

AGENDA: OTTAWA COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY
Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, June 18th, 2025 10:00am
12251 James Street Holland, MI 49424-Main Conference Room

Mission: Ottawa County Community Action Agency aims to reduce the effects of financial hardships by promoting self-sufficiency and empowering individuals and families to achieve economic independence.

I. Call to Order

II. Consent Items

- A. Approval of minutes from February 19th meeting (pages 2-3)
- B. Approval of Fair Housing Policy (page 4)

III. Reports

- I. Finance (OS 8.7)
 - 1. Fiscal Report; Update on fiscal status
- II. Program Oversight and Development (OS 5.9)
 - 1. Program reports (pages 5-7)
- III. Advisory Board
 - a. Debra Deater – Consumer Sector

IV. Old business

- A. Weatherization grant funding opportunity results
- B. Board Survey result (pages 8-10)
- C. Branding
- D. CSFP

V. New Business

- A. Walk for Warmth planning for 2026
- B. Walk for Warmth usage updates
- C. Funding updates
 - A. County-related
 - B. Six Thinking Hats activity and progress

VI. Public Comment

VII. Adjourn

Next Meeting: August 20th, 2025 10am at 12251 James Street Holland, MI 49424- Main Conference Room

**OTTAWA COUNTY COMMUNITY
ACTION AGENCY ADVISORY BOARD**

Mission Statement: Ottawa County Community Action Agency aims to reduce the effects of financial hardships by promoting self-sufficiency and empowering individuals and families to achieve economic independence.

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: February 19, 2025

TIME: 10:00 am

LOCATION: 12251 James Street, Holland

PRESENT: Rosa Hernandez, Brittney Brown, Danielle Weeks, Esther Fifelski, Molly Brouwer, Alison El-Cassabgui-virtual

STAFF: Jennifer Brozowski, Emma Bryant, Barb Koning, Megan Kwantes, AnaSue Jaramillo-colon, Maria Gutierrez

GUESTS: Tina Duoibes & Brianna Conway - GrandPR

QUORUM: Yes

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Jennifer Brozowski. Everyone went around and shared their name and role with OCCAA.

Consent Items

- A. Meeting minutes from December 11, 2024, were approved.
- B. Approval of Alison El-Cassabgui for Chair of the Advisory Board.
- C. Approval of Ester Fifelski for Co-Chair of the Advisory Board.

Committee Reports

- A. Finance
 - a. The financial report was included in the board packet.
 - b. OCCAA received increased funding for the Reach & Resiliency, DOE, and LIHEAP grants.
 - c. Short discussion on fiscal year vs. grant years for OCCAA
- B. Program Oversight and Development Reports
 - a. Reports were provided in the board packet and were reviewed at the meeting.
 - b. No questions or discussions.

- C. Advisory Board
 - a. No updates or discussion

Old Business

- A. Walk for Warmth
 - a. Discussion of the shared google sheets to remind board members to sign up to volunteer at the event.
 - b. Discussion on the assistance needed with gathering in-kind donations and monetary donations from local businesses.
 - c. Rosa reported that West Michigan Works! Chili, Soup, and Salad Cookoff will be taking place on Wednesday, February 26.

New Business

- A. Programmatic Monitoring
 - a. Brief discussion on the process of weatherization and why/how some projects fall behind the deadline (ex. Needing a custom size fridge).
 - b. Rosa shared information about window warranties to hopefully help reduce some future weatherization costs.
- B. CSFP Updates
 - a. Discussion of why OCCAA is unable to continue providing the program and that June will be the last OCCAA distribution.
 - b. Molly asked for clarification on if we are unable to sustain it, how would other agencies sustain it. Leading to discussion about larger food banks and agencies having the infrastructure to support the operations.
- C. Grants
 - a. Discussion of how the current executive orders could effect OCCAA grants and funding. Currently, there is no effect and OCCAA is in communication with the National Partnership to stay up to date on changes.
 - b. OCCAA will keep board informed if there are any significant changes to federal grant status.

Public Comment

None

Adjourn @ 11:15 am

Next meeting is scheduled April 16, 2025, at 10:00 am at 12251 James Street in the main conference room.



Fair Housing Policy

OCCAA is committed to fair housing and will work aggressively to ensure that the housing and homeless programs fully comply with local, state, and federal fair housing laws. OCCAA has appointed Jennifer Brozowski, Program Director as the agency's fair housing contact person. This person has knowledge of fair housing and will attend applicable training to remain informed.

OCCAA will ensure that persons wishing to file a housing related complaint or concern will be referred to the Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Fair Housing Center of West Michigan. Persons wishing to file a complaint or concern that is employment related will be referred to the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Michigan Equal Employment Opportunity Office, and the Michigan Department of Civil Rights. Program Director will notify MSHDA if a complaint or concern is filed, which results in an adverse finding or determination, or as otherwise requested by MSHDA if a complaint or concern is filed.

