NOTICE

The Board of Directors meeting of the Tri-County Opportunities Council will be held on Wednesday, January 27, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. at the Lee County Senior Center, 100 W. 2nd Street, Dixon, Illinois. (815-631-8043)

NOTE: The Personnel Committee will meet at 6:00 p.m. prior to the regular business meeting.

Also, everyone please read the enclosed draft Strategic Plan, and bring it to the meeting for discussion.

Julie Jacobs
Secretary

You are reminded that our by-laws require the presence at any Board of Directors meeting 33% of the current members to constitute a quorum. Your presence is urgently needed.

If you need transportation, please call 1-815-625-7830 or 1-815-875-6064 or 1-800-323-5434.

In case of bad weather, please tune to the following radio stations.

WAJK – LaSalle	WSDR – Sterling	WRHL – Rochelle
WCCI – Savanna	WSSQ – Sterling	WIXN – Dixon

TRI-COUNTY OPPORTUNITIES COUNCIL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Lee County Senior Center
100 W. 2nd St.
Dixon, Illinois
Wednesday, January 27, 2010
(815) 631-8043

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approve Minutes of November 24, 2009

4. Action on Treasurer's Report of October 2009

5. Treasurer's Reports for November & December 2009

   Fiscal Report – Dawn Robertson

6. Program Reports

   CSBG/Economic Development – Dorothy McBride
   Foster Grandparent – Sandra Julifs for Sharon King
   Head Start – Terri Lawrence
   Homemaker – Debra Ritchey
   LIHEAP – Tammy Saenz
   Weatherization/Housing – Wayne Thompson

7. President's Report – Sandra Julifs

8. Old Business

   Personnel Committee Report – Albert Harmon

9. New Business

10. Next Meeting – Thursday, February 25, 2010 in Princeton

11. Adjournment

TRI-COUNTY OPPORTUNITIES COUNCIL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
NOVEMBER 24, 2009

Chairperson Ken Krogulski called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. He noted that Michael Mohr had been elected to take Barbara Smith's seat.

The roll was called, and a quorum was present.

Members present: Sandi Billard, Sue Britt, Loretta Brown, Herman Bruns, Dorothy Carver, Sally Childers, Bernene Dahl, Bill Gaston, Albert Harmon, Mary Healy, Grace Hunter, Ken Krogulski, Barbara Nelson, Juanita Randklev, James Robison.

Members absent: Jim Barnes, Dee Biagi, Susan Bursztynsky, Edythe Geiger, Laura Gonzalez, Donna Hess, Julie Jacobs, Marlin Jones, Lynne Kilker, Mary Klopcic, Travis McGlasson, John O'Neill, James Passero, Fred Phillips, Don Romes, Ruth Sabin, Peggy Sargent, Joan Sheridan, Patrick Sloan, Kary VanDeVoorde, Marvin Williams, Mark Wilt, Jerry Wolens, Christina Wyss.

Others present: Judy Fiste, Sandra Julifs, Terri Lawrence, Carol Razo, Debra Ritchey, Dawn Robertson, Tammy Saenz, Wayne Thompson, Dawn Troupis.

The minutes of the October meeting had been mailed to all members. There were no additions or corrections. Ms. Randklev moved to approve the minutes as mailed. Ms. Carver seconded, and the motion carried.

The September treasurer's report was presented for action. There were no comments or questions. Ms. Britt moved to file the report for audit; Rev. Harmon seconded, and the motion carried.

The October treasurer's report was distributed. Dawn Robertson, Fiscal Operations Manager, reported that the October book balance was in the red $(504,562.05). However, she hasn't had to use the Comfortline loan as a lot of the ARRA funding arrived. The reimbursements from the Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) are still four months behind, and information received indicates that the Comptroller's office is only going to get worse with few vendor payments being made in November (**Ed. note:** The July and August payments were received in November).

With that being said, as approved at last November's Board meeting, TCOC's unemployment payment status will change from the reimbursement method to the percentage taxable method. TCOC's taxable rate will be 3.85% on a taxable wage base of $12,520. The reserve fund for the homemaker program will not be growing since unemployment charges will be paid next year. In January, depending upon the financial situation in Illinois, the Board may be asked to consider whether to keep the homemaker program running.

