

ECONOMIC SECURITY CORPORATION OF SOUTHWEST AREA

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 6, 2020

The Economic Security Corporation of Southwest Area's Board of Directors met on Thursday, August 6, 2020, at 7:30 p.m., by conference call. Jim Jackson, President, called the general session to order. The invocation was given by John Joines.

Roll call was taken and those participating in person were: Mike Davis, Darieus Adams, Jim Jackson, Joy Williams, Chester Neel, David Holloway, Jenny Sullivan, Paula Carsel, Kevin Johnson, and Erwin Stanscheit. Members participating via conference call were Nikki Tappana, Sarah Alumbaugh, Kourtney Connelly, Tamara Serr, Phillip Knott, and Larry Asemka. A quorum did participate. Policy Council Liason Spring Knott participated via phone. Members Joe Crosthwait, Doris Fast, Cleo Crosby, Karen Buckman, Thomas Wilson, Melissa Lance, and Sarah Rearrick were absent.

Paula Carsel made a motion to excuse the absent members who had so requested. Chester Neel seconded the motion, which was then approved unanimously.

Old Business

There was no old business to be discussed.

Executive Director's Report

Due to the increase of Covid-19 cases in our service area, John found it necessary to go back to a modified Phase 2 opening policy. We temporarily closed some centers, which have since reopened, but for appointments only. We are still following the guidelines from the city and county health departments in our overall policies, although the two different governments do not necessarily agree. We are also requiring all of our employees to wear face coverings where required by individual cities and where any of our employees are unable to socially distance. We have received, and continue to receive, grants to purchase PPEs and to purchase disinfectants.

Coronavirus has not consumed all of our attention. Staff has continued to work on projects such as our Needs Assessment and our Strategic Plan. Additionally, we are writing funding grant applications for both competitive and noncompetitive grants. We are participating in some small grants from local charities.

As you read in the minutes from the committee meeting last month, we have had significant problems with our elevator for a long time. However, they recently became much worse, and we had to discontinue elevator access to the basement. Over the next several years, we will need to modernize the elevator at considerable cost. But, in the meantime, some minor repairs needed to be made, and were done, so we were able to open the access to the basement back up.

Both of the houses we built in Sarcoxie are under contract and we expect to go to closing on both. John participated in a grant competition sponsored by the 100 Women Who Care Club, and they have awarded us a \$2300-\$2400 grant to be used as needed for the Joplin Bungalows, LLC apartments.

We have scheduled our open enrollment for insurance benefits for August 17th of this year, for the new plan year of September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2021. All plans are staying the same, with a 14.8% increase on the medical, but all others remaining at the same rate.

Head Start Policy Council Report

Spring reported that all sites are now open. Head Start received a one time Covid-19 grant for paying employees which was approved by the Council. Sixteen new employees were approved, as were changes to the Head Start Policies. These changes were in regard to birthday celebrations, where pencils, hats, etc. could be brought rather than cake. There were also changes to the Discipline and Guidance Policies.

Head Start Update Report

Jeff reported that we held summer school classes at nine different sites this year, some starting in June and some beginning in July. Those are now complete, with no illnesses reported. We are busy training and hiring for the new school year. As Spring reported, we received a Covid-19 grant, as well as approval of our Cost of Living and Quality grants.

We have another grant due to be submitted by September 21. This is an Early Head Start grant to expand our program in the four counties we serve.

Board Training

The training this month was presented by Curtis Scott. He provided before and after pictures that were indicative of the work the Home Repair Department does. The department receives rehabilitative funding from two different sources. The first is the HOME grant through Housing and Urban Development, which passes to the Missouri Housing Development Commission who then grants funds to us, and serves all four of our counties. The second source is the Joplin Consortium, which serves clients in Joplin.

Last year, under the HOME grant, which we call the HeRO program, we received approximately \$1.1million and serviced 47 homes. Under the Joplin Consortium we were awarded \$110,000.00 which allows for servicing five homes. For 2020, we have received one million dollars from the HOME program, which is enough to repair approximately 43 homes. We don't know the amount of funding we will receive from the Joplin Consortium for the 2020 year, but believe it will be about \$110,000.00.

