

Mid Michigan Community Action Agency, Inc.  
Board of Directors Meeting  
10/23/2025

MEMBERS PRESENT

Gage, Norm  
Jones, Nancy  
Reder, William  
Vernier, Joel  
Goulet, Carol  
Johnson, Ruth  
Hoefling, David  
Wilton, Kathy  
Begick, Vaughn  
Winarski, Tom  
Schuelke, Larry  
Ryder, Diane

*\* denotes virtual attendance*

MEMBERS ABSENT

Michell, Tim  
Weimer, Suzi  
Raap, Joan  
Nash, Charles  
Ortega, Theresa  
Sims, Barbara  
Bontekoe, Doug  
Byard, Tracy  
Roberts, Debbie  
Adams, Greg

CONSULTANT

Dancer, Jennifer\*

STAFF PRESENT

Polega, Mark  
Carson, Amyee  
VanderElzen, Stephanie  
Rohlman, Eva  
Swanstra, Cherri  
Loomis, Courtney  
Johnson, Brian  
Scott, Santana  
Nelson, Kaylee  
Kosnik, Jordan

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

**MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**

Motion        Vernier/Jones to review and approve the September 2025 Minutes.  
Motion unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

N/A

**POLICY COUNCIL REPORT**

*Stephanie VanderElzen*

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

## PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT:

*Nancy Jones*

### Monitoring Report for Review (For Approval)

*Discussion* U.S Department of Veterans Affairs Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Corrective Action Plan  
Eva Rohlman: The report from the Department of Veterans Affairs Supportive Services was in your packet last month; this is a corrective action plan addressing that. There were some gaps in our documentation, and we are tightening up our policy manual around this. We are waiting to hear back on our disagreement around spending on backpacks. We are making changes on documentation when Veterans leave the program. Our training was not spelled out in detail for them, so we are changing that. We have already made these changes and submitted them.

*Motion* Jones/Wilton to review and approve the following monitoring report:  
1. U.S Department of Veterans Affairs Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Corrective Action Plan  
Motion unanimously approved.

### Early Childhood Services:

*Discussion* Early Head Start and Head Start Director Reports  
Amyee Carson: For Early Head Start, we finished our corrective action plan around addressing a financial closeout document and fingerprinting every staff person. However, due to the government shut-down, there is no one in the office to receive the paperwork – we will be waiting to find out more. Our Program Nurse gave her resignation, and we have some interviews to go through and fingerprinting to get done to fill that position. We reported full enrollment and we used 4 of our slots we set aside for homeless and foster care children. Our disabilities numbers went down, but we transitioned many kids with disabilities on to preschool. We are getting more and more children with individualized plans – which means that everyone is doing better at early intervention. We are doing more crisis intervention and pulling in community partners. Appointments are being kept at the WIC clinic. We are looking at doing another crockpot cooking class in the clinic. For Whole Family Services – we are looking at where families are receiving multiple services and how we can target and plan around that.  
Stephanie VanderElzen: Our preschoolers are getting more comfortable in the classrooms. Family Service Associates and our Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) Coordinator are working hard to make sure we are at 100%. We have deadlines coming up for vision, and dental screenings. We are looking to fill a few positions. Our enrollment numbers and our waitlist numbers are in the report. The first Information Memorandum – Fiscal Year 2026 Monitoring Process for Head Start Recipients, outlines the different steps for the process and all the pieces for this year's protocol for review. The next one Addressing Vacant Slots Due to Chronic Absenteeism in Head Start Programs – this is the first time Head Start has put out guidance around absenteeism.

The following were received and filed:

1. Directors' Report
2. Early Head Start Dashboard
3. Head Start Dashboard
4. Fiscal Year 2026 Monitoring Process for Head Start Recipients (ACF-OHS-IM-25-05)
5. Addressing Vacant Slots Due to Chronic Absenteeism in Head Start Programs (ACF-OHS-IM-25-06)

ECS/EHS time 17 mins

Continuation Applications (For Approval)

*Discussion* Community Foundation of Oceana County Wishlist  
Cherri: This is a wish list for Oceana County residents that Santana Scott helped us write. We asked for funds to pay our Housing Counselors to do financial capabilities workshops, we asked for funds for personal needs products for our Oceana County residents. We will have some personal needs products in our offices and food pantries. We also asked for funds for bus passes.

*Motion* Hoefling/Begick to review and approve the following continuation applications:  
1. Community Foundation of Oceana County Wishlist - \$4,000  
Motion unanimously approved.

*Discussion* FY26 Strategic Communications Plan  
Eva Rohlman: You have a summary of the plan in front of you – if you would like a full 15 page plan, I will certainly give you a copy. We have 5 main communication priorities – and the theme this year is Community Connection. Our Communications Manager, Coralie Kuziak, created this plan and listed priorities and deadlines around each priority. We do plan on redesigning the website so that it is more user-friendly to the public. The communication staff is also doing more with the Outreach Councils and planning more community events. There is a section on how we communicate externally and capturing the stories of participants. We want to create a storytelling kit so that staff know how to talk about these stories, so that we can do so consistently as an agency.

