



Newaygo County Area Promise Zone Authority Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, February 6, 2024

NC RESA Educational Services Center Board Room

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Present: Blake Prewitt (chairperson), Becky Tuuk, Scott Rumsey, Holly Moon, Jarred Hibma, Pat Brown, Dick Dunning, Tim Rossler, Dawn Anderson, Scott Swinehart, Kathy Pope

Absent: Don VanSingel

Visitors: Melissa Miller, Katie Mater, Loretta Towne (recorder)

Chairperson Blake Prewitt called the meeting to order at 11:36 a.m.

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion by Anderson, supported by Tuuk, to approve the agenda as presented. Ayes – 10, Nays – 0. Motion unanimously carried.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Motion by Moon, supported by Swinehart, to approve the November 21, 2023, Annual and Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. Ayes – 10, Nays – 0. Motion unanimously carried.

Public Participation:

Blake opened the floor for public comments. There were none.

Scott Rumsey presented the following report on behalf of the Operations Subcommittee:

- The 2024 Certificate of Compliance and Certificate of Incumbency will be signed.
- The cash flow report was reviewed. Through December 31, 2023, there is a fund balance of \$1,919,233.
- Jarred Hibma shared that he has researched CD investment options. There was discussion and then consensus from the Board to have the Chairperson and Operations Subcommittee decide on the investments, up to half of our balance.
- Our FACF non-endowed fund has a balance of \$433,000.
- Kathy Pope asked a question about the cash flow report, with the parentheses being used it makes the fund balance look like a negative. There was consensus from the Board to have Jarred work to change that for our report moving forward.
- Our 2023 audit is underway, some Board Members will be asked to participate in a fraud questionnaire.
- Melissa Miller shared that the online Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) was revised for this year and did not open until December 31, it usually opens on October 1. With the revisions, there have been some glitches and challenges for students and families in completing their form. This relates to our scholarship application because we have a question relating to the students FAFSA completion, asking for their Student Aid Index (SAI). It was suggested that because of these factors that we extend our application due date to April 15, instead of March 1, and that we remove our FAFSA Student Aid Index question.

Holly Moon presented the following report on behalf of the Fundraising and Marketing Subcommittee:

- Our 2023 fundraising total was \$346,424.63 and includes \$250,000 from the County to our FACF endowed fund as well as significant gifts from Gerber Life Insurance, Nestle Gerber Products, and a private donor for success coaching. Giving Tuesday is no longer yielding the same level of success and Holly recommended that next year we do not spend as much time or effort on that campaign. To date, our 2024 fundraising total is \$1,310.00.
- Holly will reconvene the subcommittee after the snowbirds return.
- Our two billboards have been placed; one in Grant on M-37 that will run into July and the other heading into Fremont on M-82 by the intersection of M-120 that will run through March.
- Other signs are in the works, including signage for local schools as well as large pull up banners for our major donors to display at their business (Gerber Life Insurance, Nestle Gerber Products, County Offices).
- Holly has followed up with Gerber Federal Credit Union and they are talking with their committee about a possible donation.
- Holly will be reconnecting with Gerber Life Insurance again this year about renewing their gift.
- The fundraising committee is happy to meet with any potential donors that Board Members know of, please feel free to reach out to Holly.
- Dick Dunning is working on another potential billboard in the Brunswick area.

Becky Tuuk presented the following report on behalf of the Promise Success Initiatives Subcommittee:

- A student photo session was held in early December that allowed us to get the pictures used for our billboards and will be used for other materials as well. This was a great connection with students, and we also had them respond to questions about what the Promise Scholarship means to them.
- Before and during exam week, Success Coaches provided support and encouragement to students at MCC and at NCRESA by handing out goodie bags.
- Talent Together is a newer program for students going into the education field where they can receive money towards their tuition and be part of a mentorship program.
- With the changes to FAFSA, Success Coaches have been supporting students with their completion.
- Our team met with the MCC Advising staff and talked about better collaboration in supporting students.

If approved, the application deadline extension will be shared on our website, Facebook, with local counselors, and with Advisers/Specialists.

Advisers/Specialists are our boots on the ground to share important information with students and families about FAFSA and our scholarship, among many other topics. Blake will be meeting with the local superintendents to talk about the future funding of these positions.

Action Items:

MCC Fall Tuition Balance: Motion by Swinehart, supported by Dunning, to approve the fall tuition balance from MCC totaling \$17,504.00. Ayes – 10, Nays – 0. Motion unanimously carried.

Application Deadline Extension: Motion by Moon, supported by Brown, to approve the 2024 application deadline extension to April 15, 2024, and to remove the FAFSA Student Aid Index (SAI) question. Ayes – 10, Nays – 0. Motion unanimously carried.

Information from Promise Zone Board Members:

In the Governor's State of the State address, she proposed free community college for all. Once the budget is shared, that will help to spell out how this will be funded. It does not appear to be coming from the K-12 funds. We will not know how it will affect Promise Zones until we see the budget and have more specific details.

College Access Advocacy Day will be held in Lansing on March 12. Anyone is welcome to attend. This year will be extra important as there are two pending bills to be passed for Promise Zones. The passing of the two bills will offer clarification to Promise Zones on using SET funds.

Blake has reached out to his contacts at Ferris State University about the potential of adding them as another institution to our Promise Zone. He and Melissa are actively working to get in the door and have conversations with the appropriate staff.

Dick recommended that an article about the application deadline extension and reminder about the GPA change be published.

Adjournment:

Motion by Swinehart, supported by Brown, to adjourn. Ayes – 10, Nays – 0. Motion unanimously carried.

Meeting adjourned at 12:46 p.m.



Blake Prewitt, Chairperson