

Mid Michigan Community Action Agency, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
1/22/2026

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jones, Nancy
Reder, William
Vernier, Joel
Michell, Tim
Weimer, Suzi
Hoefling, David*
Bontekoe, Doug
Wilton, Kathy
Begick, Vaughn
Winarski, Tom
Schuelke, Larry

MEMBERS ABSENT

Gage, Norm
Goulet, Carol
Johnson, Ruth
Raap, Joan
Nash, Charles
Ortega, Theresa
Sims, Barbara
Byard, Tracy
Roberts, Debbie
Ryder, Diane
Dancer, Jennifer

STAFF PRESENT

Polega, Mark
Carson, Amyee
VanderElzen, Stephanie
Mills, Johnny
Rohlman, Eva
Loomis, Courtney
Johnson, Brian
Scott, Santana
Nelson, Kaylee
Stephenson, Heather

* denotes virtual attendance

CONSULTANT

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson William Reder called the meeting to order at: 4:30 p.m. at 1574 E. Washington Rd., Farwell, Michigan.

Roll call was taken and a quorum established.

Motion Jones/Vernier to excuse absent board members from meeting.
Motion unanimously approved.

Motion Wilton/Jones to seat Allitta Hren on the Board of Directors as a representative from Mecosta County.
Motion unanimously approved.

MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING:

Motion Vernier/Wilton to review and approve the December 2025 Minutes.
Motion unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Peggy Selmon: Thank you for the food that comes to our church – but I heard that they were going to move our distribution site. I was wondering if there was any possible way we could keep the distribution site at our Christ Temple church. I am concerned about those who do not have cars, who would have to ask someone else to get their food boxes.

Eva: As I understand it, all of our distribution sites are voluntary – the site themselves asks us to be there. As I understand, the Christ Temple Church is busy at the time of distribution.

Peggy Selmon: I am on the council for that church, and we do not have anything on Wednesdays. We have a lot of people who come to pick up food here.

Eva Rohlman: Our Community Impact Director who oversees the food programs is not here this week, but we will check in with her to see what is happening.

Mark Polega: I will make sure that your information is sent over to Cherri. If you want to provide your information to Santana in the chat, we can get back with you and give you more information as we gather more.

POLICY COUNCIL REPORT

Stephanie VanderElzen

Motion Jones/Michell to accept Policy Council Report.
Motion unanimously approved.

PLANNING & EVALUATION COMMITTEE REPORT:

Nancy Jones

Monitoring Report for Review (For Approval)

Discussion Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Bureau of Community Action and Economic Opportunity (BCAEO) Weatherization PY25 IJA Quality Assurance Monitoring Report & Agency Response – Johnny Mills: This is our technical assistance monitoring for weatherization – we had a monitoring last year and since we have grown in size, they decided to split that up into two parts for this year. This is for Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act funding. We had very good results from our quality assurance monitoring, we had zero findings, 3 concerns, and one observation, which were minimal.

FY26 STAR Assessment Results and Network Risk Tolerance—Mark Polega: This is an assessment that the Bureau of Community Action does for us every year. This is monitoring that they do quietly – they do not ask us for anything and they observe and score us. This year we scored 4.57 stars out of 5 which means we are a low-risk, high performing grantee.

Motion Jones/Wilton to review and approve the following monitoring report:

1. Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Bureau of Community Action and Economic Opportunity (BCAEO)
 - a. Weatherization PY25 IJA (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act) Quality Assurance Monitoring Report & Agency Response (MVID 3896)
 - b. FY26 STAR (State Technical Assessment Report) Assessment Results and Network Risk Tolerance (MVID 4019)

Motion unanimously approved.

Early Childhood Services:

Discussion Early Head Start and Head Start Director Reports
Amyee Carson:

- For the month of December, we were fully enrolled for Early Head Start which was not necessarily easy with a short month. Our staff worked really hard to make sure those spots were filled before the holiday break. We are at 18% of kids enrolled with disabilities.

- We had seven events between the five counties.
- We are still looking for an Early Childhood Services Nurse, which we have had some interviews and applications come in and we are feeling better about getting that position filled.
- WIC has a 90% show rate for December. For Whole Family Programming – we are looking at internal pieces in the organization to see where we are missing opportunities for internal referrals.

Stephanie VanderElzen:

- December was a short month for Head Start, with the classrooms closed around the holidays and for parent teacher conferences. Our staff meet with parents twice a year for parent teacher conferences. I am still looking for an Early Childhood Services Nurse and Head Start Regional Coordinator. For the Great Start Readiness Program, we were at 90% enrollment and 16.9% of children enrolled have disabilities.
- We did have an allegation made in one of our classrooms, which I reported to the state and to the Office of Head Start. Child Protective Service came in and did an investigation, the parents knew the investigation was going on, but no details were shared. They quickly ended the investigation, and it was not substantiated, there were no comments on how we can improve on safety.

Discussion Policy Revision – Selection Criteria Form 2026-2027 and 2026-2027 Application
 Stephanie VanderElzen: Every year, we need to update our application for enrollment. The sample in your packet should actually say 2027. We just had minor formatting edits – we updated the year, and we added a criteria option for children who have been diagnosed and/or treated for mental health services, as well as for children who have a disable parent or guardian.
 The next forms are the criteria points that go along with the application, and we highlighted the changes. We changed the year, we increased the points for children who are experiencing homelessness and who are with foster families. We increased criteria points for our returning students and transitioners from Early Head Start, Every year we take a look at what criteria we’ve seen an increase in and we adjust the points based on that.