*Motion* Jones/Wilton to review and approve the FY26 Strategic Communications Plan as presented (**Organizational Standard 2.3**).  
Motion unanimously approved.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:**

*Joel Vernier*

*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 & Human Services
  - a. **\$1,378,527.00** – Community Services Block Grant 2026 (CSBG) – 10/01/2025 to 09/30/2026
  - b. **\$46,592.00** – WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor (WIC BFPC) – 10/01/2025 to 09/30/2026
  - c. **\$2,443,859.00** – Weatherization Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (WxBIL) – 10/01/2025 to 09/30/2026
  - d. **\$135,000.00** – Michigan Energy Assistance-EAP (MEAP) – 10/01/2025 to 09/30/2026
  - e. **\$162,570.00** – Diaper Bank – 10/01/2025 to 09/30/2026
  - f. **\$323,760.00** – WIC Supplemental – 10/01/2025 to 09/30/2026
  - g. **\$1,583,253.00** – Weatherization DOE (WxDOE) – 10/01/2025 to 06/30/2026
  - h. **\$154,071.00** – Master Leasing Family Shelter Pilot (MLFSP) – 10/01/2025 to 09/30/2026
  - i. **\$529,455.00** – Weatherization Supplemental (WxSUPP) – 10/01/2025 to 09/30/2026
  - j. **\$850,000.00** – Emergency Housing Support Funds (EHSF) – 10/01/2025 to 09/30/2026
  - k. **\$574,931.00** – Housing & Homeless Services (RRH) – 10/01/2025 to 09/30/2026
  - l. **\$186,874.00** – Water Affordability – 10/01/2025 to 09/30/2026
  - m. **\$682,310.00** - Community Services Block Grant 2025 (CSBG)
2. Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA)
  - a. **\$132,000.00** – Steps 2 Stability – 09/01/2025 to 08/31/2026
3. Michigan Veteran Affairs Agency
  - a. **Extension of time** – Michigan Veteran Homelessness Prevention Grant – 10/01/2025 to 09/30/2026
4. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
  - a. **\$1,226,175.00** – Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) – 10/01/2025 to 09/30/2026

Motion unanimously approved.

Motion

Vernier/Gage to review and approve the 401k Audit as presented.

Motion unanimously approved.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

Motion

Gage/Hoefling to approve resolution #10-2025-R01 – Northeast Michigan Community Service Area (NEMSCA) – Head Start - \$2,551,370

12 ayes, 0 nays

Motion unanimously approved.

Motion Vernier/Hoefling to approve resolution #10-25-R02 Executive Director's Succession Plan (**Organizational Standard 4.5**).  
\_\_\_12\_\_\_ ayes, \_\_\_0\_\_\_ nays  
Motion unanimously approved.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### *Discussion* Executive Director's Succession Plan

Mark Polega: This is a good thing for us to have and is required of us from our federal funders. This is in case something happens to me, or if I am absent for an extended period of time. We need a plan in place so that we can ensure that the work we are doing goes on in my absence. I have developed a plan in collaboration with my staff that breaks down my duties in two pieces, programming and administrative. Amyee Carson will be taking over the programmatic side and Eva Rohlman will be taking over the administrative portion. This plan will grant them co-signatory authority – this ensure that both programmatic and administrative sides are in sync. The plan lays out what each role is, and the communication paths.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mark Polega: I have been focusing on the uncertainty around the current federal shutdown and the potential ways that it could impact us. This shutdown has a different feel when compared to those in the past. There does not seem to be much movement towards a resolution. We did receive news today that SNAP benefits will be paused effective November 1<sup>st</sup>. While not a direct monetary impact to us, it is a vast impact to those we serve in our communities. This is going to put pressure on our legislators on both sides of the table. We are making plans for how that impacts us – as an agency that people turn towards during times of crisis. We could have thousands of community members without access to food. Cherri Swanstra is working with her staff in all our counties to pool resources and food pantries – so that when people start reaching out to us, we will have places for them to go. We will be working on making sure our Clare County Food Pantry is well stocked. We are going to use the funds we have as private donations to buy more food for our pantry and help stock the food pantry network. If this path continues, there will be a huge need.

We are waiting to hear news about our WIC clinic. The administration moved tariff funds around, and there has not been much discussion around funding for WIC clinics.

We are seeing delays in food being delivered to our Food Warehouse. Fortunately, our Food Warehouse Manager, Tracy Dunn, and Cherri planned ahead and ordered more food. Ordering food through the USDA and food commodities is a science and an art – there is a tremendous amount of planning and foresight when it comes to ordering, especially when it needs to be done 8 months in advance.

It has been a tense time for the team – and it has been hard on our staff. We will be gathering together tomorrow at our All Staff Training, and it will be good to for everyone's morale to be in the same room.

**STAFF/DIRECTOR REPORTS**

Written reports provided.

Meeting adjourned at \_\_\_5:45\_\_\_ p.m.

The next regular meeting of the MMCAA board will be held December 11th at 4:30PM

Location: 1574 E. Washington Road, Farwell, Michigan

Respectfully submitted,

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Nancy Jones, Board Secretary