

**Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners
Meeting Summary
of
June 27, 2012**

Board Members Present: Frank Boehm, Marlen Santana Perez, Kristine LaLonde; Renard François and Mary Rolando

Board Members Absent: Bill Sinclair and George Price

Metro Legal Advisor: Josh Lee

Mayor Liaison: Hershell Warren

Commissioner Boehm called the meeting to order by welcoming everyone to the June Metro Social Services (MSS) Board of Commissioners Meeting.

Commissioner Boehm made a motion to approve the June meeting summary. A motion was properly made, seconded and accepted unanimously.

Finance

Pam McEwen began her report by stating that at the end of May, MSS as a whole is \$421,878.70 under budget.

Ms. McEwen projected for the months of July/June that we should be approximately \$300,000 under budget and \$400,000 with salaries and fringe benefits

The 4% fund currently has \$38,800 and the special donation has \$29,058.61 split between the Camilla Caldwell Fund and Meals on Wheels.

Ms. McEwen then reported that the Metro Council approved MSS Budget of \$7,751,000. This does not include the FY13 salary adjustment increases. Ms. McEwen stated that an increment of 4% will be given to employees that are an SR13 or below and a 2% for employees SR14 and above. The Mayor's proposed budget includes funding for increments for all Metro employees with Civil Service. However, there are 11 MSS employees who are not Civil Service and require the approval of the Social Services Board of Commissioners to receive this increment.

Commissioner LaLonde made a motion that the MSS Board of Commissioners authorizes these increases for the Executive Director and MSS employees based on the overall plan for Metro Government. The increases are as follows, increments of 4% will be given to employees that are an SR13 or below and 2% for employees SR14 and above. A motion was properly made, seconded and accepted unanimously.

Ms. McEwen then introduced the Budget Analyst for MSS, Chanita Hudson.

Ms. McEwen stated that in addition to the budgeted amount, MSS will receive a subsequent appropriation that is based on the amount of the increments. The amount we were under budget this year was because of positions that were not filled. In the new fiscal year, if the freeze is lifted positions can be filled. If MSS is fully staffed, there would not be a significant surplus at the end of FY2013.

Commissioner Boehm stated that when MSS was asked to reduce the budget by 2% and when MSS presented the 2% reduction coming from bus passes and Nutrition, the Administration decided we did not have to reduce the budget as much as requested. Ms. McEwen stated that is correct and noted that the budget was reduced by less than 1%, so there were no cuts to bus passes or Nutrition.

Commissioner LaLonde asked how long has the freeze been in place. Ms. McEwen commented to her knowledge a freeze has been in place for at least two years. Ms. Pratt stated, however, that we have been very fortunate that Finance along with Human Resources has allowed us to fill some of our grant-funded positions. MSS currently has 4 positions open that are under the freeze and we be submitting those positions for justification. Finance along with Human Resource will let us know if we are able to fill the positions. Commissioner LaLonde suggested that moving forward the Board could possible come up with a way to handle the freeze positions differently as to make sure the needed positions are not put on hold. Commissioner Boehm asked for Ms. Pratt and staff to provide information at the next board meeting as to how this can be addressed.

Program Reports

- *Adult & Family* – Commissioner Perez began her report by thanking Tarver Smith, Manager of Adult & Family for his department summary. The gaps in resources for Adult & Family are homeless emergency family shelters, transitional housing for customers with or without employment. There is limited Section 8 housing available, but there may be problems with transportation when a person gets employment, employment for those getting out of prison, medical care and prescription assistance. As far as Second Harvest Food Bank, applicants are limited in the number of times they use Second Harvest. Families have greater needs now that children are out of school for the summer; because they are providing three meals a day.
- *Homemakers* – Commissioner Rolando stated that MSS Homemakers has two additional Medicaid Waiver customers. This is important because people were unaware that MSS provided Medicaid Waiver Services and now MSS is increasing those clients. Commissioner Rolando also stated that one of the concerns is how to market the program more effectively, and recently Homemaker Services and Nutrition held Open Houses to market the programs. With this marketing, the Homemakers are also able to find out what the customers are expecting from this service and what can the Homemakers do to improve the service.

