NOTICE

The Board of Directors meeting of the Tri-County Opportunities Council will be held on Thursday, October 22, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at the Lee County Senior Center, 100 W. 2nd St., Dixon, Illinois. (815) 631-8043

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
Lee County Senior Center
100 W. 2nd St.
Dixon, Illinois
Thursday, October 22, 2009
(815) 631-8043

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Approve Minutes of September 23, 2009

4. Action on Treasurer's Report of August 2009

5. Treasurer's Report for September 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

9. New Business

10. Next Meeting – Tuesday, November 24, 2009 in Princeton

11. Adjournment

TRI-COUNTY OPPORTUNITIES COUNCIL
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
SEPTEMBER 23, 2009

Chairperson Ken Krogulski called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. The committee sign-up sheet was passed around for the benefit of those that were not at the August meeting. Dave Ridenour, CSBG Grants Manager from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), was welcomed to the meeting.

The roll was called and a quorum was present.

Members present: Sandi Billard, Sue Britt, Loretta Brown, Herman Bruns, Susan Bursztynsky, Dorothy Carver, Sally Childers, Albert Harmon, Mary Healy, Sharon Heath, Donna Hess, Grace Hunter, Julie Jacobs, Marlin Jones, Lynne Kilker, Ken Krogulski, Barbara Nelson, Fred Phillips, Juanita Randklev, Ruth Sabin, Marvin Williams.

Members absent: Jim Barnes, Dee Biagi, Bernene Dahl, Bill Gaston, Edythe Geiger, Laura Gonzalez, Mary Klopcic, Travis McGlasson, Carlos Munoz, John O'Neill, James Passero, James Robison, Don Romes, Peggy Sargent, Joan Sheridan, Patrick Sloan, Kary VanDeVoorde, Mark Wilt, Jerry Wolens, Christina Wyss.

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

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

The July treasurer's report was presented for action. There were no corrections or comments. Ms. Britt moved to file the report for audit, Ms. Kilker seconded, and the motion carried.

The August treasurer's report was distributed. Dawn Robertson, Fiscal Operations Manager, reported that the August treasurer's report had an ending balance of $170,254.44. The Homemaker's accounts receivable balance was ($358,367.45), which represented only two months. These two amounts are significantly different from July. The State of Illinois (Department on Aging) sent checks for April and May along with the April, May and June insurance reimbursements. Ms. Robertson also was able to draw down 30% of the Weatherization grants for startup purposes, which was received in August, also.

The Homemaker Program income statement, however, showed an August gain of $1,030.22 even with the retroactive required wage increase being paid along with the mandated hourly raise increase to all of its employees.

TCOC's current bank, Sauk Valley Bank, renewed the $650,000 line of credit for six months only. The bank will look at the financial situation again in March 2010. One local bank declined

the line of credit request of $1M and another bank is still deciding. Ms. Robertson will continue to work on finding a local bank to accommodate the agency. In the meantime, most of the money in the Freedom Bank account was moved to the general fund to help with the cash flow. The investment account is still separate from the operating account, and the line of credit hasn't been used in about 45 days.

In answer to a question, Ms. Robertson explained that the Amcore bank account is completely closed now.

Program Reports:

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) – Dorothy McBride, Community Services Director - The new office site in Morrison will be up and running in October, and the outreach staff will also be going to Erie twice a month. There still is an opening for a Family and Community Specialist to serve Ogle and Carroll Counties. And, a new Homeless Services Coordinator, Abbey Peterson, has been hired to work with all the agency's homeless programs, but especially with the new Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP). She comes to TCOC from a Community Action Agency in Michigan where she worked with homeless programs.

Ms. McBride reviewed the *Social and Economic Characteristics Chart for 2009*, with an emphasis on the unemployment situation as well as the increase in food stamp cases and WIC recipients. This chart is part of the data collection process for the *Community Action Plan* that is part of the 2010 CSBG grant application process.

The CSBG staff is hoping to develop hygiene/cleaning kits with the assistance of local Wal-Marts. These kits would contain basic cleaning supplies and toiletries that cannot be purchased with food stamps.

