

Board of Directors  
Tuesday, April 16 2024, at 12:00 p.m.  
2675 N. Harrison  
SHAWNEE, OK

**MINUTES**

Members Present (\*at Roll Call)

Cleveland  
Kim Lopez  
Lisa Schmidt\*

Logan  
Steve Gentling  
Sue DuCharme

Pottawatomie  
Tiffany Barrett\*  
Keli Pueblo

Lincoln  
Lee Doolen\*  
Vacant

Payne  
Chris Reding\*  
John Chaffin\*

Seminole  
Tim Porter\*  
Dennis Phillips

Staff Present:

Tracy Izell, Susan Nedrow, Cory Swearingen, Sonia Harrington, and Carol Samuels

1. **Call to Order** at 12:11 p.m. by Chris Reding, Board President.
2. **The Roll was called**, and six members were present in person out of twelve; therefore, quorum was met and the board was able to proceed with the meeting. No board members attended through Zoom.
3. **Public Expressions** - The public may comment only on any item appearing on this agenda, subject to the following restrictions: statements to the COCAA board members are limited to no more than three (3) minutes for each speaker and, collectively, no more than 30 minutes are allowed for public expressions.
4. **Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve the Minutes of February 20, 2024, COCAA Board Meeting.**

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Commissioner Tim Porter to approve the February 20, 2024 minutes. Seconded by Tiffany Barrett.

**Vote:** Reding - Yes; Doolen - Yes; Porter - Yes; Barrett - Yes; Schmidt - Yes; Chaffin – Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

5. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove for the annual meeting the slate of COCAA Board candidates for the year 2024.

Commission Reding asked if anyone wanted to keep their current position on the board.

**MOTION:** A motion was made by Tiffany Barrett to approve the annual meeting the slate of COCAA Board candidates for the year 2024. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Tim Porter.

**Vote:** Reding - Yes; Doolen - Yes; Porter - Yes; Barrett - Yes; Schmidt - Yes; Chaffin – Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

## 6. Executive Directors Report

Tracy Izell

- To satisfy the Organizational Work standards, Tracy provided the board members with the Conflict of Interest statement to sign and return.
- She also gave a copy of the COCAA By-Laws which were reviewed during the February meeting, and asked each member to sign the Acknowledgement of receipt form. This is also a required Organizational standard.
- We have set a date of April 30<sup>th</sup> for COCAA's open house from 11:00 am-2:30 pm. Barbara has offered to spearhead this endeavor and our staff will assist her to make this Open House a success. We are looking forward to this opportunity to share our resources with the local community and our partners.

- I am pleased to announce that the Shoes that Fit shoes were delivered to Little Axe. Currently, deliveries are pending with Sasakwa and Butner. We are excited to report that this partnership has enabled us to provide 245 pair of shoes plus 1,225 pair of socks total just for these 3 schools. We are running into a time constraint with shipping so other schools have been asked to wait until school starts in the fall.
- Susan and I have completed over 50 returns through the VITA program. We are trying to contact Ms. Hodges with the IRS to see how to adjust our numbers for the grant. Even though it was quite a task, it was worthwhile to serve these individuals needing tax filing services.
- The Community Action Associations Spring Conference is just around the corner and will be held virtually and in-person at the Springlake Metro Tech campus. Thirteen of our staff will attend this event, which will include Community Action Program updates and informative sessions.
- Lee, Cory and I met with potential Board member Michael Bateman via zoom. After careful consideration, he too, declined to sit on our board.
- The signage for our inside office doors and front door have been ordered making our location more visible to the public.
- I have been attending our advisory board meetings in our outlying counties to offer guidance and support to our coordinators.
- Our partnership with LifeChurch continues to strengthen. We recently filled out our renewal application with LifeChurch. In addition, they have offered staff development training which is included in my future plans for COCAA.
- I recently had the opportunity to meet with the Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board (COWIB) staff, Steve Banker, One Stop Operator, and Quitha Patterson, Business Services Consultant about our continuing partnership with COWIB. We are looking at future collaborations and will be utilizing workforce services that will benefit both of our organizations.

