NOTICE

The Board of Directors meeting of the Tri-County Opportunities Council will be held on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at the Lee County Senior Center, 100 W. 2nd St., Dixon, Illinois. (815-631-8043)

Julie Jacobs
Secretary

NOTE: Personnel Committee Meeting at 6:15 p.m before the regular meeting.

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
Tuesday, February 24, 2009
(815-631-8043)

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approve Minutes of January 22, 2009

4. Action on Treasurer's Reports of November & December 2008

5. Treasurer's Report for January 2009

   Fiscal Report – Dawn Robertson

6. Program Reports

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

7. President's Report

8. Personnel Committee Report

9. Old Business

10. New Business

11. Next Meeting – Wednesday, March 25, 2009 in Princeton

12. Adjournment

TRI-COUNTY OPPORTUNITIES COUNCIL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
JANUARY 22, 2009

Chairperson Ken Krogulski called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. He introduced two new LaSalle County Board appointees, Herman Bruns and Sandi Billard, who will be replacing Michael Beavers and Randy Freeman. The Bureau County Board Chairman has also appointed Mark Wilt to replace Korter Moran; Mr. Wilt was unable to attend this meeting, but plans to be at the February meeting. Mr. Krogulski then read a note from Ruth Sabin thanking the agency for the memorial to her brother.

The roll was called, and a quorum was present.

Members present: Jim Barnes, Sandi Billard, Sue Britt, Loretta Brown, Herman Bruns, Dorothy Carver, Bernene Dahl, Edythe Geiger, Albert Harmon, Mary Healy, Sharon Heath, Donna Hess, Julie Jacobs, Marlin Jones, Ken Krogulski, Barbara Nelson, Juanita Randklev, Ruth Sabin, Barbara Smith, Marvin Williams.

Members absent: Dee Biagi, Susan Bursztynsky, Bill Gaston, Deborah Gaughan, Laura Gonzalez, Grace Hunter, Lynne Kilker, Mary Klopcic, Gary Kroeschen, Carlos Munoz, Frank Niewinski, James Passero, Fred Phillips, James Robison, Peggy Sargent, Joan Sheriden, Curt Shouer, Patrick Sloan, Kary VanDeVoorde, Mark Wilt, Jerry Wolens.

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

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

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

The treasurer's reports for November and December were distributed. Dawn Robertson, Fiscal Operations Manager, reported that the December financial statement's balance is on an accrual basis rather than cash. This is being done as a request of the auditors. It will save them time resulting in saving TCOC money. Expenditures incurred in December were expensed and booked as accounts payable. In January, the invoices were paid which credits cash and reverses the accounts payable. The December financial statements show the expenses that were accrued, but not paid until January, thus resulting in a negative book balance. A trial balance or balance sheet would show the accurate figures. The current accounts receivable total for the Homemaker Program is $449,800.

Ms. Robertson then drew attention to the Homemaker Program report, as a lot has happened since the last meeting. The following was received: July's reimbursement on December 1; August's on December 17; September's on December 17; and October's on December 29.

A new item, " Other-Ins" has been added under the Accounts Receivable Section. This is a reimbursement ($1.33 per unit/hour) for those agencies that provide health insurance to the homemakers. This was passed back in July under the Public Act 95-713 along with the $1.70/hour rate increase. The Department has approved the additional $1.33/unit rate for TCOC's program since the program met all the requirements in the Act. However, to date no money has been received, but is being shown on the statement as it is owed to the agency. In addition, the Homemaker Program's share of the audit is $4,050 with an estimated total for 2008's accrued leave at $11,000. The finalized report will be presented next month with the actual figures.

This brings the program's gain to $58,930.55 with an overall gain for the year of $51,097.60. Many years ago, TCOC's health insurance premiums increased dramatically, and the program did not have the money to cover the employer's portion, so the Board, at that time, agreed to pay the homemakers' increase out of the unrestricted account. This amount can finally be repaid from the insurance reimbursement, when it is received, which will leave the program approximately $973.60 for the year.

At the November meeting, the Board voted to allow Sandra Julifs and Ms. Robertson to make the decision on how to pay the unemployment insurance since, at that time, the state was not reimbursing the program. Since the payments were received and the reimbursement method for unemployment is more beneficial to the agency, no changes were made.

With the excess money from the additional insurance rate, eventually the program would like to upgrade its computers and office equipment. New Community Care Program rules may require the use of costly electronic time-keeping devices. Another pending rule is that agencies must keep 90 days of operating money on hand at any time. Thus, some of this money will have to be transferred to a special restricted account just for this rule. Once all this shakes out, decisions will need to be made as to United Ways and senior tax levies.

