

MINUTES
COMMISSION ON COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES
Thursday – February 23, 2017 – 9:30 A.M.
Conference Room 208 - Lucas Building
321 E. 12th Street – Des Moines, Iowa

Commission Members Participating:

Tom Quiner		Marc Lindeen--Vice Chairperson
Kelly Busch	Anna Brown--via phone	Mary Whisenand--Chairperson

Commission Member Not Participating:

John Murphy	Anna Hilpipre	Melissa Thompson-Secretary
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Staff Present:

Mr. Bill Brand	Lori Easter	Greg Pieper
Gwen Howe		Sherrie Pruitt

Others Present:

Lana Shope – ICAA	Jean Logan, Exec Dir. Com. Action Agency of Siouxland	Dana F. New View Com. Action Agency
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I. Call to Order- Ms. Whisenand

Ms. Whisenand called the meeting to order at 9:33 am.

II. Introductions – Ms. Whisenand

Introductions were made. Quorum was established.

III. Approval of the Minutes of the November 9, 2016 Commission Meeting

Ms. Whisenand asked if there were any questions or revisions to the minutes. There were no questions. Mr. Lindeen moved that the minutes be approved. Mr. Quiner seconded the motion. All commission members present voted aye. The motion carried.

IV. Approval of the Agenda

Ms. Whisenand asked if there were any changes or additions needed to the agenda. Mr. Brand informed the commission he would be giving the Energy Assistance Bureau report in Jerry's absence. There were no objections. Ms. Busch moved that the Agenda be approved as amended. Mr. Quiner seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All commission members voted aye. The motion carried.

V. Administrator's Report – Bill Brand

Mr. Brand thanked the Commissioners for attending the Legislative Breakfast held this morning. He also thanked Jean from Community Action Agency of Siouxland and Dana from New View Community Action Agency for attending today's Commission Meeting.

Mr. Brand updated the Commission on where we stand on the Federal level. Congress approved a continuing resolution to temporarily fund the Federal Government until April 28, 2017. It's not clear what the funding will look like from April 29, 2017 thru September 30, 2017. This could cause some challenges for us and our agencies. Our approach is to be as proactive as we can and be ready so that when Congress does act we can turn it around immediately.

At the State level we are primarily watching what happens with funding for FaDSS. They are appropriated through the Department of Human Services and contract with us for the administration of the program. To reflect the most recent state revenue estimate, the Governor recommended the Legislators make a \$110 million in reductions to the budget. The reduction is to stay in sync with revenue estimates. At this time the FaDSS Program has not been cut from the Department of Human Services. The Department of Human Rights (DHR) will see \$110 thousand in reductions. This does not affect DCAA as we are Federally Funded.

Jerry McKim, our LIHEAP Bureau Chief, will retire March 9, 2017. It is estimated that he has worked 22 years for the state. His reception will be held on March 9, 2017 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm. Mr. Brand invited all Commission Members. We are in the process of interviewing for this position. A decision will be made in the next few days.

Anna Brown, Mary Whisenand and Tom Quiner terms will expire soon. The Governor has requested that Commissioners inform him of their desire to continue to serve on this Commission. Anna and Mary will continue to serve on their appointments. After 6 years of service to the Commission, Tom has decided not to serve another term. Mr. Brand asked Ms. Whisenand for permission to have some time at the end of the meeting to recognize Tom. His request was granted.

Mr. Quiner asked if there is anything new on the National standards. Mr. Brand referred the question to Mr. Pieper who will cover that in his CSBG report.

VI. Bureau Chief's Reports

1. Energy Assistance Bureau – Bill Brand

Mr. Brand gave an update on LIHEAP. The January Moratorium Report showed that there were 363 thousand plus households in Iowa with an account past due with their utility company. The total amount owed by those households for January was over 66 million dollars. This is by far an all-time high. This tells us that the affordability of energy continues to be a growing problem for a larger number of households in our state, therefore; we will not have any extra LIHEAP dollars left over this year. At this point we have 90% of our total LIHEAP grant allocated for the year. We are unsure what will happen with the 10% or if we will get it at all. We expect to hear something by May. The moratorium on disconnections is in effect until April 1, 2017. Those 363 thousand households will need additional assistance. This funding delay affects the ability of our programs to help those people. We will try to provide as much help as we can.