The new Homeless Prevention/Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP) Program is on track to start in October. Staff is developing the forms needed to run the program. The program will be similar to the current transitional housing program that TCOC runs in its southern counties with CSBG funds. HPRP is set to assist the homeless or those at risk of homelessness. The individual or family can be in the program for up to eighteen months and will be evaluated every three months to see if they still qualify and need the program. The target population will be those that fit the question "Would this individual or family be homeless **but for** this assistance?"

Ms. McBride asked Sandra Julifs, President/CEO, to handle the two CSBG action items. The first had to do with the scholarship program under the regular CSBG grant. TCOC will again be receiving $11,000 that must be used for scholarships (in addition to the money set aside in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding for scholarships). These have, in the past, been worth $1,000 each for full-time students and, as of this year, prorated for students taking less than 12 semester hours or the equivalent. There was some talk last month of raising

the amount, so Ms. Julifs invited discussion on this issue. Several different scholarship amounts were mentioned by the members. Ms. Kilker then moved, with a second by Mr. Williams, to set the amount of the scholarships at $1,500 for full time students. Motion carried.

Within the CSBG ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) grant, there is a work program that can help clients with employment, education and/or healthcare needs when the need is related to employment (current or future) up to a maximum of $1,500 per family. Since the guidelines have been raised to 200% of poverty (back of tan handout) and the amount of assistance has been raised, there have been a number of employees, and some Board members, who have requested assistance. TCOC has a policy for services to employees and members (front of tan handout) that has worked well over the years. However, some of the employee requests have been for car repairs, tires, maintenance, etc. Those employees tend to be ones who need their cars to work for us, but who also get a mileage reimbursement of $.545 per mile to cover gas and vehicle maintenance. Staff would like some guidance on how to handle these requests. As a help, Ms. Julifs pointed out that if a vehicle gets 15 miles per gallon, the reimbursement for one gallon of gas will be $8.18. If gas costs $2.60, there will be $5.58 per gallon remaining for other vehicle expenses. In other words, only 32% of the reimbursement is for gas. There was much discussion on this issue. Ms. Randklev moved that eligible TCOC employees who receive mileage reimbursements are not eligible for any car repair assistance. Mr. Bruns seconded, and, after more discussion, the motion failed 10-11. The discussion continued. Rev. Harmon moved, with a second by Ms. Britt, that eligible employees will not be able to get ARRA assistance for tires, batteries, normal wear and tear items and insurance but could qualify for major car repairs. There was more discussion. The motion failed 7-14. Again, the discussion continued. Mr. Williams moved to revisit the first motion with the addition of Board members: eligible TCOC employees and Board members who receive mileage reimbursements are not eligible for any car repair assistance. Ms. Kilker seconded. A question was asked as to whether this means any mileage reimbursements (i.e. a person receives a reimbursement one or two times, not regularly). The makers of the motion indicated yes; no one who receives any mileage reimbursements will be able to receive car repairs. The motion passed 14-7.

Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) – Sandra Julifs, President/CEO for Sharon King, Program Director, who remains on extended medical leave - The Morrison school district has contacted the FGP regarding the program and is interested in recruiting and placing foster grandparents in their school system. Lynn Scherer, Assistant Coordinator, will be meeting with a representative within a week discuss a plan of action. With the increase in income eligibility for Foster Grandparents to 200% of the poverty level, and the decrease in the age limit to 55 years of age as of October 1st, it should be easier to recruit as many people as are needed for the program.

The federal 2010 FGP grant is due on October 20th with the same allocated amount as for this year - $324,681. That will support at least 74 Foster Grandparents. Approval to submit was needed. Ms. Britt moved to approve applying for this continuation grant. Ms. Hess seconded, and the motion carried.

Head Start – Terri Lawrence, Program Director - Approval of the *2008-2009 Self-Assessment Report* was needed. This was mailed to all members. The report was briefly discussed after which a motion for approval was made by Ms. Randklev and seconded by Rev. Harmon. Motion carried.

