



**Business Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
December 7, 2023**

**Commission Members Present:** David Anderson, Kizzy Bradford (5:06p.m arrival), Coty Dunten, and Patrese Griffin

**Commission Members Absent:** Gwendolyn Hooker

**Kalamazoo County Commissioner Present:** None

**Kalamazoo County Housing Staff Present:** Mary Balkema

**Administrative Service Provider and Recording Secretary Present:** Lisa Willcutt

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at the Kalamazoo County Building, Board Chambers, 201 West Kalamazoo Avenue by President Griffin at 5:00pm. Willcutt conducted the roll call. A motion was made to excuse Hooker’s absence.

*Motion by Dunten*

*Support by Anderson*

*Motion approved*

**Approve Meeting Agenda**

The meeting agenda was approved with the addition under VI. Old Business, c. Formally approve Work Plan and Budget and under VII. New Business, a. Approve 2024 Memorandum of Understanding with Kalamazoo County for the Millage.

*Motion by Anderson*

*Support by Dunten*

*Motion approved*

**Approve Minutes of the November 2, 2023 Meeting**

Griffin asked for approval of the meeting minutes from November 2, 2023. The minutes were approved as submitted.

*Motion by Dunten*

*Support by Anderson*

*Motion approved*

**Public Comment on Agenda Items and Non-Agenda Items**

Shonna Espinoza stated that Kalamazoo Public Schools (KPS) has an issue with houselessness. KPS considers being “doubled-up” as being homeless, but the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) does not. There are families that are referred, but then the referrals, like Housing Resources, Inc., cannot help. The Mission is full now. Some housing funds should go to KPS to help houseless students. Can you help with this?



**Kalamazoo County  
Public Housing Commission**

Tristen stated they are interested in learning more about the Integrated Services of Kalamazoo (ISK) award and may have comments later. Is here to learn.

**Reports**

Financial Reports

Willcutt summarized the November 2023 Financial Reports that were distributed prior to the meeting noting that many of the variances are explained in the activities described on the Property Reports. She did state that the variance in the Veterans Homeless Initiative resulted from the third quarter support staff payment to ISK. A motion was made to accept the November 2023 financial report.

*Motion by Anderson*

*Support by Dunten*

*Motion approved*

Bethany House – A written report of activity was distributed prior to the meeting.

Veterans Initiative – A written report of activity was distributed prior to the meeting.

FUSE – A written report of activity was distributed prior to the meeting.

Portage Condominium – A written report of activity was distributed prior to the meeting. Willcutt also stated that since the property is no longer being used for an exempt purpose, she would notify the City of Portage and real estate tax would begin being assessed.

Those present authorized President Griffin and Vice President Hooker to act on offers for purchase.

*Motion by Dunten*

*Support by Anderson*

*Motion approved*

**Old Business**

2015 Millage

Creating Transitional Housing – Anderson provided an update on the progress made.

Determine How to Make the Additional ISK \$200,000 Award – A motion was made to amend the current contract with a new end date and the additional funding.

*Motion by Dunten*

*Support by Bradford*

*Roll call vote:*

*Dunten – Yes*

*Anderson – Abstain*

*Griffin – Yes*

*Bradford - Yes*

*Motion approved*



**Kalamazoo County  
Public Housing Commission**

Review and approve 2024 Budget – This agenda item was tabled to the January 2024 meeting.

Formally approve Work Plan and Budget – A motion was made to approve the Work Plan and Budget for 2024.

*Motion by Dunten*

*Support by Bradford*

*Motion approved*

**New Business**

Approve 2024 Memorandum of Understanding with Kalamazoo County for the Millage – This agenda item was tabled to the January 2024 meeting.

**Public Comment on Agenda and Non-Agenda Items**

Tristen wanted to know where they could read the ISK contract. Is excited to hear that people will share their experiences in the ISK program next month.

Shonna Espinoza said it would be a good idea for the Commission to reach out to someone at KPS. KPS needs a lot of guidance. When she called it took weeks for them to get back to her. She recommended reaching out to Dr. Slade and Robin Greymountain. She went on to say that kids are falling through the cracks and are on the streets; there needs to be extreme improvement. She is asking the KCPHC to reach out to help improve the program.

**Commissioner Member Comments**

Griffin stated that next month ISK will give a report, not the actual program participants who are receiving funds. Griffin addressed Shonna's comments by stating that the problems she is experiencing are common to nonprofit organizations that are stretched too thin. She acknowledged that there are those that may not do the work as they should as well. She thanked both speakers for participating.

Bradford feels that a lot of the housing crises is beyond this board. She herself was homeless, stably housed and now is about to be homeless again. Some issues are bigger and greater than this board can handle. We need more resources and manpower. She experienced her rent going from \$800 to \$1,400. She lost \$600 in income when she lost her seat on the Oshtemo board and is going to give a 30 day notice because she cannot afford her rent. She does not qualify to buy a house, but can be accepted to pay rent at \$1,400, which does not make sense to her. She wondered if we need to go to the capital. The housing crises in this county is bigger than this board and the City Commission. She knows it is frustrating. We have to fight this together and let them know we are tired of it.

Anderson had the Detroit HUD office director in his office and talked about our issues. The HUD director said he hears the same thing all over the state. Many HUD programs ended years ago. He agrees it is a bigger conversation to be had not only at the local level, but at the federal level.

Meeting Adjourned: 5:45 pm; Submitted by: Lisa Willcutt