From a statistical standpoint, there were 426 W-2's (decrease of 7 from last year) for 2008 with a total gross wage amount of $5,436,262 (an increase of $278,791 from last year).

The auditors will be starting February 18 and are anticipating finishing the field work by the middle of March. They have already reviewed 20 closed out funds and reviewed the internal controls.

Program Reports:

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) – Sandra Julifs, President/CEO – The 2009 Scholarship Committee needed to be appointed; volunteers were solicited and Ms. Healy, Ms. Jacobs, and Ms. Randklev, agreed to serve on the committee.

The process is beginning for Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP – formerly FEMA) funding. Normally, funds are received from all the counties except Marshall and Stark in which staff simply takes applications for the Peoria Red Cross. This is emergency-type money and is based upon several factors including unemployment; local boards determine

which agencies receive funding and whether it is to be used for food, rent/mortgage and/or utilities. There is only a miniscule amount for administration, thus the EFSP funds are used along with the CSBG program. In light of the current economic situation, all of TCOC's counties should receive more funding this year, and, so far, it appears that TCOC may receive about $27,000 for Lee County and $40,000 for Whiteside. An application has also been sent to Ogle County for an undetermined amount. Ms. Britt then moved to accept whatever EFSP funds are offered to the agency; Mr. Barnes seconded, and the motion carried.

Ms. Julifs then explained the final 2008 CSBG report that had been distributed earlier. It showed that CSBG met or exceeded its outcomes for all of the work programs even though, in two programs, fewer people were served than planned. In all, 4555 unduplicated people were served, plus another 1,392 people for whom intake applications were not done (i.e. food pantry recipients, those who come in to pick up bread, those who call for information, etc.).

Ms. Julifs also distributed copies of a news article from the LaSalle *News-Tribune* about the Delbert High Hawk family. This Native American family had come from the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota and are hoping to find new opportunities locally. TCOC's Family and Community Development (FCD) program has been assisting them through the CSBG transitional housing work program. The article showed how FCD works and what the FCD Specialists do.

Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) – Sharon King, Program Director - The 2008 Foster Grandparent Program State Highlight report was completed and submitted on January 20th. The total number of Foster Grandparents in 2008 was 101. Fifty-one Foster Grandparents assisted 219 kindergarten through fourth grade students in 85 public school classrooms in 16 public schools and 10 faith-based classrooms in 5 faith-based schools. Twenty-three Foster Grandparents assisted 60 birth through preschool aged children in nine public preschool classes, three Head Start classrooms, three public day care centers and two faith-based day care centers. Four Foster Grandparents assisted residents at the Exceptional Care facility for profoundly disabled individuals. In all, they provided 85,287 volunteer hours of tutoring/mentoring children mainly in reading and math assistance.

The Foster Grandparent Program has been at capacity for the last five years, and currently, there is a waiting list in order to participate in the program. Nineteen new Foster Grandparents entered the program in 2008 and two grandparents returned after being out a year. All together, there are 83 active grandparents and 2 inactive grandparents.

Five new sites were added to the program. They were Mary Morgan in Byron, Jefferson in Oregon, Eastland preschool in Lanark, Washington Grade School in Sterling, and Jefferson in Dixon.

In 2008, six Foster Grandparents received the President's Volunteer Service award for giving over 4,000 hours of service to tutoring/mentoring children. Thirty-nine of the present 83 active Foster Grandparents have received the President's Volunteer Service award for giving over 4,000 hours of service tutoring/mentoring children. That is 47 % of the current grandparents; this shows that almost half of the grandparents have been with the program over six years in order to attain 4,000 hours of service

Presently, Ms. King and her new assistant, Lynn Scherer, are planning two small group in-services in February and one small group in-service in March.

Head Start – Terri Lawrence, Program Director - The Head Start Migrant Program's self-assessment and annual plan were mailed to the members along with the November written Head Start report. Approval was needed. A few remarks were made about the report and plan after which Ms. Healy moved, with a second by Rev. Harmon, to approve the report and annual plan. Motion carried.

At the present time, the agency does not provide early Head Start services (EHS) which are Head Start services for pregnant women, infants and toddlers. Based on the training and information for the Office of Head Start that has come out in the last few days, if Head Start funding remains in the stimulus (recovery) package proposed by President Obama, two thirds of that funding will probably be designated for EHS services. According to the local community assessment completed by staff, it was found that services and programming for this targeted group are virtually non-existent and, within the service area, remain a vital need. In the next few months, the Head Start staff and parents, and hopefully, Board representatives, will be working on community engagement activities to gather data and determine the need for EHS and where the greatest need is within the community. We want to be strategic and be prepared if and when funds are released for EHS services.

