

Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
February 14, 2017

The Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc. Board of Directors meeting was called to order by Chair L. Vonasek at 6:30 pm at Tri-Valley Administrative Office in Crookston, MN.

Board members present were: L. Vonasek, G. Willhite, L. Hall, S. Kjono, S. Vonesh, J. Boerger-Wilder, J. Gerszewski, G. Burris, M. Gunderson, and M. Melting-Ogard.

Staff members present were: J. Carlson, M. Hams, and D. Littlefield.

J. Gerszewski moved to approve the revised Consent Agenda of Adopt Agenda, January 10, 2017, meeting minutes, January 19, 2017, Executive Committee minutes, and January Status Report. Second by M. Gunderson. Motion carried.

J. Carlson presented the Chief Executive Officer report.

- Predevelopment work is progressing on the Agassiz Townhomes project so that we'll be prepared when funds become available. The Greater Minnesota Housing Fund is covering many of the predevelopment costs through an unsecured loan. The Director from Three Rivers Community Action shared that Minnesota Housing fully supports the project and is working to help fill the gap created by the change in tax credit pricing.
- Tri-Valley continues to offer support to the Downtown Crookston Development Partnership (DCDP). The DCDP is a new nonprofit in Crookston and Tri-Valley has offered meeting space and technical assistance to the DCDP board.
- The "Rewriting the Rural Narrative: the Brain Gain of Rural America" symposia, sponsored by Tri-Valley and the NW MN Council of Collaboratives, was held in Thief River Falls and Crookston on February 7 and 8. Attendance was excellent with over 200 people participating, including M. Kroulik, S. Kjono, G. Burris, and J. Carlson. The event shared good concepts backed up with real data that shows there has been a gain in rural population. The Board discussed the possibility of another event such as this focusing on housing (perhaps partnering with the NW MN Council of Collaboratives).

L. Hall moved to accept the Chief Executive Officer report. Second by G. Burris. Motion carried.

M. Hams provided a Community Services Program update. The program has been partnering with the Bremer Foundation to help with the integration of international refugees into the East Grand Forks community. As it's obviously difficult for people not familiar with Minnesota winters and culture to ease into apartment life, the program has been teaming with immigrant tenants to provide training on daily apartment life. The training has helped to reduce tenant/landlord disputes and misunderstandings. An important part of the training is community involvement and how they can give back to the East Grand Forks community. Most arrive on a refugee visa and work toward

citizenship. The Community Services program offers a citizenship class for those working toward that goal (the next class is March 9th). While normally only a 1-year grant, the Bremer Foundation awarded a 2-year grant to the Tri-Valley Community Services program, which confirms the confidence they have in our program.

J. Carlson directed the Board's attention to the Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council meeting minutes from February 6, 2017, and the Head Start Annual Report.

The Migrant and Seasonal Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council will meet in Alexandria, MN, on Saturday, April 29.

J. Carlson reported that the Administration for Children & Families audit finding from the FY 2014 audit (Tri-Valley did not meet its federal Head Start funded enrollment) has been closed and no further action is required.

J. Gerszewski moved to accept the Head Start, Child and Family Programs report. Second by G. Willhite. Motion carried.

There was no Senior Programs Advisory Committee report.

J. Carlson reviewed the 2017-2018 Strategic Work Plan. After discussion, G. Willhite moved to approve the Tri-Valley 2017-2018 Strategic Plan. Seconded by G. Burriss. Motion carried.

Board approval was requested to apply for the Minnesota Department of Education, Head Start, Child, & Family Programs, Pathway II grant in the amount of \$525,000 that will help sustain the quality and progress made at 9 centers over the past year, and will allow for the provision of coaching and mentoring support to children, staff, and families, and enhance emotional competence.

S. Kjono moved to approve. Second by J. Boerger-Wilder. Motion carried.

J. Carlson shared that there is currently a bill on the Senate floor that will move Pathway II to Pathway I. If the bill passes, it will allow a path for children to more easily get into preschools, however the planning and enhancement of coaching and mentoring may be affected as these aspects of the services are more rigorously managed under Pathway II.

Board approval was requested to apply for the Corporation for National and Community Service, Senior Programs – Foster Grandparent Program, Continuation of the Foster Grandparent Program in NW Minnesota in the amount of \$256,811.

L. Hall moved to approve. Second by S. Vonesh. Motion carried.

J. Carlson proposed a change to the Tri-Valley Safety Committee, as requested by Ashley Peterson, Human Resources Director. Currently, Sherri Berg is the Safety Officer

and we are proposing this be changed to assign Amanda Roue, Human Resources Coordinator, to this role.

J. Gerszewski moved to approve. Second by L. Hall. Motion carried.

The annual Bylaws review has commenced. J. Carlson asked Board members to review the Bylaws and suggest updates for the next meeting. Current Tri-Valley Bylaws state that J. Carlson and 2 Board members are authorized to sign checks, however D. Diedrich is the only current Board member (in addition to J. Carlson) with a signature on file at Bremer Bank. Consequently, either additional Board members will need to have their signatures authorized with Bremer Bank or we will have to change our Bylaws. No decision is required at this time and discussion on this topic will continue.

J. Carlson suggested that Tri-Valley continue our membership with the NW MN Council of Collaboratives, which is comprised of over 50 members including school districts and special education districts, and agencies in the areas of social services, public health, mental health, and corrections. It's a unique group and should be supported. Dues are \$1,350.

J. Carlson reported on current Tri-Valley AO facilities issues. There is a lot of deferred maintenance. The current furnaces are over 20 years old and do not meet fresh air requirements for the current occupancy load. An HVAC engineering firm will have recommendations and estimates available mid-March. Accessibility issues continue as there is no elevator. Roof replacement costs are being assessed. We should continue to be cognizant of these issues and open to the idea of moving to another location. L. Vonasek, M. Kroulik, G. Willhite, and G. Burris will form a building committee to explore options.

The next meeting will be held at the Tri-Valley Administrative Office on Tuesday, March 14, 2017, at 6:30pm.

G. Burris moved to adjourn the meeting. Second by S. Vonesh. Adjourned at 7:45pm.

Adjournment.

Respectfully submitted,

Shawna Peterson
Secretary of the Board

SP: DEL