NOTICE

The Board of Directors meeting of the Tri-County Opportunities Council will be held on Thursday, April 26, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. at the Bureau County Republican Bldg, 800 Ace Road, Princeton, Illinois. (815-875-6064)

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 625-7830 or 875-6064 or 1-800-323-5434.

TRI-COUNTY OPPORTUNITIES COUNCIL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Bureau County Republican Bldg.
800 Ace Road
Princeton, Illinois
Thursday, April 26, 2012
815-875-6064

1. Call to Order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

4. Approve Minutes of March 28, 2012

5. Action on Treasurer's Report of February 2012

6. Treasurer's Report for March 2012

   Fiscal Report – Dawn Kanzler

7. Program Reports

   CSBG/Economic Development/Homeless Services – Dorothy McBride
   Foster Grandparent – Sharon King or Betty Schutt
   Head Start – Terri Lawrence
   Homemaker – Debra Ritchey
   LIHEAP – Tammy Saenz
   Weatherization/Housing – Wayne Thompson

8. President's Report – Sandra Julifs

9. Old Business

10. New Business

11. Next Meeting –Tuesday, May 22, 2012 in Dixon

12. Adjournment

TRI-COUNTY OPPORTUNITIES COUNCIL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
MARCH 28, 2012

Chairperson Kenneth Krogulski called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. He noted that Jim Barnes and his wife had recently celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary; a news article was circulated. He also reported that long-time member Mary Healy passed away earlier in the week. The members then recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The roll was called and a quorum was present.

Members present: Ralph Anderson, Dee Biagi, Bernene Dahl, Randy Freeman, Bill Gaston, Edythe Geiger, Albert Harmon, Grace Hunter, Julie Jacobs, Mary Klopcic, Donald Koehler, Ken Krogulski, Jenny Lawrence, Yvonne Oukrust, Joe Panzica, Jr., Fred Phillips, Juanita Randklev, Bill Welty, Marvin Williams, Lorene Winfield, Christina Wyss.

Members absent: Jim Barnes, Sue Britt, Loretta Brown, Susan Bursztynsky, Laura Gonzalez, Donna Hess, Lenore Johnson, Marlin Jones, Irene Lewis-Wimbley, Brad Lindstrom, John O'Neill, James Passero, James Robison, Peggy Sargent, Valerie Shierry, Patrick Sloan, Kary VanDeVoorde.

Others present: Sandra Julifs, Dawn Kanzler, Terri Lawrence, Dorothy McBride, Carol Razo, Debra Ritchey, Tammy Saenz, Betty Schutt, Wayne Thompson, Dawn Troupis.

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

The January treasurer's report was presented for approval. There were no questions or comments. Mr. Koehler moved to file the report for audit, and Mr. Anderson seconded. Motion carried.

The February treasurer's report was distributed. Dawn Kanzler, Fiscal Operations Manager, reported that the book balance was ($1,004,558.16) of which the Homemaker Program represented ($1,259,720.47). An expedited/hardship payment request was sent to the Illinois Department on Aging IDoA last week and $296,096.22 was approved for payment. The agency is now owed only four months (November-February) from IDoA. Questions were asked as to how funding for the Homemaker Program is handled. Ms. Kanzler explained that the agency has a line of credit, some unrestricted funds and the program does have a reserve fund. The bank has been good in working with the agency, and expedited letters are sent to the IDoA on a regular basis, etc.

The fieldwork for the audit has been completed at the TCOC office; however, the auditors have been emailing for more information to clarify questions that arose after they left.

Ms. Kanzler eliminated the Assistant Fiscal Operations Manager's position March 1, 2012, to save administration money with the agency's Indirect Cost Rate (ICR). Other expenses are being cut and/or eliminated going forward. There is a part-time intern from Sauk Valley Community College until the middle of May to help with the daily accounting duties. In answer to further questions, she explained that the ICR is an administrative rate that is negotiated with the federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Once a proposal is sent to HHS, TCOC is told its rate (i.e. 2.5%) which is then applied to all federal, and some state, grants to pay for expenses incurred by the administrative group (President/CEO and all fiscal staff).