John Barry, an accountant with the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) LIHEAP and Weatherization departments reviewed internal controls, files, policies etc. during his annual fiscal monitoring visit the end of October. The visit went well and his letter will be shared with the board once received. In December, Bob Eddins, DCEO accountant for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), will be coming for his annual audit. And, the auditors will begin their work the first week of December.

Program Reports:

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) – Sandra Julifs, President/CEO, for Dorothy McBride, Community Services Director who was attending training out of the area - Homeless Prevention/Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP) funds are now available. These funds are being used to assist homeless or those on the verge of becoming homeless who have an eviction notice. Thirty-one households are currently enrolled.

The CSBG program recently received a Wal-Mart grant of $1,000 that will be used to buy hygiene products and diapers (things that cannot be purchased with food stamps.)

Currently, there are three openings in the northern transitional housing units, but there are applications being completed. In answer to a question about the reasons that people leave the transitional units, Ms. Julifs explained that the reasons run the gamet from those who don't fit the program's objectives to those who have completed their 18 months' participation to those who have purchased homes. The program is easier to run in the southern area where TCOC does not own the units as there are no eviction procedures.

Approval was sought to transfer $65,230 in unobligated regular CSBG small business loan funds to the Illinois Ventures for Community Action (IVCA) if no viable loan request is brought in prior to the end of the year. The rule is that, if unused funds are not contributed to IVCA, the agency will not get credit for the loan program, the 2% rebate will be lost, and the money will still need to be sent to the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). Ms. Julifs explained that she has had thirteen serious loan inquiries this past year with two good possibilities. They were located in Stark, Marshall, LaSalle, Carroll, Ogle, and Whiteside counties. Information was sent to each of them and, in several cases, telephone conversations were held more than once. So far, however, no completed applications have been received. In addition to the regular CSBG loan funds, there is still $50,000+ in ARRA funds. Mr. Robison then moved to approve the transfer of the regular CSBG loan funds to IVCA; Mr. Bruns seconded, and the motion carried.

Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) – Sandra Julifs, President/CEO, for Sharon King, Program Director, who remains on medical leave – Ms. King expects to be back at work on December 28th. Her assistant, Lynn Scherer, has resigned due to the traumatic and severe health problems of her daughter. She hopes, however, to be able to help train a new individual once hired. An ad has been placed in the *Sauk Valley News* as well has been posted in the Rock Falls offices. Debbie Klein, a former FGP assistant, has been coming in after her regular job as a teacher assistant in order to complete the FGP payrolls and to answer

telephone messages. Ms. King has also been working from her daughter's completing a report as well as handling calls and emails.

The FGP *Project Profile and Volunteer Activity* report was distributed and discussed. Ms. Julifs noted that, in the report, there is a wealth of information not only about the Foster Grandparents but also the children they serve.

Head Start – Terri Lawrence, Program Director - Approval was required to submit the PY 44 annual refunding grant to the Region V office. The stated funding is $4,843,764 in Program Account 22 (operational) and $60,197 for Program Account 20 (training and technical assistance) for a grand total of $4,903,961. This grant is to serve 722 children from 4/1/10-3/31/11, and is due at the regional office by 1/1/10. Ms. Randklev moved to approve the submission of the refunding grant application. Ms. Healy seconded, and the motion carried.

Approval was needed to submit the Migrant Head Start Program's annual operational grant application to the Illinois Department of Human Service DHS (the grantee) in the tentative amount of $154,699 in operational funding and $3,244 in training and technical assistance funding for a grant total of $157,943. This is the current funding level. There may be some modifications by DHS after its planning meeting in December. This funding is to serve 23 migrant and seasonal farm worker children and their families from 7/1/10-6/31/11. Ms. Lawrence was for the qualifications for the program: the children must be between 6 weeks old and five years old; the family's income must be below 100% of poverty; and, 51% or more of the family's income must come from seasonal agricultural work. In answer to other questions, Ms. Lawrence stated that about 50% of the families are "true" migrants with the rest being seasonal agricultural workers. No funding comes from state revenues; all of it is federal money that comes to the state which is the grantee with TCOC and other organizations being the sub-grantees. Ms. Dahl moved to apply for the grant; Ms. Brown seconded, and the motion passed 14-1.

