



# WORCESTER COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL, INC.

The Antipoverty Agency for Central Massachusetts

484 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor ♦ Worcester ♦ Massachusetts ♦ 01608-1810  
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## Chairwoman

Noreen Johnson Smith

## Executive Director

Marybeth Campbell

## Heating Assistance

## Energy Conservation

## Job & Education Center

## Head Start/Early Head Start

Southbridge

508.765.4738

## Healthy Families of

### Southern Worcester County

Southbridge

508.909.0061

## Volunteer Income Tax

### Assistance Program (VITA)

## Board .Agenda Monday, September 21, 2020 5:00pm

### Location: Zoom Call

- I. **Welcome and Consent Agenda-** *Noreen Johnson Smith, Board Chair*
  - i. Approval of June 8<sup>th</sup> Board Minutes
  - ii. Approval of August 17<sup>th</sup> Special Board Minutes
  - iii. Approval of Executive Committee Minutes July 8<sup>th</sup> 2020
  - iv. Approval of Program Committee Minutes, July 20, 2020
  - v. Approval of Audit/Finance Committee Minutes, July 22, 2020
  
- II. **Finance.....***Steve Desmairas, Treasurer, Rob Scherer, CFO*
  - i. July Financials - \* Vote
  - ii. CSBG Q3 Financials - \* Vote
  - iii. Vacation Buy Out - \* Vote
  - iv. FY21 Budget Overview and Discussion- \* Vote
  
- III. **Head Start .....** *Kerry Brennan, Chief Operating Officer*
  - i. Update on reopening plans week of 9/21
  - ii. Early Head Start Expansion Grant- \*Vote to submit application due on 9/21
  - iii. Head Start Bylaws- \*Vote to approve
  
- IV. **Update on Strategic Planning.....** *Marybeth Campbell, Executive Director*
  - i. Extended Deadline for Community Assessment and Strategic Plan
  - ii. Update on Progress of Resiliency Center Design
  
- V. **Executive Director Report.....** *Marybeth Campbell, Executive Director*
  - i. DHCD Organizational Standard Review
  - ii. Program updates during COVID
  - iii. Denholm Update
  - iv. Review of Year Ahead BOD Schedule and Topics
  
- VI. **Executive Director Performance Review ,** *Noreen Johnson Smith, Board Chair*
  - i. Timeline and Process

### Next meetings:

- *Program Committee October 1<sup>st</sup> 2:00PM*
- *Board Meeting: October 19<sup>th</sup>, 5:00PM*
- *Executive Committee November 9<sup>th</sup> 5:00PM*
- *Program Committee November 19<sup>th</sup> 2:00PM*

## **I. OPERATIONS, PROGRAM, FUNDING UPDATE**

### **WCAC Staffing**

- Head Start Fall Reopening of Webster and Southbridge begins week of 9/21.
- Denholm staff is working in office on a schedule of maximum 50% capacity on any given day with set schedules.
- Healthy Families is continuing virtual visits and awaiting approval from funders to restart home visits.
- We are continuing to support work from home practices and providing tools for employees to continue to work from home when possible.

### **Worcester/South County Based COVID Relief Efforts**

#### **Hot Meals Program**

Used \$10,000 from DHCD/MassCAP Special Project funding for Food Insecurity to expand access to hot meals for COVID+ residents of Main South. Our funding and other pooled funds helped to support delivery of more than 5000 hot meals to 143 households and support five local restaurants.

#### **Worcester Together/MA COVID Relief Fund**

##### **Housing Relief**

WCAC received \$135,000 to support housing relief for individuals and households impacted by COVID. For WCAC's part, since we do not offer housing counselling services, nor do we manage housing funds such as RAFT or ERMA, we will be using the \$135,000 in relief dollars for rent relief OR utility arrearages for LIHEAP eligible clients (new and existing) and undocumented households. *We are also making warm referrals to RCAP, CMHA and WCHR.*

##### **South County COVID Relief**

WCAC has received \$100K to support our Early Education and Care families and clients in South County. To date we have been able to help more than 400 family members across our South County households by providing relief funds for food, diapers, formula, rent, phone, car payments, and wireless bills. We continue to expend these funds to help families in South County and are tracking needs via our case managers in Head Start, Early Head Start, and Healthy Families.

##### **Fish Family Foundation**

WCAC is fiscal sponsor for a set of funds from the Fish Family Foundation and a number of other funders in support of undocumented households. To date we have received \$400,000 to purchase and manage the distribution of 800 no fee gift cards for vulnerable households. We are working with referral partners to distribute the cards. The partners are Southeast Asian Coalition, Catholic Charities, Friendly House, and Ascentria. So far, we have helped nearly 2000 undocumented individuals and families.

##### **Volunteer Coordinator Position –Jointly hosted and Funded by WCAC, CHGW and WTF**

Worcester Community Action Council Worcester is partnering with the Coalition for a Healthy Greater and Worcester Together to fulfill a \$60K ten-month contract position (WCAC \$35K+WTF \$25K) to develop and manage a community volunteer system to support response, recovery and rebuilding efforts to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Jessica Reyes was hired on August 1<sup>st</sup>

to fill the role. She is working closely with partners to purchase and distribute cleaning supplies to families in need, track referrals and delivery of hot meals, managing volunteer coordination between organizations and families in needs, and will be helping to recruit volunteers for VITA to help sustain and expand the program.

### **Federal Stimulus Funding Update**

- *LIHEAP*- The Federal CARES ACT provides \$900,000M for the LIHEAP program. We were awarded \$2.1.07M as of 6/30/30.
- *CSBG*-Working on our CSBG Cares Act plan and budget. WCAC was awarded a total of \$951,000 for COVID relief to spend between FY20 and FY22. We are working with the Program Committee and community partners to develop a coherent approach for use of these funds and to meet the needs of people as identified in our pre COVID and active COVID community assessments. This included the development and design of the Resiliency Center.

### **Additional Funding Sources**

- *United Way of Central MA-\$45K*
  - LIHEAP: Approved for a total of \$45K (applied for \$60K; CMHA received \$15K) from Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program and EFSP CARES Act funding.
- *United Way South Central MA-*
  - Awarded: \$5K to expand VITA in South County and \$4K for LIHEAP outreach
- *Hannaford Foods Whole Health Funding Initiative*
  - Awarded \$15K for food security across early education and care programs bringing donations to our virtual food pantry to nearly \$35,000.

### **Policy/Advocacy**

- Working closely with MassCAP on the FY21 Budget process with a focus on prioritizing public policy around race equity and racial justice, early education and care, LIHEAP and VITA.
- Working with Workforce Solutions Group to plan the annual Jobs Summit, which will feature Dr. Mattie Castile as a panelist with a focus on youth employment and the City's partnership with WCAC.
- Working with the Logistics Group of the Worcester Together Coalition on issues relating to housing and food insecurity.

## **II. DENHOLM UPDATE**

- After seeking and vetting recommendations for a commercial appraiser, we hired Howard S. Dono Associates to appraise WCAC's Condo, including units 200, 250 and 280
- An appraiser conducted a walk through on 9/9/20. We anticipated a full appraisal to be presented within 30 days
- Exclusive Right to Sell Listing Agreement has been signed by 11 owners to date
- 9/10/20 Several Denholm nonprofits met again with Katie Crock, Craig Blais of WBDC, Peter Dunn from the City/WRA and Jill Dagillis who has been hired by Katie Crock and WBDC to manage a project that included steering a process for an eminent domain taking of the Denholm Building and potentially co locating nonprofits at 18 Chestnut Street owned by Katie Crock.