



POLICY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Monday, February 26, 2024, 5:30 p.m.

The Policy Board of CareWell Services SW met on Monday, February 26, 2024, in the Burnham Brook Conference Room of the Kool Family Community Center, in Battle Creek, Michigan.

Board members Present: Lyn Briel, Allen Byam, Steve Marzolf, Jose Orozco, Jr., Sherii Sherban, Deana Spencer, Shirley Tuggle, Thomas Unger, Linda Whitfield

Board Members Attended Via Zoom: Corally O’Dell (no voting privileges via Zoom)

Board Members Absent: Jim Baldwin, Barbara Frederick, Mark Doster, Mary Frisby

Staff Present: Valerie Barnaby, Karen Courtney, Jodi De Jonge, John Gelletich, Amber Logsdon, Stacy Wines, Glin Winsor

Guest Present: Julie Cortright, ACLS Field Representative; Rod Auton, Manager, Calhoun County Sr. Services

I. Call to Order

Vice Chair Byam called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m. Introductions were made. Quorum met.

II. Action Items

A. Approval of Consent Agenda for February 26, 2024, and Approval of Policy Board Meeting Minutes for January 22, 2023, meeting.

Motion by Marzolf to approve the Consent Agenda for February 26, 2024, and Approval of Policy Board Meeting Minutes for January 22, 2023, supported by Unger. Motion: CARRIED.

III. Public Comment/Open Meeting

Rod Auton invited everyone to the Food Summit on May 16. The focus will be on individuals 60 years or older facing food insecurities.

Julie Courtright reminded everyone that the Older Americans Act (OAA) new regulations will take effect on March 15, 2024, but regulated entities have until October 1, 2025, to comply.

IV. Executive Team Reports/Updates

A. Update on CEO Goals

This item was removed from the agenda and will be discussed in the Executive Committee Meeting. **Motion was made by Marzolf and supported by Sherban. Motion CARRIED.**

CEO Report

Wines reported that we had another new hire, bringing us closer to the target number of 13 for full-time nursing staff, however, we are still short of social workers. Working with the Human Resources Department on this issue to expand our searches and revamp job postings.

The National Committee for Community Quality Assurance work is moving full steam ahead. There is a two-year projected time period to complete, hoping for faster results on this if possible.

Wines reported the State Initiative Committee has been meeting frequently to put the AAAs in Michigan on a course to be successful as the deadline approaches for the Dual Eligible Special Needs Plans to become effective in January 2026. The legal documents are in place to file the LLC for Phase I, as well as the full execution of the Non-Disclosure Agreement and Memorandum of Agreement.

Regarding the Governor's budget, Wines was pleased to see funds allotted for caregivers. She noted CWS has seen an increase in caregivers reaching out for assistance. In addition to our caregiver support group, we are offering Powerful Tools for Caregivers in Marshall and Battle Creek. Currently getting a session scheduled for Barry County.

Wines advised there is approximately \$10,000 in remaining funds from the Innovation & Action Grant. United Way funding we receive is being reduced (this funding was/is restricted to serving residents in zip codes representing the city of Battle Creek.) Considering this, CWS made the decision to use the remaining funding for gap filling for our entire PSA as well as small sponsorships to strengthen our community connections.

The Policy Briefing & Capitol Hill Day in Washington DC, sponsored by USAging, was extremely informative. Wines, Porter, Tuggle and O'Dell attended. Wines praised the advocacy efforts and passion Tuggle, and O'Dell demonstrated. She also reminded everyone that she, along with Porter, Acker, and Sherban are headed to the American Society on Aging Conference in San Francisco at the end of March.

B. Executive/Personnel Membership Committee

Nothing to report currently.

C. Finance/Audit Committee

Winsor reported that the audit is underway. Moving forward, the income is solid. CWS is researching avenues to move funds into the best interest-bearing accounts. Winsor pointed out that rates may drop due to the election year; this will be monitored monthly. He noted that the Finance Committee is working on getting back on schedule to meet regularly.

Gelletich discussed the Waiver Program, relating to last year's deficit. He wanted to support the notion as to why we need a fund balance in order to offset risk when or if we have a deficit in any program. Marzolf inquired on how long we could weather a government shut down. Gelletich advised three to four months. Wines added that at that point we would look at laying staff off temporarily.

Motion made to approve year to date financials by Unger, supported by Marzolf. Motion CARRIED.

D. Waiver

De Jonge reported that we are averaging 20-30 new clients on the wait list. She also reported that referrals are being contacted within seven days. Wait times are currently four to six months for the waitlist, and CWS is working diligently to reduce that wait time. Logsdon also added that closures are still an issue, but they are out of our control.

E. Advocacy and Outreach Updates

Whitfield expressed disappointment in the guardianship issue not being a main focus for advocacy. The program is stalled at this point. She reported that the Ombudsman is at the forefront and that a special committee is being formed.

Porter reported that MMAP dramatically exceeded last year's numbers. She stated that with warmer weather, other programs will ramp up. She advised there was an increase in funding for home delivered meals as well. Porter reminded everyone that Older Michiganian's Day is fast approaching – May 1, 2024.

Tuggle advised that a subcommittee is being formed for Ombudsman. She inquired as to the ARPA funding to see if we had spent it all and if not, reminded us to do so by the end of September. Wines advised there is a plan in place to use the remaining funds, including development and strengthening of the current platform.

V. Policy Board Member Time/General Discussion

Briel stated that she has heard a great response from the Advisory Council members regarding the new structure of the meetings. Members enjoy the guest speakers at each meeting.

Sherban reminded everyone that the next research meeting for Miles for Memories will be April 30, 2024.

VI. Adjournment

Motion for Policy Board to adjourn by Sherban; supported by Whitfield. Motion CARRIED. With no additional items to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Valerie J. Barnaby, Administrative Assistant