

Northeast Michigan Community Service Agency, Inc.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Michigan Works! Office, Alpena, MI
January 7, 2005

The meeting was called to order by President Dale Huggler at 12:50 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Stuart Bartlett, Jim Bricker, Herb Makima, Frank Cowger, Bob Cudney, Mike Davis, Ann Denis, Bill Ellingboe, Bob Harden, Rev. Bill Hipwood, Dale Huggler, Rev. R.C. Knight, Jean Kroll, Dawn Lawrence, Suzanne Linkins, Jack Mahank, Tehea Minke, Boyden Olson, Clyde Soucie, Bob Spencer, Gerald Wall, Gary Wozniak and Leonard Zolnierok

Excused: Jim Charboneau, Donna Dietz, Daniel Marcrum, Joseph Pellens, Shelia Phillips, Dianna Schafer, and Walter Walsh

Absent: Terry Beardslee, Pauline Hall and Pete Hennard

Quorum present.

President Huggler welcomed Herb Makima who was sitting in for Jim Charboneau. Jim is currently in the hospital recovering from a stroke.

Staff Members Present:

John Briggs, Laura Budreau, Kathy Goddard, Karen Godi, Diane Price, Sue Schuler, Lisa Slupecki, John Swise and Michelle Smith

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Motion by Rev. Bill Hipwood to approve the minutes from the December meeting. Support by Mike Davis. All ayes, Motion carried.

Bob Spencer led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance. Rev. Bill Hipwood provided reflections.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Rev. Bob Knight introduced his wife, Rev. Bill Hipwood introduced his wife, Herb Makima introduced himself as an alternate for Jim Charboneau, Gerald Wall introduced his wife, Tehea Minke introduced her grandmother, Boyden Olson introduced his wife, Frank Cowger introduced his wife, Suzanne Linkins introduced her grandmother, and Mike Davis introduced his wife.

Public Comment – none

COMMUNICATION

President Huggler read a letter from Steve Rawlings thanking the board for letting him speak at the December Board meeting.

There will be a Policy Council/Board training on January 19th at Forwards in West Branch. The training will be held from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Rev. Bill Hipwood suggested that a per diem be approved for those members who choose to attend. All Board members were invited. John Swise

explained the training topic and encouraged the Program Planning & Evaluation Committee and Board Officers to attend. John asked that anyone interested in attending should contact Karen Godi.

Motion by Rev. Bill Hipwood to approve payment of a per diem for Board members who attend the training. Support by Mike Davis. All ayes, Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Head Start Policy Council – Tehea Minke

The Council discussed head lice and the various myths of how it is spread. It was decided that the Head Lice Policy will remain as it was written. Lance Way was introduced as the new Mid Michigan Liaison to the Policy Council.

Regional Advisory Council – Rev. Bill Hipwood

The Council met in December and accepted the resignation of Larry Sabin with regret. A resolution regarding the MI Electric Choice Program was discussed and adopted. Sue Schuler reported that the State budget is a mess and that all of the agencies may lose as much as 5% of their funds. The Family Independence Agency will be changing their name to the Department of Human Services at some point.

The Program Planning and Evaluation Committee discussed the MI Electric Choice resolution that was provided to all members in their packets and recommended its adoption by the full board. The resolution was provided to the Board by Steve Rawlings at the December meeting.

Motion by Rev. Bill Hipwood to adopt the MI Electric Choice Resolution as presented and have it sent forward to the legislators. Support by Frank Cowger.

Roll Call Vote: Stuart Bartlett, yes, Jim Bricker, yes, Herb Makima, yes, Frank Cowger, yes, Bob Cudney, yes, Mike Davis, yes, Ann Denis, yes, Bill Ellingboe, yes, Bob Harden, yes, Rev. Bill Hipwood, yes, Dale Huggler, yes, Rev. R.C. Knight, yes, Jean Kroll, yes, Dawn Lawrence, yes, Suzanne Linkins, yes, Jack Mahank, yes, Tehea Minke, yes, Boyden Olson, yes, Clyde Soucie, yes, Bob Spencer, yes, Gerald Wall, yes, Gary Wozniak, yes and Leonard Zolnierek, yes.
All yes, Motion carried.

Volunteer Program Advisory Groups:

Senior Companion Program – Rev. Bob Knight

Rev. Knight thanked Jean Kroll for giving his report last month. Rev. Knight announced his resignation from the Senior Companion Advisory Group. No meeting, no report.

Foster Grandparent Program – Jean Kroll

No meeting, no report.

Client Services Advisory Council – Boyden Olson

No meeting, no report

Personnel Committee – Clyde Soucie

No meeting, no report

Membership Committee – Frank Cowger

No meeting, no report

Program Planning and Evaluation Committee – Rev. Bill Hipwood

Report given earlier on the agenda.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Directors Report:

Financial Report –

No report.

Program Information Report – Earned Income Tax Credit Program – Michelle Smith

Michelle began by giving the definition for Earned Income Tax Credit and stating that it is a tax credit for low-income working individuals and families who have received some earned income for the year. The credit is not new, however NEMCSA received funds for the first time last tax year to prepare tax forms for individuals who qualify for the credit. NEMCSA's EITC program started last year with a short training session that took place just days before the start of tax season. Rev. Bob Knight was a wonderful resource and worked well with a nervous staff that was starting a new program with only limited training. Michelle reviewed some statistics from the first year of operation as well as a client success story. In the first year of operation, NEMCSA was not authorized to offer e-file so all returns had to be mailed to the IRS. This year the agency has received authorization to e-file returns which will allow for quicker refunds for the clients. Michelle reviewed the eligibility guidelines necessary to qualify for assistance from the program and indicated that three staff persons have been trained to prepare returns. Services will be made available throughout the NEMCSA service area via previously scheduled appointments at a NEMCSA sub-office or a Michigan Works! location. Callers will be pre-screened for eligibility and then scheduled for an appointment to have their return completed. Michelle indicated that she will be working in coordination with other local agencies and other NEMCSA programs to conduct outreach for this program. Michelle distributed program brochures which included qualification rules and contact information. Michelle stressed that the program was put in place for low-income individuals and families who cannot afford to pay for such service. Business and/or complicated tax returns will be turned away.

The next Board meeting will be held on February 4th at the NEMCSA main office.

Motion by Rev. Bill Hipwood to adjourn the meeting at 1:36 p.m. Supported by Clyde Soucie. All ayes, Motion carried.

Date Prepared: January 7, 2005

Date Approved: _____

Board Secretary

Date