



Newaygo County Area Promise Zone Authority Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, August 6, 2024
NC RESA Educational Services Center Board Room

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Present: Blake Prewitt (chairperson), Scott Rumsey, Holly Moon, Don VanSingel, Tim Rossler, Pat Brown, Dick Dunning, Jarred Hibma, Scott Swinehart, Kathy Pope (ex-officio)

Absent: Becky Tuuk

Visitors: Melissa Miller, Katie Mater, Suzanne Bierlein (recorder), Jody Zerlout

Chairperson Blake Prewitt called the meeting to order at 11:31 a.m.

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion by Swinehart, supported by Rossler, to approve the agenda as presented. Ayes – 9, Nays – 0. Motion unanimously carried.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Motion by Moon, supported by Dunning, to approve the May 7th, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. Ayes – 9, Nays – 0. Motion unanimously carried.

Public Participation:

Blake welcomed everyone. Melissa Miller introduced Suzanne Bierlein, the newly hired Student Success Administrative Assistant. Suzanne spoke briefly about her background in higher education and PreK-12 teacher education and expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve in her new role working with the Newaygo County Area Promise Zone and Early College programs and students.

Tim congratulated Melissa Miller on her promotion and appointment to serve as the Director of Career, Technical, and Post-Secondary Education, for NCRESA.

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

- The financial statement through July 31, 2024, was shared and reviewed. Total revenue was up compared with this time last year at \$82,630, with Certificates of Deposits showing good interest earnings. Total expenditures were \$216,178, with \$182,260 for program expenditures that includes tuition. Our fund balance as of July 31, 2024, was \$1,769,394.
- Melissa provided an update on the search for the additional Success Coach position and shared that two potential candidates have accepted positions elsewhere. She is currently undergoing the second round of interviews and asked if anyone has any referrals or recommendations to let her know.
- Promise Scholars for Fall 2024 numbers were shared:
 - 195 submitted a 2024 application
 - 155 were eligible for the associate degree scholarship
 - 21 were eligible for the apprenticeship scholarship
 - 108 have accepted their award for the associate degree scholarship (including 3 deferred to Winter 2025 and 4 deferred to Fall 2025)

Don asked what the reasons for the dip in numbers from the applied to eligible to accepted. Melissa provided the various reasons could be related to scenarios where students do not qualify based on requirements or eligible students may apply to multiple institutions, including 4-year programs. She also confirmed as many as 10-12 may rebound through the appeal process.

- Appeal Requests: Melissa reported there are 13, with the possibility of a few more appeal requests for the Fall 2024 semester.
- Scott mentioned there is a need to fill one Promise Zone Board member seat, followed by an additional seat to refill as Pat Brown's term expires at the end of this year. Kathy noted a clerical error on the Board of Directors listing on the agenda and requested this be updated to reflect Jarred Hibma's membership and role for Fundraising and Operations. Holly asked about the composition requirements of the board and Kathy read the portion of the bylaws relating to geography and sector. Discussion followed for giving potential considerations for having a diversified representation from all five school districts, or local partners. Kathy Pope shared her perspective on adding new rather than previous members, identifying candidates that will add to or compliment the strengths of the current board composition. The Operations Committee welcomes recommendations.
- Blake opened the discussion surrounding the Ferris State University (FSU) – Community College Guarantee (CCG). Newaygo County is one of the few counties in Michigan that does not have a community college financially supported through its taxpayers. For Newaygo County students attending MCC, this would mean the Promise Zone funds would be applied first, before the CCG. Melissa is looking at how similar Promise Zone areas are working through this and provided a document for the committee to review. Blake asked the question if we should move forward with our discussions with Ferris State University for Fall 2025 or should we wait until more details are revealed in terms of the CCG? Jarred reviewed the FSU forecasted costs estimated for students at \$5,000/per student and the mid-dollar scholarship for cost of attendance. Blake acknowledged that much more discussion is needed and an interim meeting may be called for this specific topic at some point before the next Board meeting in November. The Board members agreed that the Promise Zone should move forward with additional conversations with Ferris.

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

- Our 2024 fundraising contributions to date total \$31,505, and includes \$210 from the 2023 Year-End Appeal, \$1,485 from FAFSA, and \$4,810 from other various donors. Holly reported, the corporate ask to the Gerber Federal Credit Union that we were hoping for did not work out. For the most part, the Promise Zone did not qualify, based on the criteria brought forward. Holly thanked Kathy Pope for her support with this connection.
- Holly recommended we focus more on marketing and communications, rather than fundraising. She will reconvene the Fundraising and Marketing Subcommittee and call for a meeting soon.

Melissa Miller presented the following report on behalf of the Promise Success Initiatives Subcommittee:

- Renewal information reminders have been sent out to all our Fall 2024 Promise Scholars from their Success Coach.
- A mailing has been sent to Promise Scholars reminding them of the Mandatory Orientation scheduled for August 12th.
- Over 400 different coaching connections have occurred in the last quarter. Melissa thanked Katie for her work and taking the lead on these initiatives.

Action Items:

MCC Summer Tuition: Motion by Moon, supported by Rossler, to approve the summer tuition from MCC totaling \$9,587. Ayes – 9, Nays – 0. Motion unanimously carried.

Melissa requested the board to indicate consensus to commit \$100,000 for the upcoming budget for additional staffing support, so she could include it with the total FAFSA request. Consensus granted.

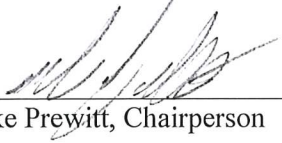
Adjournment:

Motion by Swinehart, supported by VanSingel to adjourn. Ayes – 9, Nays – 0. Motion unanimously carried.

Information from Promise Zone Board Members:

Blake announced there will likely be a special board meeting called for September/October, before the November meeting for further discussion on the Community College Guarantee.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.



Blake Prewitt, Chairperson

