

ECONOMIC SECURITY CORPORATION OF SOUTHWEST AREA

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

October 1, 2020

The Economic Security Corporation of Southwest Area's Board of Directors met on Thursday, October 1, 2020, at 7:30 p.m., at 302 S. Joplin Avenue, Joplin, Missouri. Jim Jackson, President, called the general session to order. The invocation was given by John Joines.

Roll call was taken and those present were: Mike Davis, Thomas Wilson, Darieus Adams, Joe Crosthwait, Jim Jackson, Joy Williams, Rick Lett, David Holloway, Doris Fast, Sarah Alumbaugh, Paula Carsel, Kevin Johnson, Carlos Sosa, Patricia Neely, Chantel Verren, Erwin Stanscheit, Kourtney Connelly, and Stephen Bradford. Jenny Sullivan, Nikki Tappana, Karen Buckman, Larry Asemka, Tamara Serr, and Spring Knott were absent. A quorum was present.

Kevin Johnson made a motion to approve the absent members who had so requested. Thomas Wilson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Old Business

There was no old business to be discussed.

Executive Director's Report

John gave an update on the numbers of HS/EHS employees, and children/families we serve who have been affected by the COVID-19 virus. To date, we have had 17 staff members and 84 children/families who have tested positive or had to be quarantined. We have closed four classrooms temporarily and are providing those children with virtual learning. We have also had eighteen members of our other staff who have tested positive and another five who have had to be quarantined. We are following the guidelines given to us by the CDC and the city and county health departments.

We have closed on the sale of our two houses in Sarcoxie, and hopefully the two families are enjoying their new homes.

John updated the Board previously on the situation with the elevator in the main office building. We have paid the first installment (\$20,000.00) to the repair company and within 1 ½ days of starting work on it, they said the elevator was fixed except for a few glitches. They were here yesterday to work on one of those glitches, and the game plan to get the repairs completed.

Stacie Bingham, the Director of Housing, is working on receiving housing vouchers for homeless veterans. This is not a grant where we have to apply, but rather, the money is there and we simply "request" the vouchers and explain our reasoning. Housing and Urban Development then tells us if we qualify for funding, and how many vouchers we might receive.

We have finished the work on the Joplin Bungalows. All twenty units are occupied, and we have six people on a waiting list. Financially, the project is doing well.

We are still having some issues with our insurance company, Anthem BCBS, and our broker, Beimdiek Insurance. This is especially true for those who are participating in the flexible spending account plan

Head Start Policy Council Report

PC Liaison Spring Knott was absent. It was announced that elections would be held next month for the new Policy Council officers and liaison. Since Spring is now a Board member, this will probably mean a new liaison will be elected.

Head Start Update Report

Jeff and Leisa are combining this report and the Board Training this evening.

Board Training

Jeff stated that they decided to do the training a little bit differently this year. They asked the Board members to ask any questions they had about the Head Start/Early Head Start Programs. If there was any information they wanted or were curious about, Jeff and/or Leisa would be happy to provide that, as well. Jeff started out by providing some pertinent facts about the program.

First, they are the largest program offered by our agency, with a budget of 14.4 million dollars, and about 250 employees.

Second, they also create the greatest risk for the agency, between the 1000 children served, busing of the children and families, and staff. They also meet more frequently with clients, and do so in their homes much more often than other divisions' staff.

Third, due to both their size and regulations, they collect and analyze more data than any other division.

And fourth, they are the most inter-generational program. This is because they serve clients from pre-natal to grandparents. They offer the largest range of services by any one division.

Last, but not least, they are the only program who is, in part, governed directly by participants. This reference is to the Policy Council, the majority of which is made up of parents/grandparents/guardians of the children in the program.

Asked how the representatives are chosen for the Policy Council, he replied that families at each center meet and elect a parent to serve on the Council. Because they have a child in the program, they have a vested interest in how the program is run.

How many families are in the program? There are 550 children in Head Start, 112 in the Early Head Start, and 74 who attend one of our partner sites. Ninety percent of the children in Head

Start are bussed to and from class.

