collaboration with city agencies
 - Cultivate business partners and sponsors
 - Develop and maintain a database of partners for each CAP center to inform and manage partner engagement
 - Create and maintain a calendar of partner-organized community events for each CAP center
 - Participate in community events to promote services provided by BCCAP
 - Provide staff volunteers to support partner-organized events
- Goal 6: Build BCCAP staff capacity, knowledge base and skills
 - Increase number of BCCAP staff with professional certifications
 - Expand staff diversity to create a team with a range of professional backgrounds that is racially and culturally representative of our CAP communities
 - Develop and implement an internal communications strategy to keep staff current on BCCAP and agency information and updates
 - Develop and implement an agency-wide professional development plan
 - Develop an organizational culture of exceptional customer service through regular training, monitoring and coaching

Director Whitaker opened the floor for questions and concerns before moving to next agenda item.

Councilman Stokes: BCCAP should start issuing food stamps.

Chairwoman Doris Terrell called for a motion to approve and accept the Strategic Plan.

Councilman Stokes seconded the motion.

All present Board members voted to approve and accept the Strategic Plan.

Brief Discussion: how many positions BCCAP will fill this year? The agency will attempt to fill 2 human service worker positions, 5 eviction prevention certifiers positions. Building out more temporary eviction prevention support team members.

Send to Board: e-blast that includes all positions that the agency is currently recruiting for. Working to build out the org. chart for the Eviction Prevention program.

Board member Scott Gottbreht shared that the United Way of Central Maryland is also adding capacity, another 4 team members dedicated to the Baltimore City STEP program. They are also hiring paid interns that are time limited and highly motivated.

Executive Director Edwards spoke about the strategic plan and it being a major compliance component for BCCAP. It will put the agency in good standing with the State. Prior to Director Whitaker joining the team, BCCAP had not had a strategic plan for a long time. This plan communicates the seriousness of the work and the commitment that BCCAP has to the community.

Also shows the professionalism of the Board and staff to arrive at this point. Also inviting the Board to the MOCFS Staff Appreciation Ice-cream Social scheduled on 7/30.

Councilman Stokes acknowledged the hard work of the team.

Chairwoman Doris Terrell moved that the meeting be adjourned. All Board members present agreed.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:48pm

Submitted by Jamie Johnson