Rules for these program require that we are able to fix all the issues needed for the home to meet current code requirements without exceeding the maximum expenditure limit for the program. If we are unable to do this, then we cannot do any work on the home at all. For the HeRO program, the maximum expenditure per home is \$22,500.00 and for the Joplin Consortium Home Repair program, the limit is \$25,000.00.

Curtis reviewed the terms the home owner must meet and agree to. Applications are available at ESC offices. Clients may also call the office at (417) 781-4437 and request that an application be mailed to them. The office for the Home Repair Program is located on West 4th Street in Joplin. They are open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

This is the department's 17th year of helping rehabilitate homes. They not only make repairs as needed to meet code, but also try to make the home as maintenance free as possible, since many of these clients are elderly or disabled and unable to do a lot of maintenance themselves. Luxury and purely cosmetic items are not permissible.

Executive/Finance/Audit Committee Report

Jerry Nichelson reported that in one of the committee minutes, members would see that the committee had approved the renewal of Anthem as our provider for the employee insurance benefits. They had started out at a 17.8% increase, but had come down to 14.94% for the medical coverage. There was only one other bid that came close, but the plan was not as good. The committee minutes also covered information regarding the elevator problems and repairs, and a grant for improving the playgrounds at two of our sites. The minutes from the June Board Meeting were also included in this first item on the agenda. Paula Carsel made a motion to approve the Minutes of these three meetings. The motion was seconded by Tamara Serr, and approved unanimously.

Tony Wright explained there was nothing extraordinary in the financial statements for May and June. Members would see that there were entries of the Covid-19 funds received and the ordering of supplies to deal with the virus. Going forward, we will be ordering supplies, include four disinfecting foggers, so as to be prepared for pandemics. In the future, they will also see the budget for the Joplin Bungalows LLC. Darieus Adams made a motion to approve the financial statements for the months of May and June 2020, including the credit card statements and balance sheets. The motion was seconded by Mike Davis, and approved unanimously.

John announced that there was a last minute notification from the attorneys for the buyers of the Sarcoxie properties, of some additional documents and wording they wanted before the purchase contracts were signed. The first was a Resolution giving the precise name of our CEO in allowing him to sign for the sale of the properties. Our current resolution stated the CEO had that authority, but did not list a person's name as that is subject to change. The second was a copy of the minutes where this resolution was voted on and approved by the Board. Mike Davis made a motion, seconded by Paula Carsel, to approve the amended agenda for inclusion of this item. This motion was approved unanimously. Tamara Serr then made a motion to approve the resolution granting authority to sign for the sale of the properties located at 902 and 904 Center Street, Sarcoxie, Missouri, to John Joines, CEO of the Economic Security Corporation. Paula Carsel seconded the motion and it was also approved unanimously.

Community Relations Committee Report

Tammy Walker reported that the Client Satisfaction survey is given to clients of all divisions of the agency. We had received more completed returns this year than at this time last year. Overall, the reviews were very appreciative. This report included some of the very positive

comments clients had made for each of the departments of our agency. There was no action taken or required on this item.

Winners for the low income representative and alternate positions for the vacant Barton County seat were announced and the Board was given their interview summaries. Mike Davis made a motion, seconded by Kevin Johnson, to approve Patricia Neely as the low income representative to the Board, and Gary Shepherd as the alternate for Barton County. The motion was approved unanimously.

Deborah Markman reviewed the Community Needs Assessment for the term 2020-2023. We wanted the members to have this information up front, before going into the development of the Strategic Plan for next year. We have been working on this since last October. The goal of the Needs Assessment is to identify gaps in the services provided to the population of our counties.

The state provides us with a template to use for this purpose. She pointed out that for different programs, different percentages of the federal poverty levels are used. In this document, we will use the three different levels as required. We will report the number of families in each of these different levels. The information used in our document is available, if a member wishes to take a deeper look than what is provided in the document. Some of these documents are quite lengthy.