Have there been any families who seemed afraid to send their children to class due to the pandemic? There were approximately fifty families who did express concern. They did not attend at first, and we agreed to hold their slots for ninety days. At that time, either the children would begin attending or we would fill the slots from our waiting lists. The ninety days are not up, but that number has decreased to 35 already. We do check in with them periodically.

What are partner sites? These are child care centers run by individuals in our communities which work with us. They usually provide longer hours, many for a full day, for families where parents are working or in school. We have five of these, two of which operate out of homes and three operate at an actual center. Their teachers, standards, and services must meet the same criteria as our centers. These partner sites have stayed open, with only one site closing recently for three days. We furnish supplies, equipment, and staff training to these partners.

Is the Policy Council made up only of parents or are there others involved? There is also a community representative from each of the four counties, and a Board of Directors liaison. If anyone present is interested in serving as the liaison or on the Council, please let Jeff know. The Policy Council meets the fourth Tuesday of each month.

How do we serve parents/grandparents in the program? The Council transports parents, or grandparents serving as parents, to various locations, provides trolley passes and cab (taxi) vouchers. We provide training, and hold socials for interaction. The program may spend as much time and money on these parents as on and with the children.

The Board members need to be aware of their area of governance for the program, and prepared to answer questions about it. They need to be able to answer questions about the goals; communications between the Board, the program and Council; performance standards; budget; and monitoring/quality of the program. Last year, the Board participated in a big federal review, in which there were 600 questions, covering 21 areas. The Board aced it, but we are always trying to improve.

A survey was distributed to the Board, to indicate where they feel they may need more training or items they might have questions about. These will be addressed at a future meeting. Also, Jeff and Leisa are always open to questions, so members should feel free to contact them.

Executive/Finance/Audit Committee Report

Jim Jackson chaired this committee, and called for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 3, 2020 Board meeting. David Holloway made the motion, which was seconded by Thomas Wilson and approved unanimously.

Jim reiterated for new Board members that the green sheets in the financial reports pertained to the Head Start/Early Head Start program. This is what Jeff was referring to earlier when he said Board members should know where to access this information and be able to answer that yes they did receive communication regarding the program budget. Also, the last several pages of the report pertained to the Joplin Bungalows, LLC and are new. This is the first time the Board

has seen this in their packets. David Holloway made the motion to approve the Financial Statements for the month of August 2020, including the credit card statements and balance sheets. The motion was seconded by Kevin Johnson, and approved unanimously.

It was explained that, if Item C was approved, Missouri Housing Development Corporation would issue tax credits to ESC. In return for the use of those tax credits, the developers of the Kodiak Village of Neosho would pay us a fee. Once built, we would have an office at the location which we would use to offer our services to the tenants of the Village. We have actually been asked by the developers to be a special limited partner, which means we would be involved in the structure, not just a developer. We have had this proposal looked at by our attorney and by our insurance company. These units would be what is called a working person facility, with tenants being those who make up to 80% of the median income for the area. There would be 32 units, and we would have no liability in the complex. If approved, we would break ground before the end of this year. Thomas Wilson made the motion to approve ESC entering into an agreement to become a Special Limited Partner in the Kodiak Village of Neosho Housing Project. The motion was seconded by Kevin Johnson and approved unanimously.

Item D would work the same way as Item C above. This project would have 42 units, four of which would be reserved for homeless disabled veterans and low-income tenants. The rent for the units would be based on the market rate. The motion to approve ESC entering into an agreement to become a Special Development Partner in the Forest Park North Housing Project was made by Kevin Johnson, seconded by Paula Carsel, and approved unanimously.

Joplin School District has asked us to deed over to them the southern edge of our property where the North Joplin Head Start is located. The District is building a new school on the adjoining property, and needs the additional land to build a road to the parking lot for the school. They would do any necessary work of clearing trees and brush, correcting the slope of the land so drainage to the center would not be an issue, etc. The City of Joplin would pay all fees associated with the transfer of the land, such as the surveyor, legal fees, etc. Paula Carsel made the motion to approve the transfer of approximately 150 feet from the southern boundary of the property line of the North Joplin Head Start Property to the Joplin School District for their proposed building project, with all costs of the transfer to be paid by the school district. The motion was seconded by Kevin Johnson and passed unanimously.

