

**Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners
Meeting Summary
of
September 25, 2013**

Board Members Present: Frank Boehm, Betty Johnson, Bill Sinclair, Renard François and Mary Rolando,

Board Members Absent: William Harris and Chrissy Kirkwood

Metro Legal Advisor: Corey Harkey

Mayor Liaison:

Commissioner Rolando called the September Metro Social Services (MSS) Board of Commissioners meeting to order. ***Commissioner Rolando made a motion to approve the August meeting summary. A motion was properly made, seconded and accepted unanimously.***

Finance

Pam McEwen stated the first page of her report references activity through August without the internal service fees. Metro is currently working on getting the budget posted with the internal service fees, which are a big part of our budget. Ms. McEwen is anticipating that Metro Social Services will end up with approximately \$200,000 from Personal Services, with all vacant positions filled by the end of October.

MSS Donation Funds have approximately \$32,200, divided between Camilla Caldwell and Meals on Wheels. Metro Homelessness Commission has approximately \$97,000 in the Project Homeless Connect and "How's Nashville" funds.

Commissioner Boehm made a proposal that the Director, Renee Pratt and the Board Chair, Commissioner Rolando carry the request to finance to use the extra funds to benefit MSS clients.

Program Reports

Homeless – Commissioner Boehm began his report by commenting on the wide variety of individuals that end up homeless. With the assistance from Giovanni Achoe, Manager of the Homeless Program, Commissioner Boehm was able to come up with some numbers regarding the Homelessness Program back a few years ago with an estimated 4,000 homeless individuals in Nashville.

However, Will Connelly, Director of Metro Homelessness Commission, gave a total of 2,013 homeless in Nashville. Of these 23% were veterans, 40% had mental health or substance abuse issues and many had previously been incarcerated. Commissioner

Boehm further stated that there are 105 agencies in Nashville that deal with homeless. Currently, Nashville is able to house 1200 individuals in shelters.

Commissioner Boehm stated that during the month of August the Homeless Program had a total of 104 open cases, with some of the reasons being 56% financial needs and 44% housing-related services. During July and August, the Homeless Program was able to obtain housing for 10 family households. Demographics for the 104 open cases were 83% female and 72% African American. Rooftop is a partner with the Metro Social Services Homeless Program, which is made up of 40 individual churches that provide funds to assist applicants who come for rental assistance.

Planning & Coordination – Dinah Gregory stated that P&C is currently in the process of gathering data for the 2013 American Community Needs Survey and that new census data was released last Thursday. Included in the board packet is a brief selection of census data that describes the poverty for Tennessee and Davidson County. However, for the third year in a row Davidson County's poverty rate is higher than Tennessee's. Nashville still has work that needs to be done.

Homemaker – Commissioner François began his report by stating that the Homemaker Program currently has 11 Choices customers for which we have been billed \$14,440 this year. Two new Homemakers have been hired with two more positions becoming available. One of the positions will become available due to retirement and the other position was through an internal move. The Homemakers are currently going through Succession Planning with internal staff.

Adult & Family Support – Commissioner Sinclair began by giving a brief description of Adult and Family Services. Adult & Family provides assistance to Davidson County residents to help them develop life skills, increase their independence and improve family stability with intensive counseling. All positions are currently filled in the Adult & Family Program. Adult & Family has 98 open cases, considered high for the number of workers. Commissioner Sinclair asked what the board could do to help. Staff commented that it would be beneficial to have access to financial resources to assist.

Some of the demographics include; 73% females, 27% male, age range 20-29 at 14%, 30-30 at 15%, 40-49 at 28%, 50-59 at 10%, 30% over 50 with 71% being African American and 16% white male. Housing is 40% of the request needed and 52% miscellaneous.

Nutrition – Commissioner Johnson began her report by stating that Metro Nutrition provide meals to eligible seniors 60 years and older, along with those who are disabled and live in one of the high rises. Commissioner Johnson stated for the month of August 935 senior customers have been served, serving over 15,000 meals. Year to date, over 18,000 senior meals have been served, serving over 30,000 meals. The Nutrition Program has sold 103 cases of Nutrition Supplement to 21 customers, with 26 customers enrolled for the home delivered meals for the month of August and one new customer enrolled in congregate meals.

A new frozen meal vendor has been selected by the name of "Golden Cuisine" and many positive compliments have been received regarding this vendor.

Commissioner Boehm had a question regarding the Continuous Quality Improvement numbers and whether Metro Social Services has a benchmark in which the numbers can be compared against other targets. These benchmarks or targets would let us know whether we are low or high compared to National averages. Commissioner Boehm suggested that having a benchmark would help the board as well as staff locate areas of weakness.

Commissioner Rolando suggested we discuss this at the next session of Strategic Planning and maybe the benchmarks can be available by that time.

Commissioner Rolando commented on Will Connelly and the entire Homelessness Commission, who are away at a retreat, on how well the first Homelessness Commission meeting went under her tenure. Commissioner Rolando felt the Commission is data driven and all the changes have been for the good in dealing with the chronic homeless in Davidson County.

Renee Pratt stated that the Ordinance for the Homelessness Commissions 10 year plan expires in May of 2015. Ms. Pratt and Mr. Connelly are in the process of speaking with the Chair and other Homelessness Commission members about the future of the Commission. These discussions include what the commission should look like and where it should be housed. The findings will be presented to the Metro Social Services Board where a vote will be required.

Commissioner Boehm stated that the Board should go on record agreeing that the Homelessness Commission remain with Metro Social Services after watching the symbiotic relationship between the two.

Directors Report

Renee Pratt began her report by commenting on the Metro Social Services Health and Wellness Fair that was held for all staff. Vanderbilt conducted health screenings on weight, height, BMI, cholesterol, glucose and educational presentations were provided. Staff was then asked to complete an evaluation on the fair in which excellent comments were received.

The second Strategic Planning session is currently being planned with Brad Gray as the facilitator. Ms. Pratt stated that she spoke with Commissioner Rolando about extending the October meeting from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. to have a brief board meeting and then go straight into the Strategic Planning segment. Following this session, one other session will be held to close it out.

Ms. Pratt then asked the board to refer to the "Ideas to Reality Program" flyer located in each folder. Kristine LaLonde from the Mayor's Office is working closely with Metro Social Services regarding how we can effectively deliver more services to constituents out in the

community. Ms. LaLonde along with the Nashville Entrepreneur Center has come up with the Ideas to Reality Program.

The purpose of this program is to allow Metro employees to submit innovative ideas on how to improve customer impact. Steve Lavigne of our Nutrition Program has come up with an idea on how to provide more meals out in the community. MSS is currently looking at a new way of providing services in the Nutrition Program with the existing budget if we do not receive a cut in the October budget. Meetings are currently being held with Ms. LaLonde and MSS staff. Hopefully, more information will be provided at the next board meeting.

Ms. Pratt ended her report with comments regarding the Ad Hoc Committee meeting on Aging Population and Transportation. It was decided that a Transportation Summit be held to involve more providers to determine where the needs are in Davidson County.

Commissioner Boehm called for the meeting to be adjourned.