

KALAMAZOO FOUNDATION FOR EXCELLENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CORRECTED MINUTES

Meeting of September 14, 2020

A meeting of the Kalamazoo Foundation of Excellence (KFFE) Board on September 14, 2020 held by videoconference in accordance with the Governor Whitmer's Executive Order No. 2020-154 was called to order by President Graham-Williams at 2:05 pm. Board members Hopewell, Ritsema, Anderson, Hess, Urban, Calderone-Huezo, Carrel, Dannison, Hoffman, Lonberg, Miller, C. Taylor, and Washington were present; Directors McFarlin and A. Taylor were absent. Also present were Legal Counsel/Recording Secretary Clyde J. Robinson, Deputy City Manager Laura Lam, FFE Coordinator Steve Brown, DEI Director Dorla Bonner, City CFO Steve Vicenzi, and United Way of Battle Creek and Kalamazoo Region President and CEO Chris Sargent.

The minutes of the Annual Board Meeting held April 27, 2020 as corrected were moved for approval by Director Washington and seconded by Director Anderson. There being no further discussion, the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

FFE Coordinator Steve Brown provided a staff report on 2020 Programs and COVID-19 Responses using FFE funding. City Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Director Bonner reported that in the past data was not collected on the individuals served by City and FFE funded programs. So as to create a baseline and to determine the impact and effect of FFE funded programs, demographic and income data will be collected. Chris Sargent of United Way reported on \$2,635,000 of FFE funding on four programs to assist Kalamazoo individuals, families and businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This included the Disaster Relief fund which provided food and housing to individuals; the Small Business Loan Fund; the Digital Access for All program to provide internet access for 1000 Kalamazoo Public School households through a partnership with the Kalamazoo Public Library; and a Learning Learning Hubs program in partnership with KYD Network, using a model which has proven successful in San Francisco and Cleveland

Discussion of the programs ensued with Emeritus Director Hopewell questioning why recipients of the Small Business Loan program could opt-out of permitting disclosure of receipt of program funds given the commitment by the FFE Board to transparency. It was noted that the program was not fully funded by the FFE, it was administered by the United Way, and small businesses may be uncomfortable with public disclosure that it needed to loan since it may have a negative impact on how other creditors may view the business. Note was also taken of the limited impact the program had on minority-owned businesses. President Graham-Williams indicted that care should be taken to avoid FFE funds being used in a manner which perpetuates existing racial and economic inequality.

Mr. Brown then provided a report on the results of efforts, using FFE money, to assist the community during the current COVID-19 health crisis. \$310,000 was provided by the City to the United Way and Kalamazoo Community Foundation to shore up the Disaster Relief Fund which provides assistance to nonprofit agencies that deliver programs and services to people in need. An additional \$2 million was provided to the Kalamazoo Small Business Loan Fund to provide loans of \$5,000-\$50,000 to assist businesses through the COVID crisis that have less than 50 FTE and \$25 million or less in gross revenues. Director Hopewell inquired about whether information about the Loan Program was available in Spanish. DCM Lam indicated that bilingual information is available through the 211 service. President Graham-Williams asked about those businesses which had applied but where denied a loan. Mr. Brown indicated that a broad-based committee with business acumen reviewed the applications and those applicants that were denied could not provide sufficient documentation or were already failing prior to the COVID outbreak.

Mr. Brown reported on efforts to provide local students with internet access at home. Director Washington commented that current crisis only serves to bring attention to the existing inequality faced by many students that do not have such access. Additionally the City Commission will be requested at its

September 21, 2020 meeting to approve FFE funding to provide support for 4-5 Learning Hubs to assist 200 KPS students who have various challenges (English as a second language, disability, food insecurity, etc) over the course of the current school year. The program is based on a model used with success in San Francisco and Cleveland and will be administered by KYD Network and likely located in school buildings. The funds for the project are available due to the COVID-limited 2020 summer Recreation Department programming.

City CFO Steve Vicenzi provided the Finance Committee report. As of June 30, 2020, the FFE had a fund balance of \$85.5 million. In 2021, proposed awards to the City will be composed of about \$17,260,000 for Budget Stabilization/Tax Reduction purposes and about \$8,526,000 for Aspirational Projects.

Mr. Brown presented the Executive Committee report which noted the desire to increase diversity, equity and inclusion work with the Board.

President Graham-Williams inquired as to whether was any recorded public comments. She was informed that there were none. The President then asked if there were any Director comments.

Director Anderson made several points which included concerns by the City Commission that grants/loans to local businesses be done through an equity lens; that FFE funds (with the assistance of other sources) has permitted the City to provide disaster relief quicker than it has in the past and to a better degree than other communities; that said, there are still challenges in addressing homelessness, which a local millage request on the November ballot will provide assistance; he praised the efforts of the Investment Committee whose advice will permit continued growth in the FFE endowment; and given the recent spate of gun violence, noted a desire to use funds to address violence reduction efforts.

Director Lonberg voiced concerns regarding safety and policing and asked that consideration be made to reimagine how we as community care for each other; that we encourage everyone to do better.

Director C. Taylor asked that FFE funds spent on existing violence reduction programing be spent locally.

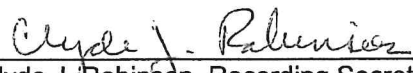
Director Urban noted the impact that the COVID-19 crisis has had on the criminal justice system; he suggested that FFE money might be spent to permit victims and those cooperating with law enforcement to go into hiding pending resolution of their cases.

Director Hoffman praised the efforts of the City Commission and City staff in the recent adoption of the Housing Equity ordinance. She asked whether this model might be used in the criminal justice context.

Upon the motion by Director Anderson, seconded by Director Carrel the meeting was adjourned by President Graham-Williams at 4:16 pm.

Minutes Drafted: September 21, 2020

Minutes Approved as Corrected: October 12, 2020


Clyde J. Robinson, Recording Secretary