

**Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners  
Meeting Summary  
of  
May 22, 2013**

**Board Members Present:** Frank Boehm, Renard François, Bill Sinclair, William Harris and Mary Rolando,

**Board Members Absent:** Kristine LaLonde and Chrissy Kirkwood

**Metro Legal Advisor:** Josh Lee

**Mayor Liaison:** Erik Cole

Commissioner Boehm called the May Metro Social Services (MSS) Board of Commissioners meeting to order.

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

Commissioner Boehm commented on the Commissioner François presentation on the Community Needs Assessment

Finance

Pam McEwen stated for the end of March, Metro Social Services is \$85,000 under budget. Ms. McEwen projects that Metro Social Services will be approximately \$429,100 under budget.

The database project has ended and there was \$5,845 left over after completion and Ms. McEwen will follow-up with Finance to close this line item out. The Special Donation Fund has a balance of \$29,556.69. Project Homeless Connect is complete and interest will start to be earned on remaining funds.

Regarding the contracts, Ms. McEwen stated that the funeral services are showing as overspent. Homeless Commission grants are currently under budget with bus passes slightly over budget and food preparation under budget.

Commissioner Kirkwood had a question concerning Wilbert Vaults and the burial process used for Davidson County. After discussion, it was decided that Josh Lee of Metro Legal would research and bring his findings back to the board.

## **Program Reports**

- *Burial* – Commissioner Harris stated that during the month of March MSS had 26 burial requests and 11 burials were performed. There were 12 requests for cremations and 4 cremations were provided. Year to date, MSS has provided 107 burials and 30 cremations.

In addition to the services provided, MSS was able to assist a family in identifying a loved one that was buried in the Bordeaux cemetery in 1998.

- *Nutrition* – Commissioner LaLonde went on a site visit with Steve Lavigne. Commissioner LaLonde was able to meet one of the volunteers. Commissioner LaLonde met with Carol Wilson and Steve Lavigne to discuss ways to increase the impact with the current dollars by identifying strategic ways to maximize efficiency.
- *Planning & Coordination* – Commissioner Kirkwood reported that Planning and Coordination Staff attended the Council on Aging meeting in April, attended the ribbon cutting event of the Nashville Financial Empowerment Center, hosted the Poverty of Nashville event at Lipscomb University, participated in Webcast on Who are the Poor in the U.S., and attended organizational meetings for A Voice, a new grassroots educational and advocacy organization to address poverty.

Commissioner Kirkwood also commented on three upcoming events: April 30, 2013 Nashville Hunger Banquet at 5:30-8:00 p.m. at Second Harvest Food Bank. May 3, 2013 Poverty in Nashville, 8:30 -11:30 a.m. at Looby Center and June or July Metropolitan Social Services is planning to host a viewing and discussion of the recent HBO documentary on the growing poverty in American, American Winter.

Commissioner Boehm commented that the Community Needs Evaluation is becoming more and more important to the community. Commissioner Sinclair further committed that he attended a meeting at Martha O'Bryan and he was very impressed with the maps that showed the spread of poverty.

- *Family Support* – Commissioner Sinclair met with Demitria Vaughn on the Family Support Services Program. Commissioner Sinclair explained that for those who are unemployed and lack transportation, bus passes can be provided to assist with employment or housing. He indicated that affordable housing issues remain and the most frequent request is for financial assistance. The client population is 91% mothers with children and 75% need financial assistance.

Family Support currently has 7 staff positions, of which 2 are vacant due to retirement. MSS is currently partnering with the Financial Empowerment Program Eric Cole works with. Commissioner Sinclair commented on the Ride to Thrive event in which had over 1,000 people in attendance.

## **Homelessness Commission Report**

Judy Tackett presented in the absence of Will Connelly, Director of the Homelessness Commission. Ms. Tackett began her report by stating that the Homelessness Commission has launched a community campaign that is partner-driven. Also, the Homelessness Commission is known as the lead for this campaign that focuses on providing housing for chronically homeless individuals in Davidson County,

Judy stated that the Homelessness Commission is working very hard on the Registry Week, which is to be held on May 28 - 31. During this time period, people will be surveyed to find the most vulnerable and chronically homeless. On June 4, the Homelessness Commission will hold a public briefing press conference to launch Nashville's campaign to end chronic homelessness from 10:30 a.m. to noon at the Nashville Downtown Library.

Commissioner Boehm stated that the goal is to put 27 homeless people/families into housing each month.

## **Directors Report**

Renee Pratt began her report by stating that the sequestration did impact the Nutrition budget by about \$47,000. MSS received a one-time carry over fund from our funder of \$30,000 for this year. However, this may cause a problem for next year's budget.

The Ride 2 Thrive Community event was held last Saturday at Hartman Park and it was very successful. The event had multiple health screenings available from breast exams to dental and vision checks, etc., from approximately 60 vendors.

Ms. Pratt commented on the budget meeting with Mayor Karl Dean and said that it went well. Most of the questions asked at the budget hearing involved the Community Needs Assessment.

The MSS budget meeting with the Metro Council is scheduled for May 16 at 4:30 p.m. at the courthouse on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Commissioner Boehm and Renee Pratt are scheduled to meet with the Mayor on May 6 to talk about the issues of Indigent Burial and the Ad Hoc Committee on Aging. Commissioner Boehm suggested that Commissioner Rolando be included in this meeting with the Mayor.

Ms. Pratt closed her presentation by commenting on the MSS Annual Report and the Community Needs Evaluation. Both of these documents were provided to Board members, and if additional copies are needed, please contact Bonnie Campbell.

## **Personnel Committee**

The Nominating/Personnel Committee met on March 27 to evaluate the performance of the Metro Social Services Executive Director, Renee Pratt and to make recommendations to the

Board of Commissioners on renewing Ms. Pratt's contract as Metro Social Services Executive Director.

Members present at the Personnel Committee meeting were Commissioner Boehm, Commissioner Rolando and Commissioner Harris. The committee discussed the September 2012 Evaluation of Ms. Pratt and covered the appraisal period from June 2011 to June 2012.

The Personnel Committee agreed that Ms. Pratt was an excellent Executive Director and agreed that on all performance criteria she was either commendable or outstanding. The Committee then reviewed Ms. Pratt's letter addressed to the committee outlining the past years activities and her participation as well as her request for the board's consideration of an extended contract. Then after careful consideration, the overall opinion of Ms. Pratt's performance as Executive Director of Metro Social Services, the Personnel Committee was unanimous in recommending that Renee Pratt be given a five year contract.

Director's salary will increase by a 1 time of 6% if current or future administration reinstates increments within the contract period. It was also recommended that Renee Pratt be given a 25 day vacation each year as she has served Metro for 20 years or more and this is in the line with Metro guidelines.

Commissioner Boehm presented this to Ms. Pratt and it has been given to Josh Lee of Metro Legal. Josh has also put together a contract with the discussed items outlined.

The Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners had to decide on the contract between Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County and Renee Pratt. Commissioner Boehm then opened up for questions.

Josh Lee stated that whatever the Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners decides within the contract is what governs.

***A motion was made to accept the Metro Social Services contract for Renee Pratt as follows: MSS Executive Directors salary will increase by one time at 6% if Metro reinstates increments within the contract period, will be given a five year contract and 25 days of vacation each year. A motion was properly made, seconded and accepted unanimously.***

***Commissioner Boehm called for the meeting to be adjourned.***