

**Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners
Meeting Summary
of
August 25, 2010**

Board Members Present: Howard Gentry, Patrick Willard, Mary Kate Mouser, George Price, Frank Boehm and Bill Sinclair
Board Members Absent: Gwen Harris
Legal Advisor: Christy Feldman
Mayor Liaison: Hershell Warren

Commissioner Gentry called the meeting to order by welcoming everyone.

Commissioner Gentry then requested a motion to approve the July 28 meeting summary. Motion was properly made, seconded and accepted unanimously.

Director's Report

Renee Pratt began her report with updating the board on distributing school supplies to students from low income families. MSS, along with the National Black Police Association, Community Health Center, Tennessee Biker's Association and Amerigroup, hosted the annual Fresh Start Giveaway on August 7 where 254 children were provided backpacks and school supplies.

MSS also participated with the Mayor's First Day Festival on August 8. MSS provided information regarding our agency and handed out safety information, healthy snacks and other school supplies.

Metro finance will shortly announce the proposal, the nutrition program's food vendor services contract. The contract with the current vendor will end early and we will review RFP's for a new vendor as soon as possible.

Finance

Ms. McEwen reported that the budget has not yet posted which mean we will still have some adjustments in the July budget. However, this will be a very tight budget year, so there is little flexibility.

As far as the close out for the fiscal year 2010, we were actually more under budget than anticipated. We have \$23,000 in the Donation Fund and have budgeted \$77,000 for the ARRA Funds.

Personnel/Nominating Committee

The Personnel/Nominating Committee met on Thursday, August 19 to nominate the next Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners Chair and Vice Chair. The committee

members present were Commissioner Boehm, Commissioner Price and Commissioner Mouser. Current Chair, Howard Gentry was nominated for reappointment and Vice Chair nominee was Frank Boehm.

Commissioner Gentry then asked for any other nominations from the Board, and no additional nominations were offered.

A motion was moved, seconded and approved that the Personnel/Nomination Committees nominations for Commissioner Howard Gentry Chair and Commissioner Frank Boehm Vice-Chair be appointed for a two-year term.

Unmet Financial Needs

Commissioner Boehm stated at the last meeting his interest in the board addressing the issue of unmet financial needs in Davidson County. Following the meeting Commissioner Boehm spoke with Dinah Gregory to assist with gathering some information as to the level of unmet financial needs of the city. Dinah Gregory provided Commissioner Boehm with information that he presented to the board.

Commissioner Boehm began by stating that for decades MSS had provided funds to the residents of Davidson County to assist with utility bills, rent and other basic needs. However, in July 2005, MSS stopped providing this assistance, and these local funds were transferred to the Metro Action Commission (MAC).

Commissioner Boehm stated that the economy in Davidson County has clearly worsened in the city, pointing out the significant increase in unemployment and the poverty rate. Commissioner Boehm further stated that the research shows there is a great unmet need for funds for housing and related assistance.

Commissioner Boehm stated that giving people money to assist with the housing and related items is nice, but, to have a meaningful impact, it must be provided through a management process. Commissioner Boehm then presented the board with a proposal.

Commissioner Boehm proposed that the MSS Board approve a process that request the MSS Administration prepare a proposal that would increase the next MSS budget by an additional dollar amount to be determined based on reality, politics, sensitivity and other issues and would not take away money from any other organizations or departments in Metro. So as to address the now existing financial Social Services gap existing in Nashville, TN along with a detailed explanation that supports this request and that this proposal and explanation is to be presented to the MSS Board for final approval sometime prior to the next budget cycle, but as early as possible to give us time to approach the correct people for this idea.

Commissioner Boehm also noted the importance of using these funds to promote employment for self-sufficiency.

Commissioner Boehm then welcomed any questions.

Commissioner Sinclair asked if the approach would be for Metro Government to increase the Metro Social Services budget and where the funds would come from.

Commissioner Boehm explained that these would be new funds, including local dollars. Commissioner Boehm felt that this would help MSS address the unmet need, that any amount of money used to reduce the gap would be a big help.

Commissioner Sinclair suggested that we need to have a good sense of what other Metro related agencies and other non-for profit organizations are funding so that we are not merely trying to expand those existing resources which in effect mean we are competing.

Commissioner Gentry stated that MSS has been providing direct services over the last five years and we have not had the funding. It has been observed during that period of time that we need to have some funding available at MSS to assist with meeting these needs. Commissioner Gentry further stated that we must come up with a recommendation as to where the funding will come from.

Commissioner Boehm proposed the MSS Board approve a process that request the MSS Administration to prepare a proposal that would increase the next MSS budget by an additional dollar amount to be determined so as to address the now existing financial Social Services gap existing in Nashville along with a detailed explanation that supports this request and that this proposal and explanation be presented to the MSS Board for final approval sometime prior to the next budget cycle, but as early as possible to give us time to approach the correct people for this idea. Motion was moved, seconded and approved.

Board Orientation continued

Ms. Pratt stated at last month's board meeting there was discussion around the increasing needs of baby boomers and that MSS is receiving more and more calls from that population for services. Planning and Coordination prepared a report on the effects of the baby boomers' needs located in the board packets. Patricia Wingfield, Homemaker Services Program Manager, discussed the growing needs of the aging population, including the baby boomers.

The staff persons and departments who made presentations are as follows:

- Patricia Wingfield – Homemakers (Baby Boomer Population)
- Giovanni Corley – Homeless
- Tarver Smith – Adult and Family
- Dinah Gregory – Planning and Coordination

Commissioner Gentry stated that the board orientation information has been very beneficial, and it provides the board with a better understanding of Metro Social Services.

Commissioner Gentry called for the meeting to be adjourned.