We are currently working with the agency directors and ICAA to develop a model outreach strategies survey and looking at the targeted populations that we serve. Every agency has different outreach strategies that they use. In general we can help the agencies identify the populations they are not reaching but want to reach. A study was done a number of years ago and we would like to update the data.

There are 363 thousand families that are behind on their utility bills owing 66million. Is that a reflection of the job market, economy, or more debt that people have? The utility bills have to be significantly lower because of the mild winter. What's the reason? Mr. Quiner asked.

We do not know for sure but this has been a long time trend. This year seems to be an extension of last year and the year before. The lower heating cost does not impact the trend. About 60% of those served by LIHEAP are at an income level of 100% poverty. This means that for a household of one person their income cannot exceed \$11,000 per year. This may be a factor. Ms. Dana added that another reason for the increase could be the landlords no longer include utilities as part of the rent as they have in the past. She has noticed that affordable housing is dwindling in her area. As a result low income families are moving into older homes/apartments and have not factored the large utility cost as part of their budget.

2. Community Services Bureau – Greg Pieper

Mr. Pieper e-mailed his Commission report to Commissioners last week and included it in the Commission packet today. The CSBG grant award for 2017 was \$7,702,858 available to the community action agencies until April 28, 2017 due to the continuing resolution (CR).

The CSBG-IS Annual Report is due to the National Association for State Community Services Programs by March 31, 2017. This report was completed last week and submitted yesterday. A confirmation receipt was received this morning. The CSBG-IS reporting requirements have been met for 2017.

In January we were notified that some of our CSBG Annual Report requirements have changed. Some changes are immediate and others will be phased in. Since we anticipated these changes we have be

planning since last fall. We will work with ICAA and the agencies throughout the year to address these changes.

Our community action agencies are required to conduct client and community needs assessment and use that information to plan and develop their programs, services and community strategies. We have been working with the agencies to design some of the needs assessments and implement those surveys. Next week the committee will meet to finalize the survey we have been working on. We are scheduled to begin surveying community action partners and stake holders in April through September. This survey gathers information about the community resources and assets that are available/not available for low income people. In September the committee will aggregate the data from the surveys and create reports. These reports will then be distributed to all the agencies to be used for the next year program planning.

Our State Plan is due September 1, 2017. The DCAA will develop the State Plan with input from the community action agencies and the Iowa Community Action Association. Once completed, the DCAA will e-mail the State Plan, in draft form, to the commission. A timeline is detailed in the handout. During the week of August 14, 2017 a commission meeting is needed to discuss and review the draft State Plan with the commission. Once the State Plan is approved by the commission, the DCAA will submit it to HHS/OCS. We will schedule a conference call meeting as the date approaches.

3. Weatherization Bureau – Gwen Howe

The Weatherization Bureau's report was included in the Commission packet. Mrs. Howe thanked the Commissioners that participated on the conference call held on February 7, 2017. The Weatherization State Plan was submitted to DOE Project Officer and approved on February 8, 2017. On February 9, 2017 the plan was sent to the Contracting Officer. We should hear something in a few weeks.

Mrs. Howe anticipates it will approve at 60% of the total grant submitted. This is due to the continuing resolution (CR). The contracts will be issued to the sub grantee at 60% of the total allocation. Once there is a CR or a budget for the rest of the year the sub grantee's contracts will be modified to reflect the changes.

We have our LIHEAP transfer for 2017. The utilities and LIHEAP Weatherization contracts started January 1, 2017.

We have a few administrative monitoring to complete. All of the technical monitoring has been completed. We are required to do no less than 5% of homes completed for state review. We shoot for 10% so we will revisit the larger agencies.