- We are exploring the Oklahoma Alliance for Recovery Resources grant that may lead to additional collaboration with CareerTech Skills Center and will focus on the COCAA transitional house for reintegration clients.
- EAGLE Program Coordinator, Gloria Wallace, visited with our staff about the E.A.G.L.E. program at Gordon Cooper Technology Center. This program assists TANF, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, eligible individuals who want to improve their lives through upgrading of math and reading skills, and attainment of technical training to enter the workforce.
- COCAA is a member of the Logan County EFSP board. Again, partnerships continue to strengthen.
- The OSU Extension program and the Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board have teamed up to bring the Poverty Simulation to Shawnee on May 3 at the CPN Reunion Halls. Most of our staff have registered to participate in this impactful tool to help us rethink the challenges millions of low-income individuals must face.
- Larry Sand, Mike Little and Mark Mosely have expressed an interest in collaborating with COCAA on a HUD Senior Living project in Wewoka. They are looking at land and Larry has started writing a grant application which is due in June. Tracy will try to have Larry and Mike come to the next board meeting to present the details of this project.

7. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove Executive Director's Report.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Tim Porter to approve the Executive Director's Report. Seconded by Lisa Schmidt.

**Vote:** Reding - Yes; Doolen - Yes; Porter - Yes; Barrett - Yes; Schmidt - Yes; Chaffin - Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

## **8. Finance Committee Report**

**Lee Doolen, Vice President**

The finance report was presented by Susan Nedrow.

As required by the Organizational standards, we are required to present the monthly reports with budget to actual numbers, and we have been working on that for the last several weeks.

This is not a restatement, only a change in presentation of the Financial statements that were done last year, to include the budget to actual format that is required by the organizational standards from January 2023 through March, 2024.

Susan presented the financial report on revenue and expenditures that compares budget to actual, categorized by program; and balance sheet/statement of financial position to the board for approval.

Susan asked if there were any questions.

March information presented included the Summary Accounts Payable ledger; payables did go up a little for the month of March. We have been in the process of repairs and maintenance of COTS vehicles; additionally, we have Spring Conference expenses.

The budget to actual report of Revenues and Expenditures, includes agency-wide values as the as program reports. We have not booked accounts receivables for March yet nor the receivable we have for ODOT. There is about \$195,000 in accounts receivable that are not reflected in this statement.

Our expectation is that once we get all of our receivables, we will not have a deficit for the fiscal year.

Tracy noted that our March payments are up since we pay 25% of our insurance for the year.

Susan advised the board that we are continuing to work on preparations for the 3/31/2024 audit.

Chris asked if we made allowances for the increase in utility expenses in requests for funding. Tracy stated that the CSBG Contract was a stated amount up front, so we are always watching expenses to make sure we have enough to cover. She also stated that in relation to our new rental agreement, our utilities are capped at \$350/month, so our rent is set in stone.

Susan also added that in the budget that was presented and approved at the February board meeting, allowances were made in anticipation of increased costs such as insurance and fuel.

Lee asked about payroll expenses for possible future wage increases for staff. Lee asked if we can ask for more funding for raises.

Tracy reported the payroll has remained steady and has actually been reduced with the leave of the Grant Writers to Avedis. Our staff wages are comparable to other agencies so she is not going to focus on raises at this time. Tracy also reported that she was carefully watching the proposed Wage and Hour Rule by the FSLA. This rule could potentially affect COCAA so she was waiting to hear the final rule before making any decisions about salaries.

**9. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove Finance Items and Report.**

**MOTION:** Motion made by Lee Doolen to approve the Finance items and report. Seconded by Tim Porter. Motion passed unanimously.

**Vote:** Reding - Yes; Doolen - Yes; Porter - Yes; Barrett - Yes; Schmidt - Yes; Chaffin – Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

**10. Program Development Report**

**Chris Reding, Board President**

The Program Development report was presented by Cory Swearingen. The committee did have a quorum and January minutes were approved at the last committee meeting.

- New funding proposals

There are several Allocations for Emergency Food and Shelter program Phase 41.

Lincoln County – \$11,242 is split between COCAA and Chosen House. As of this date the amounts have not been determined.

Logan County – \$15,100 – We will apply for rent and utilities assistance.

Payne County - \$2000 out of \$25, 020.

Pott County - \$25,152 – This is usually split between COCAA and Salvation Army.

Seminole County - \$8994- This typically goes to COCAA since there are no other applicants. This will go toward rent and utilities.

City of Shawnee contract - we applied for \$90,000 for this year.