Community Relations Committee Report

Kevin Johnson made the motion to approve Ricky Lett as an elected official for McDonald County. The motion was seconded by Carlos Sosa and passed unanimously.

Doris Fast then made a motion to approve Stephen Bradford as the Low-Income Representative for McDonald County. This motion was seconded by Paula Carsel and also passed unanimously.

Paula Carsel made the motion, seconded by Thomas Wilson, to approve Betty Whited as the alternate for the Low-Income Representative for McDonald County. This motion was approved by all.

Agency Personnel and Planning Committee Report

There were no items for this committee.

Program Monitoring and Evaluation Committee Report

Mike Davis reported that there were no actions taken during this committee's meeting due to not having a quorum. For the Head Start Data review, they were told that we normally would be serving 734 families at this time. However, we are serving 495 in the centers and 84 virtually due to Covid 19 concerns. We have reduced classroom size from 15 children to 10 to allow for social distancing. The virtual group is receiving most of the same services as those in the classroom: food, education, sharing of information, activities, etc. We received \$695,000.00 for expenses associated with the Coronavirus.

Charts for the HS/EHS program data are included in the Board packet. Our waiting list has received a lot of use due to the Coronavirus. We are having to get creative and recruit by other methods.

The Head Start/Early Head Start self-assessment is an ongoing process, with an aggregate report for the year being completed at the end of the year. It identifies the strengths, weaknesses, things to improve, etc. Items to correct or improve are identified as long-term or short-term goals, and separated by which of the program's goals they apply to. The plan for improvement is presented to the Policy Council. If approved by them, it is then submitted to the Office of Head Start. Kevin Johnson made the motion, seconded by Darieus Adams, to approve the Head Start/Early Head Start Self-Assessment. This motion was approved unanimously.

The third item for this committee was addressed by Tammy Walker. We have two staff members who work with the Rapid Rehousing program and one with the CHANCE programs, utilizing these funds through the Homeless Coalition. These programs are for the homeless population. It is required that we have a monitoring by a non-funding agency, and in this case that agency was Legal Aid. They looked at such things as compliance, how we are spending the funds, etc. There were three grants reviewed by the monitors, and they had no findings nor corrective actions needed.

Closed Session

At 8:30, Kevin Johnson made the motion to go into closed session to discuss a personnel and real estate matter. The motion was seconded by Darieus Adams and approved unanimously in a roll call vote. At 8:58, Mike Davis made a motion, seconded by David Holloway, to return to open session. There were no actions taken during the closed session. Both these motions were approved unanimously by a roll call vote as follows:

Kourtney Connelly – aye
Joy Williams – aye
Mike Davis – aye
Thomas Wilson – aye
Joe Crosthwait – aye
Paula Carsel – aye

Kevin Johnson – aye
Rick Lett – aye
Sarah Alumbaugh – aye
Jim Jackson – aye
Doris Fast – aye
Erwin Stanscheit – aye

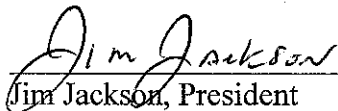
Carlos Sosa – aye
Darieus Adams – aye
David Holloway – aye
Patricia Neely – aye
Chantel Verren – aye
Stephen Bradford – aye

At 8:58 P.M. the meeting returned to open session. At this time, Jim Jackson told John the Board would like to extend his employment for another year. Further, it was understood that John had received the 2% Cost of Living increase, the same as the rest of the agency employees. However, the Board would also like to give another 2% increase to John for his services. John was asked if he was agreeable to this, and he indicated he was indeed.

This concluded the evening's business, and the meeting adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

Announcements

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 7:30 P.M.



Jim Jackson, President



Attest: Nikki Tappana, Secretary