OCCAA is accessible and barrier free. OCCAA will make every attempt to reasonably accommodate all customers with reasonable accommodation needs; Include the fair housing logo on relevant documents and all advertisements; Post a fair housing poster in a visible place; Secure and distribute the following housing materials to all applicants and customers:

- **MDCR, "Your Guide to Fair Housing"**
- **U.S. Department of Justice, "Sexual Harassment is Illegal. Fair Housing is Your Right."**

OCCAA will have at a minimum one hard copy of the HUD booklet "Fair Housing Equal Opportunity for All" to be used as an onsite reference. The booklet will be accessible to all staff and customers and can be found at:

- **MSHDA Fair Housing, HUD 1686 Fair Housing Booklet**

OCCAA will consider all applicants, customers and contractors based on qualifications and eligibility. No applicant, customer or contractor will be denied housing, services or a contract based on their race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, height, weight, marital status, familial status, and disability. Persons raising concerns regarding discrimination will not be retaliated against.

- Is committed to affirmative marketing and will identify their fair housing needs and barriers.
- Will address these needs and barriers by establishing a plan to resolve and meet fair housing needs.
- Is committed to providing safe, affordable, decent, and sanitary housing located in areas where people choose to live, or shelter that is safe, decent, and sanitary.

OCCAA Utility Assistance Statistics (FY 2024-2025)
May 2025

Grant		Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	YTD/Total
Walk for Warmth	Expenses	\$595	\$72	\$209	\$798	\$519	\$1,583	\$841	\$2,798					\$7,415
	Households	3	1	2	4	3	9	5	15					42
	Avg Payment	\$198	\$72	\$104	\$199	\$173	\$176	\$168	\$187	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$177
Water Affordability Grant	Expenses	\$2,748	\$799	\$2,410	\$2,113	\$2,608	\$2,470	\$1,625	\$2,552					\$17,326
	Households	4	4	13	9	11	9	7	7					64
	Avg Payment	\$687	\$200	\$185	\$235	\$237	\$274	\$232	\$365	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$271
MI Energy Assist Prog (\$38,000)	Expenses	\$816	\$215	\$767	\$4,066	\$1,015	\$0	\$3,470	\$1,588					\$11,936
	Households	2	1	2	8	5	0	11	4					33
	Avg Payment	\$408	\$215	\$383	\$508	\$203	\$0	\$315	\$397	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$362
MEAP - APP responsibility (part of \$38,000)	Expended	1,133	1,787	1,544	1,980	1,381	3,597	2,210	1,733					15,364
	Payments	9	11	13	13	19	21	20	20					126
	Avg Payment	\$126	\$162	\$119	\$152	\$73	\$171	\$110	\$87	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$122
ZBPW (\$5,000+)	Expenses	\$0	\$453	\$1,282	\$163	\$118	\$550	\$1,153	\$99					\$3,819
	Households	0	2	4	1	1	1	3	1					13
	Avg Payment	\$0	\$226	\$321	\$163	\$118	\$550	\$384	\$99	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$294
Holland BPW grant (\$50,000)	Expenses	\$0	\$1,382	\$909	\$466	\$4,525	\$3,119	\$0	\$0					\$10,401
	Households	0	4	4	2	12	10	0	0					32
	Avg Payment	\$0	\$345	\$227	\$233	\$377	\$312	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$325
HBPW C.A.P.	No. of appts.	6	11	7	9	8	9	5	1					56
Denials		7	6	1	2	0	1	7	2					26
FY 2024/25 Monthly Totals	Expenses	\$5,293	\$4,708	\$7,120	\$9,586	\$10,165	\$11,319	\$9,299	\$8,771	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$66,261
	Households	18	23	38	37	51	50	46	47	0	0	0	0	310
	Avg Payment	\$294	\$205	\$187	\$259	\$199	\$226	\$202	\$187	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$214
FY 2023/24 Monthly Totals	Expenses	\$8,300	\$4,860	\$4,459	\$5,956	\$7,425	\$16,127	\$6,588	\$5,484	\$9,691	\$18,686	\$7,164	\$7,446	\$102,184
	Households	48	36	29	36	35	54	36	28	44	60	37	39	482
	Avg Payment	\$173	\$135	\$154	\$165	\$212	\$299	\$183	\$196	\$220	\$311	\$194	\$191	\$212

OCCAA Energy Education, Home Energy 101 and Homeowner Programs

May 2025

Home Energy 101 and 201

	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	YTD
HE101 and 201	4	6	6	2	0	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	27

HQS Inspections

	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	YTD
HQS Inspections	7	7	16	17	15	8	5	8	0	0	0	0	83

Homeowner Programs

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	YTD	In Prog.
Home Rehab (Emergency)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Weatherization Prog.