We are looking at additional Tier 1 training for our QCI's this year due to many needing to be recertified.

Mr. Quiner expressed his delight with the Weatherization Demonstration.

4. FaDSS- Lori Easter

Currently FaDSS staff is working on completing their monitoring visits, which is due at the end of June. FaDSS has a council meeting March 23, 2017. FaDSS is looking for a business representative to serve a three year term to the council. FaDSS is also working on 2 Generation (2Gen) federal grant. They are collaborating with Department of Human Services (DHS), Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) and Department of Human Rights (DHR). An Iowa Core Group meeting will be held next week. FaDSS is hoping to have a pilot project by next fiscal year.

V11. ICAA Activities Report – Lana Shope

Mrs. Shope reminded everyone about the ICAA Conference July 18 and 19, 2017.

Mrs. Shope is preparing to go to Washington D.C for the National Community Action Foundation Conference. We have appointments set up with all our congressional members except for Congressman King. Ms. Shope spoke

with Senator Bill Anderson today who informed her there is a new scheduler and he will follow up with her about who she needs to contact to set the meeting with Congressman King.

Each agency is preparing a simple one page information sheet that will be put in packets by congressional district. Three topics will be addressed on these information sheets: Trust, Program Improvements or innovations that each agency has made, and Success.

Mrs. Shope explained that the possibility for increase funding for FaDSS is not likely. The Managed Care organizations presented to the budget subcommittee yesterday. They all project to lose one hundred million dollars. She is hearing from the local community action agencies that with those companies losing money now, their services are going to change. Mrs. Shope is aware of one agency that is no longer going to provide a service due to the untimely payments from the NCO's. In her conversation with Legislators yesterday they said in the beginning reimbursement payments were dispersed every sixty days. Now payments are many months behind. This makes it really hard on smaller entities who are trying to provide those services.

The Family Planning Wavier impacts three of our local agencies who provide family planning services. The bill that passed the Senate has a tier reimbursement rate. Unfortunately we are in the third tier, which means they are not going to get any money. In the House they will remove this section of the bill. They are currently working with DHS to figure out a way for the distribution of those funds.

There will be no money for the Individual Development Accounts (IDA). Mrs. Shope says she is uncertain what will happen with Child Care Assistance. She says there have been some change at the Federal level on what is allowed for TANF and there is a concern on how this may impact our State Child Care Assistance funding. The Early Head Start Funds received a slight reduction. We have six state funded Early Head Start Programs.

Some other issues that have come up on behalf of the agencies is a Municipal Utilities Bill. This bill would require a household to a ninety day deposit for utilities. With Senator Anderson's help we were able to shorten this to a sixty day deposit. We were also able to get a sentence included in the amendment that states municipal utilities are subject to IUB repayment plan rules prior to disconnection. IUB stated they still have authority on the repayment plan. Even for municipal utility customers prior to disconnection. The current language in the bill did not reflect the intent. This amendment passed the Senate Commerce Committee this week. Mrs. Shope will try to get this amendment added to the House Committee Bill. Another bill that deals with the State Wide Voluntary Pre School that pushes districts into serving more low income kids. They want to increase the reimbursement rate to 1.0 as oppose to the .5 for every eligible child they enroll. This puts the State Wide Voluntary Pre School in direct competition with Head Start. We have tried to get language in the bill that would require collaboration with local Head Start providers.

Mrs. Shope has been working with the Transportation Capital Improvements and Infrastructure Committee on the request for one hundred thousand dollars for each local agency for infrastructure improvements.

XI. Other Items

1. Ms. Whisenand suggested that the Commissioners commit to inviting their legislator to our meeting.
2. Mr. Brand thanked Mr. Quiner for his loyal work on the Commission.

XII. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on May 5, 2017.

XII. Adjournment

Ms. Whisenand moved that the meeting adjourn. Mr. Quiner seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherrie Pruitt