The Head Start Program received a Financial Assistance Award for the One-Time Program Improvement funding application submitted in July 2009. While the program did not get everything that was requested, it was awarded funding for two busses ($98,500), updates to playgrounds ($60,000), replacement of some classroom furniture ($55,000) and funds to renovate bathrooms at targeted centers ($30,000) for a total of $243,500 in one-time funding.

Ms. Lawrence received a call from the Region V Office on September 22nd regarding the Early Head Start grant that was submitted in July. The regional office is considering the application for funding. Chandra Allgood-Foster, TCOC's Regional Program Specialist, basically discussed the proposal and funding if the size of our proposal was reduced from the original 210 slots to 100 slots. This call is not a confirmation of actual funding; however, based on the length of the call and the negotiations on services, options and budget revisions, Ms. Lawrence tended to think it is very likely that TCOCwill be funded and is anticipating some sort of official notice on the EHS grant within the next 2 to 4 weeks.

Homemaker Program – Debra Ritchey, Program Director - In the month of August, the programs serviced 481 clients with 9,996 units of service for which the $162,235 was billed. The insurance off-set was billed at $14,594.

Ms. Ritchey, Ms. Robertson and Ms. Julifs attended the Illinois Department on Aging's certification meeting in Oglesby that informed and answered questions about the provider certification application process, the role of Area Agencies on Aging, and the new Community Care Program (CCP) rules.

The last of this year's in-services was held September 22nd. Jim Buzard talked about 403 (b) retirement plans, and Emily Taylor from Lutheran Social Services of Illinois explained the importance of filling out the client monitoring sheet and following the client's care plan.

Ms. Julifs, Pam Vasquez and Ms. Ritchey will attend the United Way of Lee County Campaign Kickoff at YWCA on September 25, 2009. The program will also participate in health fairs this month at the Mt. Morris and Whiteside County senior centers.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) – Tammy Saenz, Program Director – The LIHEAP program for the winter is here and going strong. As in the past, September is set aside for the elderly and disabled. October is for the elderly, disabled and disconnected households, and November is for the general public. At this point, the program has spent $547,644 in heating payments and has entered 1,974 applications into the system.

All cooling payments have been sent out and should be credited to accounts this month.

The staff is continuing to work with ComEd and its hardship program and is waiting for some new agendas for the future.

Furnace repairs begin in October for the elderly and disabled; the general public may apply for furnaces in November. All furnace applicants must be homeowners and income eligible. Anyone interested in applying for LIHEAP may call the main office at 1-800-323-5434.

Housing – Wayne Thompson, Program Director - Approval was requested to apply to the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) for the 2010-12 Single Family Owner Occupied Rehabilitation Program (SFOOR). The grant application is due October 9, 2009. Staff would like to request funding for five houses per year (10 during two year grant period) to be served over the nine county service area. The amount of the grant request will be $420,000 for this program. Ms. Healy moved to apply for these funds. Ms. Heath seconded, and the motion carried.

Board approval was also requested to apply to the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) for the 2010 grant for the Homebuyers Assistance Program that is due October 16, 2009. Staff would like to request funding for 11 families to be served over the nine county service area. The amount of the grant request will be $440,000 for this program. Mr. Phillips moved to apply for these funds. Mr. Jones seconded, and the motion carried.

Mr. Thompson noted that the IHDA Board met on the September 18th and approved funding for TCOC's Home Modification Program in the amount of $120,000.

President's Report – Sandra Julifs, President/CEO - Ms. Julifs reported that, at the National Community Action Partnership's annual conference in Philadelphia, she attended many good workshops, but one, in particular, was very good and pertinent to boards of directors. It was called "Stimulus Steps for Slumping Boards" (handout distributed to members). She reviewed the handout (the presenter did not have copies of the Power Point presentation) and commented that she really appreciates the TCOC Board as it seems to be doing all the right things; this was not the case with some of the others boards discussed in the workshop. Several other members noted how well the Board handled the discussion on car repairs earlier in the meeting as well as its work in general.

Old Business: There was no old business.

New Business: The next meeting will be held on October 22, 2009, in Dixon.

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:01 p.m.