Oklahoma Department of Transportation – 5311 Grant – last year we received \$154,989 plus \$5000 for RTAP funds which are used for training and travel expenses. That is allocated on a percentage that ODOT comes up with. We have not been notified of that amount yet.

Emergency Solutions Grant – COCAA will be reapplying for this grant. Last year we requested \$50,000, the allocation for our sub-region was about \$76,000, we can only receive what we ask for. We thought other agencies in our sub-region would apply but that did not happen. This year we will probably request \$75000. This grant covers Pott and Seminole counties for Homeless and Homeless prevention activities.

The Mill Creek Foundation for Payne County which focuses on Homeless and Education.

- Previous funding proposal updates

SSM Health Grant – Our Volunteers Impacting People had requested for the 2024 cycle but did not receive funding.

- Program and Client Services Report

There are two reports, the final numbers for the 2023 Calendar and the beginning of 2024 statistics.

The Customer Satisfaction Survey reports that we receive from July to December numbers, percentages, and service satisfactions from our customers remain steady. A couple of categories decreased as our funding decreased for some

services. More reports are coming in from our other counties, except for Cleveland due to lack of funding for services.

- Monitoring Reports

ESG monitoring coming up June 24-28, 2024.

We had a OHFA Fiscal monitoring on March 5 for the bank building project. Susan, Sonia and Cory met with OHFA staff. They had a planned meeting with Tonya who does the rental for the properties. We have not heard back on any findings as of today.

Lisa had a question about Item 8, ESG asked which counties are covered. Cory answered that it covers Pottawatomie and Seminole Counties.

John Chaffin asked about the Denial of services – Cory reported that we have started showing denial of services at the end of 2023 so we could better track those who applied but could not provide services due to (1) over income, (2) already received assistance or (3) no funding at the time of application. In 2024 we began reporting three categories of Denial of services: Denial of Service which can incorporate several options, rental and utility assistance because those are the two highest for request of services. We can better track those we weren't able to serve and the reason for denial which will help with future grant applications.

Chris asked about the Healthy Steps, Tracy explained that we have liaison in Payne to work with parents and doctors. The original agreement that was instituted when Gary Theiland was here to pay 25% of the salary. It is a successful program that helps parents, especially low income parents to promote child well-being.

The board noticed that there are many volunteer hours under the Volunteers Impacting People program and wanted a more information. Cory informed the board that is our senior volunteer program here in Pottawatomie County. Most of the drivers for the Meals on Wheels program are senior volunteers, and they help with the VITA program during tax season.

**11. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove Program Development Items & Report.**

**MOTION:** Motion made by John Chaffin to approve the Program Development Items and Report. Seconded by Commissioner Tim Porter.

**Vote:** Reding - Yes; Doolen - Yes; Porter - Yes; Barrett - Yes; Schmidt - Yes; Chaffin – Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

**12. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove updated COTS Drug and Alcohol Policy.**

**DISCUSSION:** Cory stated that changes made were on the drug monitoring and drug tester and a couple of other minor changes. When FTA and ODOT make changes, then we have to make updates at our level as well.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Commissioner Lee Doolen to approve the updated COTS Drug and Alcohol Policy. Seconded by John Chaffin.

**Vote:** Reding - Yes; Doolen - Yes; Porter - Yes; Barrett - Yes; Schmidt - Yes; Chaffin – Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

**13. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove the updated Financial Statements for FYE 3-31-2024.**

**MOTION:** Motion made by Commissioner Tim Porter to approve the updated Financial Statements for FYE 3-31-24. Seconded by Tiffany Barrett.

**Vote:** Reding - Yes; Doolen - Yes; Porter - Yes; Barrett - Yes; Schmidt - Yes; Chaffin – Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

**14. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove the Community Action Plan for 2024.**

**DISCUSSION:** Cory explained that the Community Action Plan for 2024 is part of the Organizational Work Standards and CSBG application. Basically, it's a template that we follow from the Department of Commerce to discuss our ROMA (Results Oriented Management Accountability) cycle. Our assessment process which includes the Community Needs Assessment, Satisfaction Surveys, and all the data that we collect for our clients. We compile all that data to show how we are going to address the top three needs. Our 2022 assessment determined the top three needs were individuals and families that need stable and affordable housing, families that need higher paying jobs or jobs with benefits, and individuals that need assistance with utility bills. Within this plan, we will address those needs for housing through our Emergency Shelter, Rapid Rehousing Prevention services with our ESG, try to provide more affordable housing units to our communities and work with our partners to provide more low-income housing such as the 202 Program discussed earlier. Job placement and jobs with benefits we will partner with Workforce try to help with resume building, job searches and job placement. Utility assistance, our focus area – if we are out of funding will work on referrals with other agencies.