Approval was also needed to approve the modification recently made the Early Head Start (EHS) expansion grant as per the regional office request. The original application changes to the SF 424 were made in the training and technical assistance funds. The original application request was for $60,375 in annual T/TA funding and $35,520 in one-time start-up T/TA. The Regional Office requested that the total of both the annual and the start-up be changed to a total of $74,045; therefore, Ms. Lawrence left the $35,520 in one-time start-up T/TA and changed the annual operational amount to a year one amount of $38,525. Rev. Harmon moved to approve these modifications; Ms. Britt seconded. There was quite a bit of discussion about space and other needs for an EHS grant after which the motion carried.

The regular Head Start Program seated its 2009-2010 Policy Council at its October meeting. Officers were elected at the November meeting. They are: Jessica Francois, Dixon, Chairperson; Christina Wyss, Lacon, Vice-Chairperson; and, Tashawnee Sheaves, Mendota, Secretary. TCOC Board Chairperson Ken Krogulski also attends the Policy Council meetings.

Homemaker Program – Debra Ritchey, Program Director - In the month of October 469 clients were served with 10,755 units/hours for which the program billed $189,446.34 with an insurance off-set amount of $14,971.57.

Ms. Ritchey attended an Illinois Association of Community Care Program Homecare Provider (IACCPHP) meeting. Those attending were introduced to the new IACCPHP Executive Director whose name is Bob Thieman. During the meeting, five priorities for 2010 were discussed: advocacy with the Illinois Departmrnt on Aging (IDoA); increasing membership in the IACCPHP; recognition of the IACCPHP; a policy to discourage clients from simply hiring personal assistants on their own; and, training.

Staff from the Illinois Department of Aging (IDoA) has said that they have noticed an increase in client/participants. They are trying to find ways to lessen the cost to the state budget with only a small impact to the clients. One method would be to eliminate cost share clients from the Community Care Program (CCP) by only serving persons who are on Medicaid. Others would have to go onto self-pay in order to continue home care services. Another way would be to lower the service cost of clients. But no decisions have been made yet. Of TCOC's clients, 264 or 56% fall into the cost share program, and just under 50% of those cost share clients have to pay $10.00 or less for the month.

TCOC has have been approved for certification by the Illinois Department of Aging's Community Care Program. This entitles TCOC's program to continue to service CCP clients. Next month, Ms. Ritchey and one other person will attend the required management training by IDoA.

The delay in payments from IDoA is still unresolved.

Approval was needed to apply to the Illinois Department of Public Health for a renewal on TCOC's license that allows it to service self-pay clients. The current license runs out 1/31/10. The application fee is $1,500 and is required if in order to serve anyone except Community Care Program clients (i.e. self-pay, Title III-B, Respite). Ms. Ritchey noted that CCP clients are assessed by Lutheran Social Services and include those for whom TCOC is reimbursed by the state (i.e. Medicaid or cost share clients). For those, no license is needed. Ms. Dahl moved to apply for the license renewal; Mr. Bruns seconded, and the motion carried.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) – Tammy Saenz, Program Director – Approval was needed to accept a modification to the LIHEAP federal budget. The modification will add $2,334,900. The breakdown is: Direct Client Assistance - $1,922,206; Reconnection Assistance - $93,513; Furnace Program - $62,342; Program Support - $116,745; and, Administration - $140,094. This will total $4,887,724 in federal funding. Ms. Billard moved to approve the modification to the LIHEAP federal budget; Ms. Healy seconded. Motion carried.

The LIHEAP Department has been very busy with the program now being open to the public. Staff has entered 6,200 applications. This exceeds last year's applications for the same period.

A lot of new clients have been helped, and the numbers show that with the poor economy people are struggling everywhere. To date, 34 furnaces have been repaired or replaced this program year.

The program is also running a Fresh Start program through ComEd and an interim PIPP program for Ameren IP. PIPP stands for Percentage of Income Payment Plan. Each company has sent a list of names for those that qualify (all electric households and under 100% of the poverty level). ComEd Fresh Start qualifying customers will be placed on budget billing and will make $10 payments monthly; ComEd will provide $150 to their bills with the clients responsible for anything over that $150. If the customers make six on-time payments, their arrearages will be eliminated. Fresh Start customers who are late for two payments in a row or three (total) will be removed from the program. Ameren Interim PIPP Program customers will have their arrearages eliminated when they sign up and need only to make $10 payments each month. LIHEAP will be notified if an Ameren PIPP customer has missed a payment and will be expected to contact that client. Staff is hoping the best for these new programs but do not know what the outcome will be. With the PIPP, TCOC will be sent names and LIHEAP staff will send out the letters.

