

ECONOMIC SECURITY CORPORATION OF SOUTHWEST AREA

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

March 7, 2019

The Economic Security Corporation of Southwest Area's Board of Directors met on Thursday, March 7, 2019, at 7:30 p.m., at 302 S. Joplin Avenue, Joplin, Missouri. Henry Lopez, President, called the general session to order. The invocation was given by John Joines. New members Joe Crosthwait and Joy Williams were introduced. Guest Melissa Chindamo from the Office of Head Start was also introduced.

Roll call was taken and those present were: Mike Davis, Henry Lopez, Darieus Adams, Jim Jackson, Chester Neel, Doris Fast, Jeanetta Sullivan, Randy Evans, Cleo Crosby, Thomas Wilson, Becky Crane, Yanet Pacheco, Phillip Knott, Melissa Lance, Erwin Stancheit, Joy Williams, and Joe Crosthwait. A quorum was present. Spring Knott represented the Policy Council.

Board members David Holloway, Nikki Tappana, Paula Carsel, Kevin Johnson, Karen Buckman and Melissa Kennon were absent. Bethany Knoll has resigned, and Janice Franklin has retired.

Henry made a motion to excuse the absent members, who had so requested. This motion was seconded by Chester Neel and approved unanimously.

John explained that since the February meeting was cancelled on the morning of that meeting, a conference call was held by the Executive, Finance, and Audit Committee to take care of any urgent business. The rest of the items from the February agenda would be covered this evening, in addition to any new items. When the agenda for this meeting was sent out, the members were asked to review and bring with them the items from the February packet as well as the March packet. Chester Neel made a motion to accept the amended agenda. The motion was seconded by Darieus Adams and passed unanimously with no discussion.

Old Business

There was no old business to be discussed.

Executive Director's Report

John announced that we were finally going to see some actual physical activity on the Joplin Bungalows, LLC project. This project has taken a lot of time and effort to get up and going since Debbie Markman started working on it four years ago. The project will have twenty housing units, mainly for veterans and seniors. It is a joint project with the City of Joplin and Vecino Group. At 11:30 A.M. on March 14th we will breaking ground at 26th and McCoy Streets in Joplin. Board members were urged to attend the ceremony to show their support. The Region 7 Housing and Urban Development leader will be attending.

John and Tony will be meeting with representatives of Southwest Missouri Bank tomorrow morning regarding a line of credit for this project. The banking experience of Randy Evans was utilized in negotiating the funding.

The Missouri Community Action Network (MCAN) is holding their annual conference in Kansas City this year from May 20 through May 23. They do offer courses during this conference specifically for Board members, so if any of our members wish to attend, they should let John know. Our agency takes care of the fees for this conference, and it would be an excellent training for new Board members, especially.

Jeff Goldammer decided to try out a new and innovative option for Policy Council members. As Board liaison to the Policy Council, Henry was really impressed and has asked that John and staff consider having the Board utilize Chromebooks for the Board packets and documents, rather than paper copies. Since this is new for the Policy Council, John wants to let them use the Chromebooks for a few months before making any recommendation or decision. John stated that we should not need to buy all new machines, but could utilize the same ones the Policy Council members use, if we decide to go this route.

Head Start Policy Council Report

Spring Knott reported that the Chromebooks were fabulous. They were easy to use, all of the information needed was all together and would not be misplaced. At the February meeting, there was no Board report as the February meeting had been cancelled. The Policy Council had approved the hiring of sixteen new employees. Jeff had submitted the changes to the By-Laws for a second review. They were also checked for alignment with Performance Standards. There were changes to the Selection Criteria for families where a parent is receiving services from a drug program or is incarcerated. Cathy Slade presented ERSEA training and Selection Criteria for the program year 2019-2020.

Head Start Update Report

Jeff explained that one of the items approved at the committee meeting on February 11 was applying for the Head Start Cost of Living grant. This would increase wages by 1.77%. Also approved was the bid by which we have purchased four more new buses, and plan to buy one per year going forward until we have replaced all of our old diesel buses. The Head Start budget year ends March 31. Jeff has been visiting with all of the Area Supervisors this week and will be visiting sites next week.

We submitted two grant applications (approved by the Board in December) for which we expect to receive an answer by March 31. These are the grants for extended hours of duration, and the Child Care Partnership grant to allow us to add another seventy children to our programs.