Dept. of Energy (DOE) July-June Goal: 30	1	3	10	2	2	4	6	3					31	18
BIL Oct-Sept Goal: 68	1	1	0	0	0	1	2						5	9
LIHEAP Oct-Sept Goal: 10		1	1	0	2	1	6	3					14	13
Combined	2	5	11	2	4	6	14	6	0	0	0	0	50	40

	Individuals Served					Slots
	Holland-Zeeland (SW)	Jenison-Hudson (SE)	Tri-Cities (NW)	Coopers-Allend (NE)	County Total	
January-25	202	26	91	33	352	400
February-25	212	42	92	30	376	400
March-25	209	28	92	30	359	400
April-25	206	42	98	38	384	393
May-25	203	27	97	38	365	393
June-25	201	41	97	34	373	393
July-25	199	27	97	34	357	393
August-25					0	393
September-25					0	393
October-25					0	393
November-25					0	393
December-25					0	393
Calendar Year (2025) To-date Totals	1,432	233	664	237	2,566	

*trying to get a few more boxes out

Calendar Year 2024 Average/Month	199	32	78	33	341
Calendar Year 2024 Box Totals (annual)	2,388	378	931	400	4,097

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

	Households Served		Total Slots	Pounds Received	Value
	Mass Dist	Pantry			
(Second Quarter) Jan - March 2025	548	3,832	2,330	57,682	\$4,023.00
(Third Quarter) April - June 2025			2,330	72,567	\$4,156.65
(Fourth Quarter) July - Sept 2025			2,330		
(First Quarter) Oct - Dec 2025			2,330		
Calendar Year (2025) To Date Totals	548	3,832		130,249	\$8,179.65
Totals from Fiscal Year 2024					

Ottawa County Community Action Agency (OCCAA):		Count		Count
OCCAA has a positive image in the community.	Strongly agree	3	Agree	3
OCCAA works collaboratively with other agencies.	Strongly agree	4	Agree	2
OCCAA develops and maintains positive relationships with community partners.	Strongly agree	4	Agree	2
OCCAA is driven by a clear mission to assist low-income people to become self sufficient.	Strongly agree	4	Agree	2
OCCAA's current Strategic Plan (2017) has a clear plan for the future of the agency.	Strongly agree	2	Agree	4
OCCAA has competent, knowledgeable, and skilled staff.	Strongly agree	4	Agree	2
I have access to agency information and program reports.	Strongly agree	4	Agree	2
I have the tools/information/training I need to perform my board member duties.	Strongly agree	4	Agree	2

OCCAA understands common needs of low-income county residents.	Strongly agree	4	Agree	2
The OCCAA board seeks to advocate for low-income county residents.	Strongly agree	4	Agree	2
OCCAA has strong values and ethical principles.	Strongly agree	4	Agree	2
OCCAA is creative and innovative in developing and sustaining programs.	Strongly agree	3	Agree	3
Communication between the agency director/manager and the board is good.	Strongly agree	4	Agree	2

I am familiar with the agency's mission statement.	Yes	6	No	0
I understand my CAA Advisory Board duties.	Yes	6	No	0
I would recommend OCCAA to others as a good place to be a board member.	Yes	6	No	0
I am familiar with the all programs offered at OCCAA.	Yes	6	No	0

What would you say are OCCAA's major strengths as an organization?

retention of staff, empathy of customers, understanding of resources
The agency has staff that are passionate about the work they do .
Passion and kindness to assist individuals in need
Committed to helping the needy in Ottawa County. Very passionate staff.
Knowledge of programs; empathy
There is a strong need for the services they provide, and they try to meet those needs for our community

What would you say are OCCAA's major weaknesses or limitations?

Unpredictable funding sources, causing an excessive amount of effort on scraping together finances rather than providing services.
funding.
Not enough funding and too much control from county.
policy restrictions
Planning documentation can be more robust.
Limited staff

What are the top three issues you think OCCAA should focus on in its Strategic Planning?

1	2	3
Funding	Board Retention	Program (not enough staff)
Fundraising	Expanding Assistance	N/A
Long term finances	Community awareness	Outreach to maximize use of funding
Walk for Warmth	Community Outreach	Developing an annual cadence to plan yearly events
Operational efficiency and Resource allocation	Adapting to change outside org and how to shift funding	Staff and leadership development

Would you like to attend trainings (summer conference, CAA Association trainings, etc.)?

Yes	3
Maybe	2
No	1

What topics of training would interest you?

Financial
Volunteer management for boards - Program evaluation and impact measurement
Federal and state grant processes, procedures, and requirements

Are you happy with the current day and time of board meetings [Third Wednesday of even months at 10:30am (except Dec)]?

It is okay but not preferred.	3
No	1
Yes	2

The length of the meetings are: About the Right Length (all)

What are some additional items you would like to see in Board Meetings? Check all that apply.

More information about specific programs	3
More financial information	1
Staff spotlight	3
Activities such as icebreakers	1

Do you have anything else you would like to add or share?

The expectations of Board members seem to be changing from a focus on the services OCCAA provides to having Board members as fundraisers for Walk for Warmth. That is valid, but a change in focus that is not in my comfort zone, so I am questioning if I am still a good fit as a board member.
I'm truly impressed with how the program is being carried out—it's clear that a lot of heart, strategy, and dedication go into every detail. The impact on the community is not just visible, but meaningful. It's also refreshing to see an agency that's so well-organized and mission-driven. From leadership to staff, there's a real sense of purpose and teamwork that sets a strong foundation for sustainable success.
I enjoy being on the board and I think the work Jen and her team are doing is very important for the folks of Ottawa County. All of the staff are easy to work with and share a passion for helping others. I think Jen does a fabulous job as director.
Keep up the great work!