Motion Jones/Vernier to review and approve the following policy revisions:
 1. Policy Revision – Selection Criteria Form 2026-2027 and 2026-2027 Application
 Motion unanimously approved.

The following were received and filed:
 1. Directors’ Report
 2. Early Head Start Dashboard
 3. Head Start Dashboard

ECS/EHS time 20 mins

New Applications (For Approval)

Discussion Prosperity Now – 2026 VITA Support Fund
Mark Polega: I will fill in for Cherri here. VITA stands for Volunteer Income Tax Preparation, and this is additional funding that will help us support the tax prep program. We typically fund this program through a small Community Economic Development Association of Michigan grant. We have extended this program's operations, and this will help the program reach even more households.

Motion Jones/Winarski to review and approve the following new application:
1. Prosperity Now – 2026 VITA Support Fund - \$20,000
Motion unanimously approved.

Discussion National Head Start Association – GrowMoreGood Garden Grant
Amyee Carson: Santana Scott and I applied for this grant earlier this year. We are looking at putting vegetable gardens in Clare and providing supplies for affordable vegetable gardens with our families as well.

Motion Jones/Wilton to review and approve the following new application:
1. National Head Start Association – GrowMoreGood Garden Grant - \$5,000
Motion unanimously approved.

Continuation Applications (For Approval)

Discussion U.S Department of Veteran Affairs – Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)
Eva Rohlman: This is the time of year where we write our continuation grant for SSVF. We serve about 167 veterans across 12 counties. We have a subgrant with our sister agency, and they are interested in continuing to apply with us in the following year.

Motion Jones/Begick to review and approve the following continuation applications:
1. U.S Department of Veteran Affairs – Supportive Services for Veteran Families - \$1,226,175
Motion unanimously approved.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Joel Vernier

Brian Johnson: We are close to wrapping up the FY24 audit. We are working diligently to have FY24 finalized by the end of January, or early February at the latest. We want to start on FY25 as soon as possible once FY24 is wrapped up. Things are moving along well, and we only have a handful of items left.

Motion Vernier/Jones to accept the Fiscal Year to Date Financial Reports
Motion unanimously approved.

- Motion Vernier/Jones to approve the following contracts & awards:
1. Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)
 - a. \$255,000 increase – Weatherization Deferral (WxDEF) – 10/01/2025 to 9/30/2026
 - b. \$518,093 – Weatherization LIHEAP (WXLiheap) – 10/01/2025 to 9/30/2026
- Motion unanimously approved.

RESOLUTIONS

Mark Polega: When we transferred our retirement plan to Mutual of America, it enrolls employees on the plan at the first new quarter after their eligibility date. Our agency's policy has always enrolled staff after completing one year of service and 1,000 hours worked. We are amending our adopted plan with Mutual of America so that it follows our long standing policy, to reduce administrative burden on our end.

- Motion Jones/Michell to approve resolution #1-2026-R04, Amendment Number 02 to the Employee Retirement Plan.
- _____12_____ ayes, _____0_____ nays
- Motion unanimously approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

N/A

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mark Polega: I like to come into the new year and start thinking about what I want to accomplish in the year ahead. I am looking forward to doing some work with my Leadership team. I have a fantastic group of experts around the table, and they bring diverse perspectives and opinions. We have a leadership retreat scheduled in March to work with a consultant to work on collaboration and communication skills. We are going to put the work in to get more in sync as a team.

As an organization, I want us to adopt Pathways to Excellence. Pathways puts us on the road to go above and beyond our Organizational Standards. My aim is to achieve the bronze level in 2026, and continue working up from there.

I am really looking to bolster our some of our administrative processes and workflows. We are a large agency. We have an incredible group of administrators, and I see some areas where we can improve our capacity so that everyone is trained on critical workflows. My main focus is our Finance Department. It is my goal to start the hiring process for the Finance Director this year. We have been able to bounce back from a tough spot and we have righted the ship. I am looking to capitalize on that momentum and hire a Finance Director so that we can have an expert in place to look at the long-term fiscal health of our agency.

It is our hope that we will have Karl Eck from Wipfli to present you the FY24 Audit in February so we can have that wrapped up, as Brian had mentioned earlier. And then we can get to working on the FY25 audit right on time.

We had a webinar with David Bradley, our lobbyist in Washington D.C. We are up against that January 31st deadline when federal funding expires. The House and the Senate have come to

some agreements on spending, and we are moving forward with cautious optimism that we will be secured for the remainder of FY26. We will be flat funded, but in this environment, this is a win.

Our thrift store in Essexville, the Cat's Meow, is looking to fill the store with donations. If you have anything to donate, feel free to bring it with you to the board meeting, you can also donate to any of our offices and we will get it to our store.

STAFF/DIRECTOR REPORTS

Written reports provided.

Meeting adjourned at ___5:57___ p.m.

The next regular meeting of the MMCAA board will be held February 26 at 4:30PM

Location: 1574 E. Washington Road, Farwell, Michigan

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Jones, Board Secretary