Planning process

Strategic planning to show outcomes of our services, our target population which those with income at 125% or less. The template also asks how we will work with youth so our Shoes That Fit fall under this plan as well as our Healthy Steps program; Hunger and Nutrition services are referred to community food pantries. Other processes include Emergency Services, implementation and data entry processes, and case management. With that information we do our observation and results from reporting and analysis with the reports that we provide to the board and staff, and any other funding sources that require this information.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Commissioner Lee Doolen to approve the 2024 Community Action Plan. Seconded by Commissioner Tim Porter.

**Vote:** Reding - Yes; Doolen - Yes; Porter - Yes; Barrett - Yes; Schmidt - Yes; Chaffin – Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

**15. Motion, Discussion and to approve or disapprove the update for the Community Action Plan for 2023.**

**DISCUSSION:** This is an update of what we said we do in 2023. Briefly discussed in the 2023 plan, our 2019 assessment identified Mental Health services as a need but not included in our 2022 plan since it is not one of our specialty services and is referred to health partners. The Workforce Initiative involved partnering with Workforce, AARP and the National Council on Aging for staff to help our offices at our offices. Continued services included Shoes That Fit, utility assistance, transportation, food pantry referrals. In 2023 we received a grant from SSM Health to provide transportation cards. We were able to provide 61 cards out of 125 during 2023. We will continue with that project.

The last two pages reflect the data that we collected from services we provided in 2023. There was a decrease in services due to the ending of COVID funding. The CARES funding allowed a 200% level of income guidelines but with the end of the funding we have returned to the current level of 125%.

Chris asked if the plans for public transportation in Shawnee is still in the works. Cory explained that plan has been tabled for now.

Cory and Tina have been attending the Central Oklahoma Regional Transit planning meetings with COEDD to try to start their mobility management, ODOC's new system, to coordinate transportation services between eight counties. Nothing has been officially launched yet.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Commissioner Lee Doolen to approve the update for the Community Action Plan for 2023. Seconded by Commissioner Tim Porter.

**Vote:** Reding - Yes; Doolen - Yes; Porter - Yes; Barrett - Yes; Schmidt - Yes; Chaffin – Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

**16. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove the Affirmative Action Plan.**

**DISCUSSION:** Tracy updated the statistics and the EEO is now Carol Samuels.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Commissioner Lee Doolen to approve the Affirmative Action Plan. Seconded by Commissioner Tim Porter.

**Vote:** Reding - Yes; Doolen - Yes; Porter - Yes; Barrett - Yes; Schmidt - Yes; Chaffin – Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

**17. Motion, Discussion and to vote to approve or disapprove the updated Fiscal Policies and Procedures.**

**DISCUSSION:** The changes made to the policies were mainly verbiage, so nothing changes on how we operate. Tracy removed the following sections:

- The Role of the Board of Directors since they are explained elsewhere.
- Practice of Ethical Behavior because it is covered in personnel policies and by the attorney who reviewed the policies.
- Explanation of assets and expenses.

**MOTION:** Motion made by Commissioner Lee Doolen to approve the updated Fiscal Policies and Procedures. Seconded by Commissioner Tim Porter.

**Vote:** Reding - Yes; Doolen - Yes; Porter - Yes; Barrett - Yes; Schmidt - Yes; Chaffin – Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

**18. New Business**---any matter not known about or which could not have been reasonably foreseen prior to the time of the agenda posting. 25 Okla. Stat. §311 (A) (9).

**19. Motion to Adjourn ---**

**MOTION:** Motion made by John Chaffin to adjourn the meeting . Seconded by Lisa Schmidt.

**Vote:** Reding - Yes; Doolen - Yes; Porter - Yes; Barrett - Yes; Schmidt - Yes; Chaffin – Yes

The motion was passed unanimously.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for June 18, 2024 at 12:00 PM

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

6.18.2024 1:27pm  
Date & Time