

**Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners
Meeting Summary
of
September 28, 2011**

Board Members Present: Frank Boehm, Bill Sinclair, Mary Rolando, George Price, Marlen Santana Perez,

Board Members Absent:

Metro Legal Advisor: Mary Johnston

Mayor Liaison:

Commissioner Boehm called the meeting to order by welcoming the community and the Metro Social Services (MSS) staff.

Commissioner Boehm requested a motion to approve the August meeting summary in addition to the correction of the date located on the top summary. Motion was properly made, seconded and accepted unanimously.

Director's Report

Ms. Pratt reported that the MSS Annual Report has been electronically distributed and we have received a great deal of positive feedback along with follow up questions as it relates to the Community Needs Evaluation.

Dinah Gregory and the Planning and Coordination staff were congratulated for producing the first Annual Poverty Council Report. This report will be presented next week at the poverty council meeting. More information will be provided regarding the leadership of the Poverty Council at the October meeting.

Ms. Pratt introduced the Parent to Parenting Program that provides classes to parents and children throughout the Davidson County area. Corliss Nelson, a Social Worker here at MSS has reinstated the program and the first last class will start on September 29 here at MSS. The primary goal of the program is to raise awareness of the responsibilities and skills needed to be an effective parent. Referrals are accepted and information on the program has been sent out to the Juvenile Court and Metro Nashville Public Schools. The class has a sliding scale fee, in which clients pay a fee which is refunded at the end of the program for those who complete the entire course.

Ms. Pratt has developed relationships with the metro school. As a result, caseworkers have received several calls with referrals for case.

Metro Action Commission (MAC) has moved in the office space next door to MSS, and they have experienced a large volume of customers. MSS is experiencing an increase in volume because we serve the same target group. Along with this, we are allowing some of the overflow from MAC to sit in the MSS lobby while they wait to be seen.

Financial Report

Ms. McEwen noted a correction regarding the amount the under budget amount at the end of August. It should be \$202,229.26 so she asked that the Commissioners note this correction. All expenditures should be in by the end of September and we will be able to give a better idea as to year-to-date totals. Ms. McEwen projected \$62,000 under budget for the year.

Social Services Donation Fund was slightly over budget \$25,000 dollars that include the Camilla Caldwell Fund Donations and the Nutrition Meals on Wheels Donations. Commissioner Boehm asked for Mary Johnston with Metro Legal to follow up regarding a question as to whether contributions are tax-deductible.

Nashville Poverty Council

Ms. Gregory announced that the Poverty Council Meeting will be held on October 5, at 9:00 a.m. at Goodwill, 937 Herman Street. One of the topics on the agenda is how to improve communication among the seven implementation teams on the Poverty Council. Research has been done to examine how other councils operate and their organizational structure. Additional information regarding this topic was distributed to the Board, which will also be distributed at the next Poverty Council Meeting.

Homelessness Commission

Clifton Harris reported on the following items.

Policy & Governance

- Metro Legal is reviewing the contract between the Metro Homelessness Commission (MHC), Metro Social Services and the Key Alliance.
- Homelessness Commission is in the process of appointing and/or re-appointing six commissioners.

Communications

- Judy Tackett has completed the work on the MHC web site within the MSS Webpage, which contains MHC issue briefs and minutes from previous Commission meetings.
- MHC is available to speak to any group of 5 or more individuals regarding homelessness and how people can get involved.

Service Planning & Coordination

- Carolyn Cooper is working on the manual for the Go Teach program. Ms. Cooper has secured 60+ housing opportunities. However, there is no funding available for rent and case management to provide people with housing opportunities.
- Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is now operational, and the majority of the service provider's users have already been trained.
- Housing First retention has been compiled over four years, with a 93% retention rate for the 50 consumers served in 2010/2011. The return on the investment for the same fiscal year was \$694,160 and it comes from the calculation of the number of days on the street at a rate of \$96 a day. We

are still at 98% first-time approval rate for SSI/SSDI applicants. 96 individuals have received this service during the fiscal year 2010/2011 and 77% secured housing. Commissioner Sinclair asked for additional information on how the case management agency provides this service.

- There are continuing unmet needs for homeless prevention and employment services.

Mr. Harris was asked to explain the Housing First Program which provides both housing and supportive services for the homelessness individuals who may have continuing chronic/mental health issues or substance abuse issues. The casework would then coordinate around their medical needs, mental health needs, employment needs and social needs. As a result of this we are seeing 93% of these individual remaining in housing for a year or longer.

Mr. Harris stated that the primary focus for the Homelessness Commission is to get the homeless off the street into appropriate housing. It was then agreed that the MSS Board of Commissioners will receive a monthly report from the Homelessness Commission.

Commissioner Boehm stated that he would like to meet with Mr. Harris to become more familiar with the Homelessness program. Commissioner Boehm further asked Mr. Harris if there was a way to monitor the increase in homelessness we are experiencing in the city due to the economic downturn. Mr. Harris stated that they will be able to track people coming into the city by adding a question to the assessment form and to determine the person's most recent zip code?

Old Business

Election of New Chair and Vice Chair

On behalf of the Personnel Committee, Commissioner Price brought forth a recommendation at the last meeting asking for Commissioner Boehm for Chair and Commissioner Sinclair for Vice Chair. A motion was made and passed by Commissioner Price and Commissioner Boehm was elected as Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners Chair and Commissioner Sinclair was elected as Vice Chair.

Commissioner Boehm stated that this is a very important commission and the work that MSS, Planning & Coordination and the Homelessness does is really an informative group. Commissioner Boehm further stated that he would need everyone's support and encouraged people to contact him anytime.

Commissioner Boehm called for the meeting to be adjourned.