Commissioner Rolando expects to go on the next Open House on the 25 of July. The Homemaker Program currently has a waiting list of 125.

- *Nutrition* – Commissioner François stated that he attended the on June 22 Open House at Trevecca Towers. Commissioner François stated that it was a really good

experience, with about 60 people in attendance of which approximately 30 were regular customers. Handouts were available along with giveaways that provided telephone numbers for the different MSS programs. The people in attendance also participated in a raffle for prizes.

Steve Lavigne provided an overview of the program along with additional information on the other programs with MSS. The next Open House is scheduled for the July 25. Commissioner François did have the opportunity to speak with some representatives from the Tennessee Commission on Aging who indicated that Commissioner Jim Shulman is considering a food summit, since it was brought to his attention that Nashville is within the bottom of 5 in the country of providing meals to seniors. Commissioner François stated he would keep the board informed once this summit is being developed.

- *Planning & Coordination* – Commissioner LaLonde felt that the focus for this month would again be on the Poverty Council. Commissioner LaLonde stated that the Executive Committee Meeting went well and one of the topics of discussion was developing a Focused Neighborhood Project in collaboration with the teams. Dinah Gregory prepared a very extensive draft of a status update on Poverty Council implementation teams and is waiting for greater input from the team chairs. Commissioner LaLonde stated that she would really like to empower the MSS staff to have greater ownership over some of the activities of the Poverty Council.

The next Executive Committee Meeting is scheduled for July 18. Before closing Commission LaLonde, commented on the Bloomberg Foundation application grant and had not heard if Metro has made it to the second round. However, we hope that Nashville will be one of the five cities selected. Commissioner LaLonde hoped to have an answer by the end of July.

Executive Directors Report

Renee Pratt began her report by commenting on the All Staff Meeting to be held on Friday, June 29, at Howard School Building from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00p.m. As previously noted during the Finance report, the Nutrition Program is underspent by approximately \$154,000. This money will go back to the Metro Governments General fund, and it is anticipated that next year Nutrition will also be underspent by \$150,000. With the Boards approval Ms. Pratt is asking if we could apply these funds to serving additional meals in the community in three ways which are as follows:

1. Extend a program that is currently in effect at Chippington Towers, Madison, in which we provide meals in one of the towers but not both. We would like to extend meals to be provided to both towers. The tower that is currently not receiving meals has staff to serve and do the paperwork they only need MSS to provide the meals. It would probably cost about \$24,000 annually to provide these meals.
2. Reopen Riverwood Terrace in Madison, that was actually open about 1 1/2 years ago using stimulus funds. However, when the funds were exhausted and the site was closed. The demand is still there for this service, and they are only asking for meals. Their staff will make sure the meals are served and the paperwork is complete, costing about \$24,000 on a yearly basis.

3. Address needs of the baby boomers particularly the age group from 50 to 59 that is not eligible for MSS programs for those 60 years of age or older. However, MSS has received many questions and referrals from this age group regarding those who are either physically or mentally disabled and they are asking how they can receive services. Ms. Pratt asked that approximately \$50,000 be used to save this targeted group and continue to serve them throughout the year.

Ms. Pratt is asked for the approval of the Commission to proceed with these three requests, starting by August 1, 2012 with the hopes of continuing the programs in future years.

Commissioner LaLonde asked where the meals will be served. Ms. Pratt stated the meals will be provided in the various community centers throughout Davidson County. The service will include home bound meals and meals in the community sites.

Commissioner Rolando moved approval to extend services in Chippington Towers, reopen Riverwood Terrace and provide meals to the physical and mental disabled in Davidson County between the ages of 50 to 59. A motion was properly made, seconded and accepted unanimously.

Ms. Pratt continued with her report regarding the notice received last week that Clifton Harris, Executive Director of the Homelessness Commission resigned. Effective June 24, Carolyn Grossley has accepted the Interim Director position to take effective immediately with hopes to having a permanent director hired within the next 2 to 3 months.

Carolyn Grossley introduced herself by stating that she has been with the Homelessness Commission for approximately 2 years. Ms. Grossley stated that she has served and worked with the homeless in many different areas for a totally 30 years of service. Ms. Grossley has worked with the Domestic Violence Shelter since being in the Navy and she has a long career in the Homeless community.