The Illinois Head Start Association met over the past two days and discussed the Illinois position to send forth nationally on the needs of Head Start within the state as guidance on the distribution of additional Head Start funding if the projected amounts remain in the stimulus package. The association is advocating for infrastructure one-time funding for programs (bus replacement, facility and playground renovations and updates, etc.) and COLA for staff.

Homemaker – Debra Ritchey, Program Director - In the months of November and December, the program served an average of 515 clients. There were 21,830.75 units of service for which $432,368 was billed.

Ms. Ritchey attended The Governor's Conference on Aging from December 9th-12th in Chicago. There were special meetings with the Illinois Association of Community Care Program Homecare providers (IACCPHP) and and its Community Care Program Advisory Council (CCPAC). Things discussed were delayed payments to providers, mailing in hardship letters, and questions on the new CCP rules. The proposed CCP rules changes may have programs using electronic time keeping systems and have a 90 day expense back-up

The extra rate increase for the provision of health insurance from July to December amounts to $ 84,566. This will help with debts and equipment for the office once it is received.

Ms. Ritchey continues to work on the licensing requirement and updating policies and procedures for the home health license needed to serve self-pay clients.
On January 14th, she, and other staff, attended the United Way of Whiteside County's celebration meeting and received an award for a 40% increase in giving over last year's amount.

As of January 1st, the program is no longer providing services at Pinnacle Place in Savanna.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) – Tammy Saenz, Program Director - The LIHEAP "gang" has been extremely busy with processing or at least trying to process the applications. There are currently 1,100 more applications this year than from this date last year. Staff is also about month and a half behind with the computer system down more than it is working, which makes it very hard to have a productive week. The staff has been working Saturdays and Sundays to try to get ahead. There have been many new clients which shows the need for help very clearly. The program has also either repaired or replaced 69 furnaces which exceeds last year's amount also.

The ComEd and Ameren programs are still being offered and more information on them can be obtained by calling the main office.

Ninety-one percent of the state grant and 45% of the federal grant have been spent, but there are still plenty of funds. So if the members know of someone who has not yet applied, they can have them call the main office at 1-800-323-5434 and they can be referred them to the nearest intake site.

Weatherization/Housing – Wayne Thompson, Program Director - So far this program year (July 1 to June 30) in the Weatherization program, 113 homes have been approved on the system. Of the 113 approved, 73 homes have been completed and finaled.

The ECHR program has four homes approved and two complete. Applications are being reviewed for additional homes.

In the (SFOOR) Single Family Owner Occupied Rehab Program, there is one home complete and one in progress. Additional homes for the program are being reviewed.

In the Homebuyer Assistance Program, 20 homes have been closed on with an additional closing by the end of this month. Construction is complete on 12 of the homes. Mr. Thompson also mentioned that the 2009 Homebuyer Assistance grant proposal went before the Illinois Housing Development Authority Board and was approved for $880,000.00 for 22 homes the program can help purchase and rehabilitate.

There is one vacancy in the agency-owned rental units and no vacancies in the northern transitional units.

One member asked how it is working out with using contractors, and Mr. Thompson replied that it is going very well. Another question was asked about assessments; the assessors are in-house.

President's Report – Sandra Julifs, President/CEO - Copies of the draft revised *Personnel Policies* had been mailed to all members. The mission statement was considered separately, as it needed to be reviewed for the agency's strategic planning process.

Several comments were made after which Mr. Barnes moved to leave the mission statement as it is. Ms. Heath seconded, and the motion carried.

Next, the Board considered the revisions to the *Personnel Policies* that will put the agency in compliance with both the new Head Start Act and the new IRS 990 guidelines. The Head Start Policy Council had reviewed both the mission statement and the revisions and recommended approval by the Board. Ms. Dahl moved to approve the revisions to the *Personnel Policies*, and Mr. Williams seconded. Motion carried.

Ms. Julifs noted that the first meeting for the strategic planning process is to be held on January 27th (postponed to February 9th); the Board Planning Committee, plus Chairperson Krogulski, have been invited although any member is welcome to attend. There will be a good cross-section of staff, board and Foster Grandparents attending. Jamie Larson and Kim Larson of the Head Start staff will be the facilitators.

Under the House version of the stimulus bill, the following TCOC programs/activities are listed: CSBG - $1 billion; Head Start - $2.1 billion; homeless grants - $1.5 billion; LIHEAP - $1 billion; Emergency Food and Shelter - $200 million; and, Weatherization – a whopping $6.2 billion. All will have specific parameters and must be spent over the next two years. Now, the Senate will need to agree on a stimulus bill after which a conference committee will need to draft the final bill.

Old business: There was no old business.

New business: The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 24, 2009, at Dixon. The Personnel Committee will meet at 6:15 p.m. prior to the regular meeting.

As there was no further business, Chairperson Krogulski adjourned the meeting at 8:42 p.m.