

Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners
Meeting Summary
of
October 27, 2010

Board Members Present: Howard Gentry, Gwen Harris, Mary Kate Mouser, Frank Boehm and Bill Sinclair
Board Members Absent: Patrick Willard and George Price
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 August meeting summary. Motion was properly made, seconded and accepted unanimously.

Director's Report

Renee Pratt began her report by reminding the board of the Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway which is scheduled for November 20. Last year 500 baskets were given away and this year 1,000 baskets will be given away to families in need. This will be one of the biggest Thanksgiving giveaways of the season. The distribution site will be at TSU in Keane Hall, the same as last year.

MSS is scheduled to move out of the Metro Center building effective March, 2011 and will relocate to the Clifford Allen Building. Ms. Pratt stated that we are in the process of working with General Services regarding the new building space and to make sure it will accommodate the requirements of the agency since this will be our permanent location. Ms. Pratt stated that she would keep the board posted and schedule a walk through later in the process.

MSS staff is still managing about 15 flood recovery cases that came from the North Nashville project and we hope to have these cases closed by the end of the year. The Planning and Coordination unit provided consultation on case management and policies and procedures for the flood recovery effort with United Way and others.

The MSS Nutrition Program should have a vendor selected by the end of the year. We are in the process of looking at proposals and we will make a selection soon.

Dinah Gregory and the Planning and Coordination staff are working diligently on the Community Needs Evaluation. Ms. Pratt stated that she hope the board has had the opportunity to review all the sections except for the neighborhoods section which should be available within the next two weeks.

Ms. Pratt informed the board of the Poverty Reduction Nashville (P.R.N.) invitation located in the board packets. This event will be held on December 9, at 9:30 at Scarritt Bennett. Dinah Gregory has the distribution list for invitees and if Board members would like to add someone to this list, please give the names to Dinah Gregory.

Ms. Pratt commented on the MSS board holiday meeting schedule. It was decided the board would meet on November 16 at 9:00 a.m. Bonnie Campbell will email the board to confirm a meeting date and time for the month of December.

Commissioner Boehm made a proposal at the last board meeting concerning financial assistance. The actual motion was as follows:

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.

The above motion was approved by the board. Department staff was asked to prepare a report about how targeted financial assistance could promote employment. The report prepared by Planning and Coordination is located in the board packets. Ms. Pratt stated that she felt MSS should review the actual data of the customers who have been served at MSS along with the recommendations of the reports, grants, contributions and any other data. Ms. Pratt asked for the commission's assistance with thinking of funding options and how funds can be raised. Once this is determined, Ms. Pratt will then come back to the board with a proposal to present to the Mayor and the Council.

Finance

Ms. McEwen reported that we are currently \$191,000 under budget as of September 30. Ms. McEwen stated that we will send the board the requested detailed information regarding admin / executive budget.

We have approximately \$23,000 in the Donation Fund. We have budgeted \$103,000 in expenditures for the year in ARRA Fund. The actual ARRA Fund Grant ended on September 30.

As far as the contracts, funeral services are over budget, food preparation is over budget, and bus passes are slightly over budget. The Gatherings contract has ended and we are now under the emergency contract with Piccadilly. As stated earlier by

Ms. Pratt, we just received the RFP's for consideration and we hope to have this process completed as soon as possible.

Poverty Council

Commissioner Gentry stated that a meeting was held on October 9 and that encouraging reports were given by implementation teams and everything is on schedule. The first semi-annual progress report will be completed during the month of January and ready for the Mayor and the public by early February.

Community Needs Evaluation and Ad Hoc Committee

Planning & Coordination has drafted a 2010 Community Needs Evaluation Update that is being edited and finalized, and it will be available by December 9. The Board was invited to attend the P.R.N.-Poverty Reduction Nashville event on December 9, at which data from the needs evaluation will be presented and the Poverty Initiative Implementation Teams will describe their work. Mayor Karl Dean will also speak at the event. Commissioner Gentry and Commissioner Boehm will also host a luncheon at which information about community needs will be shared with the philanthropic community.

Commissioner Boehm made a motion that we approve the Community Needs Assessment 2010 that will have additional final editing. Motion was moved and seconded.

Next, Commissioner Boehm spoke on the Ad Hoc Coordination Committee that met on September 21. Commissioner Boehm stated that it was a very good meeting and some good suggestions were made:

- Identify someone at MSS with the function of serving as a liaison between MSS and the outside world (media, communication with mayor's office, voice of MSS, etc.) At Commissioner Boehm's request, Renee Pratt agreed to serve in this capacity.
- Planning and Coordination should respond to crisis situations (recession, floods, etc.)
- Questions would be sent out to find out what was needed and when
- The data collected could be more individualized and provided to specific organizations that dealt with that particular issue.
- We need to promote community awareness of needs, including to potential funding sources.

With these recommendations, Ms. Gregory has developed a status report that outlined these requests.

Commissioner Gentry called for the meeting to be adjourned.