



Economic & WFD Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

8/2/18

8:30 – 10:00 AM

Attendees: Chad Patton, Lynne Bosma, Deb Matis, Dick Bulkowski, Amanda Reimink, Laurie Craft, Lisa M Derr, Lynda Sweigart, Rueben Ndjerareou, Tawana Brown, Kristi Ayers, Samuel Jones, Tammy Britton, Santra Gaddey

Staff: Wende Randall, Kyle Johnson

I. Welcome/Introductions

Introductions around the room, state your name, organization, and role

II. Census Discussion- What do we need to know?

- a. What should the role of a group like this be with the census? There are some unique challenges to the upcoming census. There will be a 50% cut in funding with regional and local offices and door-to-door census takers. There is also an historic dip in public trust for the government to carry out the census in a timely and accurate manner. A question of citizenship also adds another politically hot item to the census. This will affect Michigan in funding and legislative, electoral representation. Michigan Nonprofit Association is mobilizing nonprofits to increase counts. They are doing this by training and tools to nonprofits, awarding mini-grants, and coordinating statewide communications. The full position paper that Danielle took information from is available on Trello. United Way will be looking for support and agencies should reach out to Bob. Neil pointed out that trusting in the government is perceived as Unamerican and that the Census is the most grass roots agency that employs vast number of low-income populations. If we change the narrative this can be effective. Bob pointed out that a lot of analysis and data is taken from Census numbers; we take this for granted. Danielle posited that in September WFD wants to bring in an expert or form a working group to work on this census.

III. Early Childhood Millage Presentation

- a. Amy from First Steps presented this millage. This would be the first early childhood development millage. Thousands of Kent County's kids under 5 are not receiving vital services. Investing in early childhood services is imperative to a childhood's projected success with social, emotional, and intellectual areas. The bold goals of this millage are babies are born healthy, from birth to third grade children are actively engaged in this work. The cost would be around 18 dollars per year. The benefits of this millage would be to develop consistent, accessible navigation system for all families, increase participation in prevention and early intervention services. There would also be developmental screenings for young children. These screenings will increase early

identification of delays and/or disabilities. Another benefit of the millage would be in-home and community-based support and education for families. Community-based early learning experiences would increase participation in programs that improve language and early literacy. This is not preschool but just another channel to integrate children to social and intellectual learning. The proposed structure is modeled after the Senior Millage. Allocation would distribute funds to community-based organizations that are already proven to work. All dollars will be reported through an independent financial audit. On the ballot this issue is anticipated to be the last question in an already lengthy ballot, so don't forget! More information can be found at www.firststepskent.org. Neil asked if this millage is spreading the allocation to thin. Amy countered that these services are not high-cost. Wende asked what employment services would result from this millage. There would be some added mental health workers and medical professionals.

IV. **Discussion About General Advocacy and Engagement**

V. **Action Team Update**

- a. Ten agencies participated. Results from the ten agencies that participated were-total unique clients were around 5,000. Danielle went through the data collection. This presentation will be available on Trello. The next Systems Outcome Analysis will occur in 2019.

VI. **Agency Updates**

- a. CSR- Jordan Daly left and Adrien Pendry is the new contact for Calvin.

VII. **Adjourn**

Next Meeting:

September 6, 2018

8:30-10:00

West Michigan Works!