New Business

Ad Hoc Committee

The Ad Hoc Committee had been previously discussed to help Nashville prepare for the aging population. Commissioner Boehm stated that, like most cities, Nashville is not prepared for the baby boomers born between 1946 and 1964.

Commissioner Boehm noted that Ad Hoc Committee members had been identified, and Commissioner Mary Rolando has graciously agreed to chair the Ad Hoc Committee. The Ad Hoc Committee will consist of the following members whom who have all agreed to serve:

- Mary Rolando, MSS Board of Commissioners, Committee Chair
- Mary Beth Farringer, Council on Aging of Greater Nashville
- Cathy White, Greater Nashville Regional Council-Area Agency on Aging and Disability
- Jim Shulman, Tennessee Commission on Aging
- Janet Jernigan, Fifty Forward
- Ladawna Parham, Vanderbilt Coalition for Healthy Aging

- Robin Brown, Metropolitan Department of Human Services
- Jim McAteer, Metropolitan Transit Authority
- Steve Matthews, WholeCare Connections
- Dr. David Jones, Minister, Schrader Lane Church of Christ
- Renee Pratt, MSS
- Nutrition Program, MSS
- Homemaker Program, MSS
- Dinah Gregory, Planning and Coordination, MSS
- Lee Stewart, Planning and Coordination, MSS
- Julius Witherspoon, Planning and Coordination, MSS
- Diane Neighbors, Vice Mayor (Designee)

The Ad Hoc Committee will put together a report and bring it before the MSS Board of Commissioners for approval, after which it will be sent to the Mayor's office.

Commissioner Boehm and Ms. Pratt had discussed an MSS Board of Commissioner Retreat to be held possibly in the fall. It would be an all-day event, which would include not only the Commissioners but as many of the MSS staff that are able to attend. Commissioner Boehm would like to utilize the leadership of all the Commissioners to lead a small group and have each program area highlighted to determine where these groups are going and what can the board do to help.

Case Management System

Mr. Brothers stated that the developers are used to develop the code and analysis the business and requirements of the business.

The developers are as follows: Rex Brothers with 29 years IT experience and Terrence Riche with 23 years of IT experience and currently employed with Metro Social Serves as the Information Systems Advisor.

Mr. Brothers gave a presentation to the Commissioner's on the technical aspects of the application. Mr. Brothers described the benefits of the Case Management system being stable, secure environment, central location for business critical data, form generation and archival, data validation, complete client history and agency reporting. Moving forward, Mr. Brothers plans to include the Ensure inventory and a survey system. This application is supported by Metro ITS; and the Case Management System is scheduled to be completed by November 2012.

Old Business

Ms. Pratt reported on the Indigent Burial Program and MSS is still reviewing the policies and changes and recommendations should be available by the July board meeting. Ms. Pratt spoke with Rich Reibling, Director of Finance regarding the ten acres of land and how it can be funded. A meeting is schedule for Mr. Reibling and Ms. Pratt next week to discuss the Indigent Burial in further detail.

Commissioner Francois asked about the idea of charge backs in terms of a particular county that does not have an Indigent Burial Program and we handle the burial is there a way for Davidson County to charge for this service. Ms. Pratt stated that if someone moves to Davidson County to receive Hospice care if the person dies here in Davidson County,

then MSS will bury them here, although this is one of the policies being considered for change. Commissioner Francois stated that he thought the program was written in such a way that eligible persons would have either lived or died in Davidson County, but they did not necessarily have to be residents. Ms. Pratt further stated that the policy currently does not specify the time limit in which one is to be considered a resident of Davidson County. Commissioner Francois stated that this would probably take care of some of the confusion. Ms. Pratt stated that we will make recommendations on the policies/procedures and make those changes. The staff that will be working with these recommendations will include Demitria Norman, Director of Programs, Carol Wilson, Program Manager, and Commissioner Price, who has been extremely instrumental in this process, along with herself. These recommendations will be presented to the MSS Commissioners after reviewed by the MSS staff.

Commissioner Boehm called for the meeting to be adjourned.