Why do we have a needs assessment? To determine what and why these needs are there. There might be a lack of resources, for instance for food, jobs, opportunities. We prioritize these needs to determine the top five, many of which cross over to more than one area, or domain. A domain is one of seven issue areas that contributes to the conditions of poverty. There may be some areas we are unable to address. This information is all collected in an executive summary submitted to the state by September. It is then used to develop a Community Action Plan in preparation for the Strategic Planning meeting next year. No action was needed for this item.

Agency Personnel and Planning Committee Report

Daricus Adams reported for this committee. For item A, Staci Bingham, Director of Housing explained the Family Self Sufficiency Program. This is a small program offered by the department, and the grant we wish to apply for is to renew it and receive funds for another program year. Tamara Serr made the motion to approve applying for the FY2020 Family Self-Sufficiency Program Renewal Grant in the amount of \$47, 526.00. The motion was seconded by Daricus and approved unanimously.

Staci also explained the VASH vouchers, which help with housing for homeless veterans. Again, this is a renewal of a current program for the new fiscal year. Kevin Johnson made a motion to approve the Registration of Interest for VASH vouchers from Housing and Urban Development, which was seconded by Paula Carsel. It was approved unanimously.

Jeff Goldammer, Head Start Director, explained that the Coronavirus Incentive Pay was to encourage employees to come back from lay-off to work in the summer school classes for Head Start. Kevin Johnson made a motion, seconded by Paula Carsel, to approve the Coronavirus Incentive Pay for Summer Head Start employees. This motion was approved unanimously.

Jeff explained that the Office of Head Start had provided guidance for continuing payment of wages and benefits to employees in the Head Start/Early Head Start programs who were/are unable to work due to the pandemic. As of now, this policy is in effect until September 30, 2020 but may be extended. This continuance does not apply to program staff who would normally be laid off during annual end-of-year program closures. Paula Carsel made the motion to approve the Ongoing Payment of Head Start Wages Policy. The motion was seconded by Darius Adams and approved unanimously.

It is time to once again approve the by-laws of the policy council. Kevin Johnson made the motion to approve the By-Laws of the Economic Security Corporation Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council, which was seconded by Paula Carsel. The motion was approved unanimously.

The Emergency Solutions Grant would help pay for the salary of the case manager working in the CHANCE program for the next year. Mike Davis made the motion to approve applying for the Emergency Solutions Grant in the amount of \$21,000. The motion was seconded by Darius Adams and approved unanimously.

Program Monitoring and Evaluation Committee Report

Mike Davis stated that items A-D had been reviewed by the committee in their meeting. All reviews and actions associated with them were completed satisfactorily. No action was required of the Board for these items.

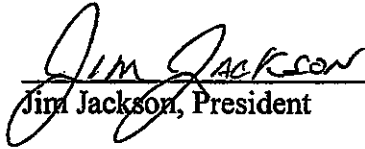
Tammy Walker, Community Development Director, said the state has received CSBG funds under the CARES ACT. The state office will be going over the funding documents this week, and then next week, they will send out applications for the agencies to complete. Darius Adams made a motion to approve applying for CARES CSBG funds in the amount of \$1,086,268. This motion was seconded by Kevin Johnson and approved unanimously.

Ryan Peterson, Director of Weatherization, explained that some of the agencies are behind in spending their Weatherization funds due to the Pandemic. They will be unable to spend all of their funds by the end of the fiscal year, so the LIHEAP program funds are being reallocated to other agencies. The state office called us and asked if we want them for our program, as we are on schedule. Paula Carsel made the motion to approve accepting the reallocated LIHEAP funds in the amount of \$75,000.00. The motion was seconded by Tamara Serr, and approved unanimously.

Announcements

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 3. John stated we may do that meeting differently to make it easier to coordinate attendance. He also encouraged members to please call if they need clarification on anything, including how to participate in the meeting. He may be reached at either his office or cell number.

Kevin Johnson made the motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mike Davis, and approved by all unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:40p.m.



Jim Jackson, President



Attest: Nikki Tappana, Secretary