

CITY OF PORTAGE HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

Minutes of Meeting, November 6, 2014

CALL TO ORDER: 6:30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Shawn Havens, Effie Kokkinos, Ray LaPoint, Edward Morgan, Sandra Sheppard, Amanda Woodin.

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Diane Durian, Elma (Pat) Maye, Nadeem Mirza, Sharat Kamath (Youth Advisory representative)

STAFF PRESENT: Elizabeth Money, Neighborhood Program Specialist

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Morgan moved and LaPoint supported approval of the October 2, 2014 minutes as submitted. Motion passed 6-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Red Ribbon Week Update: Sheppard informed the Board that upwards of 40 students, teachers, and parents attended the Red Ribbon Week event at the October 21, 2014 City Council meeting. The group met with the Mayor, took a brief tour of city hall, and students took turns reading the Proclamation at the meeting. Sheppard and the Board thanked LaPoint for his work organizing the schools' participation and the Board agreed that the same procedure should be followed next year.
2. Human Services Information & Referral Update: Sheppard indicated that she had apprised the City Council on the updates, the Board activities, and that training had occurred with city staff. Use of the handouts would be ongoing with city staff with certain employees, such as Public Safety and Parks Department employees, coming into contact with more residents that could use assistance information.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Presentation Kalamazoo County Transit Authority: Sean McBride, Executive Director, presented information on Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority (KCTA) and Central County Transportation Authority (CCTA). McBride provided 2013 statistics on KCTA including ridership information, fleet information, information on the millage changes, and an explanation of the KCTA/CCTA future organization and operational areas. McBride then discussed the Kalamazoo Metro Transit ADA Compliance Inventory that was completed in October 2014. A majority of the bus stops on the KCTA/CCTA bus routes are not ADA compliant and work is needed to bring them into compliance. Some major areas of nonconformance are in bus stop grading, the width of the sidewalk, and the surface material of the bus stop. Plans are made to budget for future alterations to noncompliant stops to bring them into compliance with ADA code. The Board had several questions and comments regarding the bus service. Woodin inquired if the CCTA was what area governments were opting in and out of and McBride explained it was and referenced a map that outlined the CCTA area. There are now some areas served by fixed route buses that will no longer receive that service. McBride indicated that, in the future, private agreements may have to be made with large organizations outside of the CCTA fixed route system. An example would be Kalamazoo Valley Community College, which is no longer in an area served by fixed route buses. Other items under review are Sunday service (currently no Sunday service), expansion of hours in the fixed route system,

frequency of stops along current bus routes, and student fares or student fare cards. When questioned by the Board on ADA bus stops in Portage, McBride indicated that City Engineer Chris Barnes was already working with KCTA on improving bus stops when in conjunction with street work. Sheppard questioned how many bus shelters were needed. McBride indicated that while there currently were no guidelines, they worked to place bus stops in heavy use areas and areas where bus stop placement was feasible. Not every stop could or should have a shelter as the number of riders is low or the placement of a shelter is impossible. McBride passed out some additional handouts and thanked the Board for allowing him to present.

2. FY 2014-15 Annual Action Plan Substantial Amendment: Sheppard opened the Public Hearing for the Annual Action Plan amendment which included a review of the proposal by city staff Elizabeth Money and Portage Community Center (PCC) Director Chris Buckley. The Board agreed that the use of the additional funds to assist with utility bills was a good use of the money and that a number of Portage citizens would be directly assisted. The Board asked about the increased need in assistance and Buckley explained the new policies at the Department of Human Services (DHS) that increased the financial assistance requests to other area agencies, including PCC. The Board questioned the increased income and Money explained that more revenue was received in the second half of FY 2013-14 than anticipated, that the housing market was once again moving, and people were selling their homes and paying off their CDBG loans. Money indicated that having additional funds like the current situation was not typical and while each year there are program income projections – the CDBG Program had received almost twice the revenue as anticipated. As the increase came in conjunction with the DHS changes and PCC need for increased funds to assist residents, a rather unique situation was created and funds could be utilized to directly assist residents with utility service expenses. Buckley added that in October PCC had to halt assisting residents with utility shut-off (both electrical and water/sewer) as they had run out of funds. He indicated that there was enough need that he anticipated using up the funds from the requested amendment by June. No additional comments or questions were received and the public hearing was closed. Money indicated that the public hearing was followed by a 30 day public comment period and that the amendment would be brought back to the Board in December and then provided to City Council for approval.
3. Kalamazoo Transit Authority LAC update – Maye: Maye was absent and no update provided.

STATEMENT OF CITIZENS: None

ADJOURNMENT: Money reminded the Board that the Human Public Service Grant applications would be due by December 5, 2014, so the Board would receive their grant books after next month's meeting. There being no further business before the Board, Woodin moved and Morgan supported adjournment. Motion passed 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Money, Neighborhood Program Specialist