Ms. Kanzler also distributed agency resource books to those requesting them.

Program Reports:

Community Services Block Grant/Homeless Services – Dorothy McBride, Community Services Director - Scholarship applications are still being taken through April 20th. Twelve scholarships will be awarded this year.

Three new outreach workers have been hired. Melinda Temple and Maria Hufnagel will be working in LaSalle County, and Harrison Roberts will work in Ogle County.

The Princeton office and food pantry will be moving April 26, 27 and the 30th. The pantry will be closed the 27th and 30th; however, LIHEAP will continue to be open during the move. As of May 1st, staff will be in the new building at 1019 North Main St., Princeton. This is just north of the present office on the same side of the street and was previously a restaurant. There will be an Open House/Grand Opening in the future.

Board action was needed to apply for an Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) in the amount of $87,592. The application goes through the Continuum of Care which covers fifteen counties; this amount will be used to provide homeless prevention and rapid re-housing services in the nine counties TCOC covers as well as Jo Daviess and Stephenson County for which TCOC will handle the funding. After a question about whether the amount was just for TCOC's area (it's not), Ms. Biagi moved to apply for the funding; Ms. Oukrust seconded, and the motion carried.

Ms. McBride then noted that she had scholarship applications, prescription cards and the ROMA material from the last meeting for members wishing them.

Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) – Betty Schutt, Assistant Coordinator - The third small group in-service session will be held on March 29th for 25 grandparents at the Red Apple Restaurant in Sterling. The focus of this session will be on reading approaches the grandparents can use when assisting and guiding the students they are helping. It is planned to continue and review the brain health topic from last year. Also, the smaller groups allow for better communication and interaction.

Ms. Schutt has visited 51 of the current 76 grandparents at their sites. One grandparent will be returning to the classroom after spring break in April. Two grandparents are inactive because of sickness.

The March 2nd edition of the *Journal Standard* in Freeport printed an article about the Foster Grandparent Program and a picture of June Kingery from Lanark in Carroll County assisting three children at the Early Step Pre-school Program at Eastland Elementary in Lanark; Carroll County is in the *Journal Standard's* circulation area. Calls have also been received from those receiving the paper in Stevenson and JoDaviss counties, but those callers are not eligible because they do not reside in TCOC's area.

The annual grandparent appreciation buffet luncheon and musical show is being planned for the White Pines State Park banquet room on Wednesday, May 16, 2012. Other than that, the program is moving along at a normal daily pace without any other special projects, reports, or assessments that are required to be completed. April and May will be busy with the state grant, summer placements, and the end of the school year child assessments.

Head Start – Terri Lawrence, Program Director - Approval was required to submit a supplemental application, due on April 16th, to the ACF Region V Office for funding as: $35,498 for this year's .72% Head Start Cost-of-Living (COLA) allowance; $60,197 in Head Start Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) funds; $1,150,000 for the annual Early Head Start funding for the period 4/1/12-3/31/13; $8,280 in Early Head Start Cost-of-Living Allowance (COLA) monies; and, $28,957 in Early Head Start Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) funding that will represent an increase of $207 in Early Head Start T/TA funding. Ms. Dahl moved to submit the supplemental funding application; Mr. Welty seconded, and the motion carried.

Program family service staff is busy recruiting children for the 2012-13 program year. At this time, the majority of the children that are age-eligible to return to the program or the children currently in the Early Head Start program that will be transitioning to Head Start have had their recruitment paperwork either updated or completed. Siblings of the returnees have also been recruited. Acceptance letters for all returnees, their siblings and/or those children transitioning have been sent to parents. The family service staff is now concentrating on community recruitment; i.e. referrals, call-ins and children from the DHS lists. Ms. Lawrence asked that members please call the Rock Falls office if they know of a child that may be eligible for either the Early Head Start or the Head Start programs. Eligibility includes pregnant women and children from birth through age five. Families must meet 100% of poverty guidelines. Children with a diagnosed disability may qualify regardless of income. Children who live in families who are homeless, receive SSI or on get TANF cash benefits are categorically eligible. Foster children are also categorically eligible.