Ms. Saenz asked the members to refer those who have not applied for LIHEAP this year. The income guideline is 150% of poverty. For more information on times, sites or how to do a mail-in application, people can call the main office at 1-800-323-5434.

Weatherization/Housing – Wayne Thompson, Program Director - So far this year in the Weatherization Assistance Program, 215 homes have been approved on the Weatherization system. Of the 215, 70 are complete with both the architectural and furnace sides being done and inspected.

Ms. Robertson and Mr. Thompson held meetings for all of the Weatherization contractors. The meetings were held to instruct them about the Davis-Bacon wage rates that must be paid to their employees when working on the ARRA (Stimulus) Weatherization jobs. Also, they were trained in the proper procedures for filling out and submitting their required weekly certified payroll sheets to the fiscal office. It is anticipated that the ARRA jobs will be started in the next couple of weeks.

The Single Family Owner Occupied Rehabilitation (SFOOR) Program has four homes completed and two more out to contractors. We have one application in the review process,

The Homebuyer Assistance Program (2009-2010) has had eight families close on homes. There are two homebuyers in the process of receiving first mortgage lending. Rehabilitation is complete on one home.

Six regular housing units are vacant at this time. Several tenants have moved out, and some units need extensive work. Staff is working with the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) to be able to use reserve funds.

There have also been six clients who have signed recapture agreements for the Home Modification Program with rehab completed on two of these projects.

Board approval is sought to apply for the third round of funding for the Rental Housing Support Program (RHSP). This program was created by the General Assembly in 2005 and is designed to provide subsidies to reduce the cost of renting for extremely low-income households. TCOC is one of five Community Action Agencies that are partnering with the Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies (IACAA). If approved, TCOC would be requesting a three-year award of $329,472. The IACAA decided the amounts for each of the participating agencies. For this particular program, the application is much stronger if submitted as part of a combined application. Rev. Harmon moved to apply for the RHSP funding; Mr. Bruns seconded. In answer to a question, Mr. Thompson explained that those enrolled in the program will have their rents paid up front to the participating landlords. This program is for extremely low-income people. The motion carried

President's Report – Sandra Julifs, President/CEO – Conflict of Interest forms were distributed to those members who were not at the October meeting.

While working with Ms. Ritchey on the Homemaker Program's Community Care Program certification process, Ms. Julifs had to put together a business plan for the agency. This was nothing new as she pulled bits and pieces from a number of documents. This was distributed to the members.

As normal for the November meeting, the agency's *Salary/Wage Classifications by Position* were presented as, due primarily to ARRA funding, there have been new positions added and filled, some employees are near or over the top of their positions' ranges, more responsibilities have been added to key positions, etc. With that in mind, Rev. Harmon moved to go into an executive session to discuss these ranges. Ms. Healy seconded, and the motion carried. Ms. Julifs was allowed to remain in the session. After the discussion was over, Ms. Britt moved to come out of the executive session and into an open meeting. Ms. Billard seconded, and the motion carried. More discussion followed after which Ms. Britt moved to approve the new classification ranges, and Ms. Nelson seconded. The motion failed 6-9. Ms. Julifs then asked what she was to do with positions that are new and filled as well as with increases to the bottom of the ranges that have been mandated by funding sources or law. She was told to leave them in. It was also suggested that the Personnel Committee review the ranges and bring its recommendations back to the Board.

Action was also needed on the *Exempt Employees Incentive Compensation Awards* program. An explanatory handout was distributed, and several questions were asked. Ms. Julifs explained that, in order to have the exempt employees receive the same awards as last year, $22,361 would be needed. This is slightly more than last year's total because some employees reached milestones, one person left and her replacement's award will be pro-rated, etc. Ms. Childers then moved to award the same amount per point as last year for a total pool of $22,361. Mr. Bruns seconded, and the motion carried.

Old Business: There was no old business.

New Business: Mr. Bruns mentioned that he had visited the Head Start site in Streator and had received a thank you from someone for weatherizing their home.

The next meeting will be held on January 27, 2010, in Dixon.

As there was no further business, Chairperson Krogulski adjourned the meeting at 9:24 p.m.