Cathy Slade has been working with our Home Based platform. The attendance is still low, as is the wait list. Board members are urged to help spread the word about this excellent program.

Lindsay Fisher has been working with staff on the emergency procedures in the centers. They

have been practicing those procedures for tornados, fire, medical emergencies, etc.

Board Training

Cathy Slade conducted the Board training this evening. Cathy started as a Teacher Aide in our Head Start program in 2009 and has been promoted to Teacher, Child Care Coordinator, Child Care and Education Services Manager, and now to Enrollment Coordinator. Her training this evening focuses on ERSEA, which stands for Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance.

Eligibility determines who we can serve. This starts with the family's income. In the process of determining this, the coordinator might look at tax returns, W-2s, Child Support, etc. Some sources are not considered, such as a tax refund or food/housing given in lieu of wages. A family who has no income is required to complete a self-declaration of this. The coordinator (staff person helping to complete the application) will need to get third party verification of this. If there is a question of what needs to be included or whether documentation is sufficient, Cathy makes the final decision.

The Early Head Start program serves prenats up to their third birthday. The program requires that we prepare the child to transition to Head Start, which takes about six months. We stop accepting new children into the program once they reach 29 months, as later than this would not allow us the full six months of preparation time. Children enrolling in Head Start must reach their third birthday by the date the public school system utilizes, usually July 31st.

To qualify for the Pre-natal portion of the program, there are specific criteria that the family must meet, not all of them the same as for the classroom programs. First, they must be at or below the federal poverty guidelines for a family of their size. They may be on public assistance or receiving Social Security Disability. They may be homeless, in which case special allowances are made for missing documents. Or, finally, they may be in foster care.

All families are to be treated with dignity and respect. Staff undergo training on disclosures of domestic violence annually. There is a policy in place to address any instance of staff not following these protocols, up to and including termination of employment.

The members were given a copy of the federal poverty guidelines and the 2019 Selection Criteria for the various child care options.

Executive/Finance/Audit Committee Report

Henry made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 3, 2019 meeting. This motion was seconded by Mike Davis, and approved unanimously.

Second, Henry made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2019 conference call meeting of the Executive, Finance, Audit Committee. This motion was seconded by Chester Neel, and also approved unanimously.

Henry then made a motion to approve the Financial Statements for the month of January 2019. He reminded the Board that the Financial Statements for the month of December 2018 were approved in the February 11 committee meeting. Also, for the benefit of the new Board members, Henry explained that the green sheets included in the Financial Statements were the reports pertaining to Head Start/Early Head Start. Board members should always review these and be familiar with them for monitoring purposes. This motion was seconded by Randy Evans, and passed with no nay votes.

An audit was done of the Jasper County Public Housing Agency for Fiscal Year ended 6/30/2018. There were no findings. Henry made the motion to approve the audit of the Jasper County Public Housing Agency for fiscal year ended 06/30/2018. It was seconded by Thomas Wilson, and approved by all present.

Next, Henry made the motion to approve the Economic Security Corporation audit for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2018. Rob, from our auditing firm, had met with the fiscal director, the controller and John Joines to review the audit, as well as with the committee. The agency was found to be fiscally sound, with no audit findings for another year. Chester Neel seconded the motion, which was approved by all.

The Economic Security Corporation 990 Return has been completed, and is ready to be mailed to the Internal Revenue Service tomorrow. Henry made the motion to approve this return, Yanet Pacheco seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

The committee had also reviewed the Economic Security Community Development Corporation's (ESCDC's) 990 Return. This return was complete and ready for mailing as well. Henry made the motion to approve the ESCDC 990 return for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2018. This motion was seconded by Darieus Adams and passed unanimously.

We had solicited bids for metal siding for the units in the Joplin Bungalows, LLC project. Hardie Boards has a process by which worthy projects can apply for materials as a donation to the project. These Hardie Boards are actually made of concrete. Henry made the motion to approve applying for these donated materials, which was seconded by Joe Crosthwait and passed unanimously following discussion.

Henry made a motion to not renew our contract with Legal Aid of Western Missouri, but to rent to them on a month-to-month basis. The motion was seconded by Mike Davis.