The program is losing its center-based facility for the LaSalle Extended Day Head Start class at the end of this school year. Staff is still looking for space to house this classroom next year. Ms. Lawrence asked that if anyone has a suggestion to please contact her at the Rock Falls office.

Homemaker Program – Debra Ritchey, Program Director – In the month of February, the program served 511 participants with 12,843.5 units of service for which $240,291.88 was billed.

Approval was needed to apply for Whiteside County Senior Services Tax Levy funds. Staff does not apply for an amount of funding. This is determined through the county committee and board process; this year, $25,898 was the amount allocated. Ms. Geiger moved to apply for this funding; Mr. Anderson seconded, and the motion carried.

Approval was also needed to apply for funding from the United Ways of Whiteside and Lee counties. In both cases, increases are being requested based upon the increases in clients the program has served. Thus, from the United Way of Whiteside County, $18,500 is being requested, and from Lee County, the request is $13,500; if granted, the amounts would be $1,500 higher for both counties. Ms. Oukrust then moved to apply for the United Way funds; Mr. Koehler seconded, and the motion carried. Ms. Ritchey noted that she, Ms. Kanzler and Ms. Julifs were in the process of completing the United Way applications.

The program supervisors were attending training in Springfield at the time of the Board meeting. With this training, the supervisors will have completed 12 hours of the required 24 hours annually. The remainder of the training is provided by the regular in-services. And, the next in-service will be held in April for the supervisors and the 132 homemakers.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) – Tammy Saenz, Program Director – The LIHEAP Department is slowing down, which usually happens around this time each year. To date, 9,698 applications have been entered into LIHEAP.net. The program has repaired or replaced 70 furnaces. Furnace applications will continue to be taken, but cannot be processed until Ms. Saenz receives all of the furnace work orders back from the contractors.

By looking at the numbers, it is easy to see that this has been a mild winter resulting in fewer clients applying for LIHEAP help. Unfortunately when April begins, so will the disconnects, and that in turn begins a frantic time for the LIHEAP Department with the phone calls doubling for information on assistance. We did receive an e-mail that the emergency priority period ended as of March 26th at the close of business.

The Com-Ed hardship program is still going on for clients who have a hardship and are at or below 250% of the poverty level. Besides income, some of the criteria to qualify are

being disabled, loss of income, medical bills, sudden death of a spouse, grandparents raising grandchildren, etc.

Staff is in the process of re-certifying the 1,207 PIPP (Percentage of Income Payment Plan) clients. Ms. Saenz and the PIPP coordinator attended a meeting in Elgin earlier in the day and learned that the PIPP recertification process will take place during May, June and July, but programs will have to wait until September for the anniversary date to be put in as the utilities are not ready. Everything will be manually done. They also learned that there might be a supplemental payment this summer rather than a cooling program.

Since the last meeting, a new location for Marshall County was acquired; the address is 309 5th St. in Lacon. The Oregon office will be open now on Mondays and Thursdays; this new office is located at 412 W. Washington St. in Oregon.

She then asked the members to spread the word that funds are available for LIHEAP until the end of May.

Weatherization/Housing – Wayne Thompson, Program Director - In the current Weatherization Program, the ARRA (Stimulus) funds have been depleted and he and Ms. Kanzler are working on reconciling those funds. At the annual Weatherization Conference, held earlier this month, it was announced that Illinois ended up second in the nation for number of jobs created with the ARRA funds (over 1,100) and third for number of homes weatherized with stimulus funds. Twenty five states will not receive any Department of Energy funds for Weatherization this year as they did not spend out their funds in a timely manner. The Health and Human Services (HHS) funds are now being used and there are 173 homes approved on the system.

Approval is needed to apply to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) for the 2013 Weatherization grants. The amounts are as follows: Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) - $527,799; Department of Energy (DOE) - $268,706; and, State of Illinois Supplemental - $426,508. The total amount requested is $1,223,013. These grants, if awarded, will allow staff to weatherize approximately 250 homes in the 2013 program that starts on July 1, 2012 and ends on June 30, 2013.

Program employees are currently working on the final two homes in the 2010-2012 Single Family Owner Occupied Program (SFOOR) and are awaiting official word on the status of the grant that has been submitted for the 2012-2014 program year.

The Homebuyer Assistance Program has three clients with loan approval; one has an accepted offer while the other 2 are house shopping.

The CHDO program staff has begun searching out available foreclosed and easily made assessable and passable housing stock. Several viable candidates in the Peru and Rochelle

areas have been located and staff is the process of contacting the realtors/owners for inspection.

Three regular housing units are vacant at this time and applications are being reviewed to fill these units.

Presently, TCOC has been assigned 250 cases in the Illinois Hardest Hit program. Twenty have been funded by the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) and 59 others are at various stages of processing at IHDA.

Currently the Rental Housing Support Program (RHSP) round 2 has 17 assisted units and anticipates 10 additional units being assisted in April. RHSP round 3 has three assisted units and hopes to fill three more. Eligible RHSP clients can be helped for up to 24 months.

The Housing Assistance Council (HAC) wants to do a story about one of TCOC's clients in its magazine *Rural Voices.* The story Mr. Thompson submitted is about a single widow with three disabled children in wheelchairs. TCOC helped this family through the federal HOME Program which then leveraged additional funds.

President's Report – Sandra Julifs, President/CEO – Ms. Julifs reported on the Illinois Ventures for Community Action (IVCA) which is the economic development arm of Community Action and includes all 37 CAAs in Illinois. Ms. Julifs is an IVCA board member and was one of the founders of the organization. She had attended IVCA's annual and board meetings on March 22nd and learned that it had been a good year for IVCA'a loans and investments. The mission of IVCA is to create wealth for distribution to member CAAs and enhance their economic development capacity. In line with that, the distribution this year will be $225,000 which, when divided among the members, will give each agency $6,081. In addition to that amount, TCOC will also receive $2,300 from Second Illinois Ventures, a for-profit subsidiary of IVCA. TCOC, a preferred shareholder, invested $29,000 some years ago which was then invested into several companies. She passed around write-ups of some of IVCA's companies.

There are still some Board vacancies: Organizational – Bureau, Lee and Ogle; Low-Income – Bureau and Lee. Replacements for inactive members are also sought: Organizational – Marshall; Low-Income – Bureau, Putnam, Stark.

Ms. Julifs then announced that she would like to retire at the end of 2012 or early in 2013. She talked to the Personnel Committee and officers prior to the meeting and they will begin the process of finding a replacement perhaps as early as May.

Old Business: Ms. Jacobs noted a couple of date changes that need to be made on the *Fact Sheet* (2010 to 2011); those will be changed.

New Business: Rev. Harmon reported for the Personnel Committee and officers who met prior to the regular meeting. He reported that they had completed Ms. Julifs' annual evaluation and had two recommendations for the Board. The first recommendation was to renew Ms. Julifs' contract for 2012. Ms. Oukrust moved to renew the contract for 2012; Ms. Geiger seconded, and the motion carried.

Rev. Harmon explained that the Board is responsible for setting the salary of the CEO on an annual basis which then becomes the standard raise for agency personnel if funds are available within the programs. Ms. Julifs is paid from the Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) that Ms. Kanzler explained in her report. Unfortunately, the ICR cannot support a raise for Ms. Julifs at this time primarily due to the difficulties with the PIPP program as the expenses for it have been much smaller and slower than in the past with just LIHEAP. There were numerous questions and discussion at this point. Rev. Harmon explained that the committee and officers recommended a 2.5% raise for Ms. Julifs. There was more discussion after which Mr. Welty moved to grant the President/CEO a 2.5% raise if, and when, funds are available under the ICR plan. Ms. Biagi seconded, and the motion carried.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 26, 2012, in Princeton probably at the Bureau County Republican building due to moving the Princeton office.

As there was no further business to come before the Board, Chairperson Krogulski adjourned the meeting at 8:31 p.m.