In discussion, John stated that Legal Aid has leased office space from us since 2001, when we first received the building. Recently Legal Services Corporation, the parent group for Legal Aid, did a survey of the facilities. They felt Legal Aid needed more space and private offices due to confidentiality, a waiting room of their own, and increased security for the building. There is no way for us to give more space to them. All of the offices in the building are occupied, and to try to create more would compromise the integrity of the historic nature of the building. It would also be very expensive, and would take us a long time to recoup the cost.

John has drafted a letter to send to Legal Aid and Legal Services Corporation. He proposes that once the lease is up in March, we would rent to them on a month to month basis until they are able to find more appropriate facilities. The fees charged to Legal Aid are actually a Usage Fee based on the square footage used by them. Starting in March, this would be \$1560.00 per month.

As stated previously, our building is full to capacity. We ourselves could certainly utilize the space, which amounts to eight offices. The Board voted unanimously to send the letter to Legal Aid and to terminate their contract when it comes up for renewal.

John reminded the Board that about a year ago, we had considered an offer by the owners to sell us the Drake Apartments, which were operating at a loss. We decided against it at that time.

Since then the owner, Tom Carlson, has made two more offers. In the second offer, he suggested we purchase the property and he would pay us what we suffered in losses each month. In the third and final offer, he asked that we take it over due to our being a CHODO, which would give us special funding priority. We would apply for a new twenty year grant. This offer was reviewed by John, Terry, Tony, and our auditor. Our auditor made the recommendation we pass on the offer. Since we are a minority partner as a CHODO on the original project, we are owed \$200,000.00 of interest, which we will receive no matter who purchases the property.

Henry made a motion, seconded by Chester, that we accept the recommendation of the auditor and management staff, and not purchase or take over the Drake Apartments. The Board passed this motion unanimously.

Henry brought the Board's attention to the Selection Criteria handout they had received during Cathy's presentation. On line six, the points assigned to families who had a parent who was incarcerated or receiving services from a Drug Treatment Program have been increased from 200 to 500. Written notice of the guidelines are provided. The child with the highest number of points receives priority for entering the program. Henry made the motion to approve the new Head Start/Early Head Start Selection Criteria. The motion was seconded by Randy Evans, and passed unanimously.

Community Relations Committee Report

This committee had no items, and did not have a meeting or report.

Agency Personnel and Planning Committee Report

This committee had no items, and did not have a meeting or report.

Program Monitoring and Evaluation Committee Report

Yanet Pacheco reported that this committee had reviewed the Compliance Review the Missouri Housing Development Commission had conducted on our Neosho rental properties. In three of the four areas rated, we received a rating of Above Average. In the fourth area, we received a rating of Superior. There were no findings, and no response was required of us. This was a

review only, and no action was taken by the Board.

The next item was the review and discussion of the Agency's First Quarter Grade Card Update. There are some areas where the items being measured are just getting started, so they contained grayed out items. On others, they were yellow because although the plan of action was in place and now being followed, it was too early to have any measurable results. Overall, we are pleased with the results to date. Again, this was a review and discussion, and no action was taken by the Board.

On January 23 and 24, 2019 the Missouri Department of Economic Development's Division of Energy (DED-DE) conducted an on-site technical monitoring of our Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program. There were some borderline items, which we voluntarily corrected immediately. There were no findings on the monitoring. This was good practice and preparation for the federal monitoring we anticipate undergoing soon. No action was taken by the board for this agenda item.

The committee reviewed the Program Performance Summary Report for Head Start. This was the report summarizing the monitoring recently conducted over the phone by the Office of Head Start. There were no findings. Yanet made the motion to accept the Program Performance Summary Report for Head Start. The motion was seconded by Phillip Knott, and approved unanimously.

The final item for this committee was the review of the Head Start Data Reports for January 2019. We were above the 85% attendance requirement overall, despite some sites being below average due to illnesses and/or the weather. Our wait lists are in good shape for the most part, with the exception of the Home-Based Option as mentioned earlier. The demographics for current enrollees and those on the waitlists were compared and reviewed. Yanet had obtained some flyers for the Home-Based program, and asked that members take some to distribute and have on hand for anyone they met who might need the program. She stated she felt it was part of the members' responsibilities to promote this excellent program.

Announcements

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 4, 2019.
This meeting adjourned at 8:35 P.M.

Henry Lopez, President

Attest: Nikki Tappana, Secretary