

Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners
Meeting Summary
of
January 22, 2014

Board Members Present: Mary Rolando, Frank Boehm, Betty Johnson, and Renard François
Board Members Absent: William Harris, Bill Sinclair and Chrissy Kirkwood
Metro Legal Advisor: Josh Bobo

Mayor Liaison:

Commissioner Rolando called the January 22nd, Metro Social Services (MSS) Board of Commissioners meeting to order.

Commissioner Rolando suggested we review the budget at the beginning of the meeting since Commissioner Johnson had to leave early.

Budget

Pam McEwen begin her report by stating the budget kick off meeting has not been held and by that being said the budget reduction projection for FY 2015 has not been determined. Ms. McEwen supplied the board with four potential reduction scenarios, 2%, 3%, 4% or 5% with details of what could be cut. Commissioner Rolando stated that Ms. McEwen did a great job presenting the budget to the Homelessness Commission. Ms. McEwen stated that the Homelessness Commission has already voted on this same reduction as shown on the scenarios.

The following expenditures would occur in each option a vacant position, a decrease in the Homelessness Commission's external contracts and reductions in the meal preparation in the Nutrition program.

The **2% option** amounts to \$124,200 which includes all the above expenditures. Next, is the 3% option includes a portion of the Ensure budget, which amounts to \$186,300, and again the same option hold true with the vacant position and the amount for the Homelessness Commissions. The Meal Preparation remains the same, all the bus ticket money is removed along with some other line items. The **4% option** amounts to \$248,400; slightly raised meal preparation and increased the other line items. The Ensure budget would be totally removed from the program, so we would no longer provide Ensure for customers. The **5% option** amounts to \$310,500; a total of \$133,600 will be taken from meal preparation and increased some other line items to make the reduction amount.

Each Commissioner received a copy of the meal reduction-cost determination. Since this will be the biggest reduction in every option, this page shows the problematic impact which would basically be the number of meals that will be cut. Ms. McEwen stated the

50-59 groups which are totally supported by local dollars would be the first decrease about \$47,250.00. The three sites Chippington I, Riverwood and SCI Bordeaux, which are funded by local dollars, would also probably have to be cut. Finally, the sites that are partially funded by GNRC, may result in a reduction of meals that are funded by local dollars.

Commissioners Rolando stated that none of these options are happy consequences.

Commissioner Johnson shared that MSS is serving about 14,000 to 15,000 meals a month on average. She noted that option 5 would reduce the number of meals served by 35,600 and that is approximately 2½ months if put all together spread over 12 months.

Commissioner Rolando also stated her concern is also for the bus tickets that would be cut and how it would affect the mobility for a lot of people.

Commissioner François stated regardless of the scenarios we will have a significant decrease in the amount of meals that are provided. Commissioner François asked if we have thought about partnering with any other organizations in which clients could be referred to in order to receive these services.

Ms. Pratt commented that there is really no other place to refer people to. The GNRC grant is being used to its capacity and then the local dollars supplement the other meals. Ms. Pratt further stated that in the past when we have had to cut the budget, we were able to take it from Nutrition and we could absorb the reduction.

Commissioner Rolando asked if staff is prepared to say how many people are affected by these cuts in each scenario. Ms. Pratt stated that this information will be included in the report when time to go before the Mayor and Council. The budget kickoff is scheduled for January 27. However, we have not received the date on which we will present to the Mayor.

Commissioner Johnson had a question regarding the MHC Contracts and whether this was staff dollars, food, etc. Ms. McEwen stated that these are the basic contracts with the Homelessness Commission Program. This is the contracts that MSS have with the external vendors. The Homelessness Commission has not experienced a previous cut.

Commissioner Rolando asked if the Commissioners had any further comments regarding the Budget Reduction Options.

Commissioner Rolando made a motion to adopt the Budget Reduction Options Projection for FY 2015. The motion was seconded and accepted unanimously.

Community Needs Evaluation

Renee Pratt stated that we are in the process of finalizing our Community Needs Evaluation for the 5th year and we requested the Commissioners approval to publish in the spring.

A motion was made to approve the 5th edition of the Community Needs Evaluation for publication. The motion was seconded and accepted unanimously.

Commissioner Boehm had a question as to how many agencies are feeding people in Davidson County. Commissioner Boehm stated he read things in the newspaper about different organizations feeding people in the Davidson County area. Commissioner Boehm asked if there was a way in which we can get a listing of all the organizations that provide meals/food to citizens in Davidson County.

Ms. Pratt stated that MSS is one of the largest providers in Davidson County. Ms. Pratt further stated that additional research would need to be done to determine the other meal providers in the city.

Commissioner Boehm stated that the possible reductions are addressing a significant number of meals. Commissioner Boehm stated that Mayor Dean and Mr. Riebling need to know that cutting MSS would reduce meals for 14,000 people. Commissioner Rolando pointed out that this could put a greater burden on staff, and if the research is done we should be able to come to a resolution.

Commissioner Rolando asks if Dinah Gregory and Planning and Coordination could start the research. Commissioner Boehm gave an example, "we have five or organizations that do 90% of the feeding of the hungry in Nashville and MSS is number is XX%".

Commissioner Boehm then commented on the Strategic Planning and he is looking for this to help determine the most important things we are doing for the vulnerable, and that shelter and food are the most important things in helping those who are poor.

Finance

Pam McEwen began her report by stating that we are currently \$379,000 under budget. The only line item over budget is Contribution to Others due to the expenditures for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Ms. McEwen is projecting MSS will be \$245,000 under budget, with the majority from personal services. The variance in all other line items is \$23,800 which Ms. McEwen is projecting will be under budget.

We have started a program in which customers are assisted with water and gas utility deposits. We should be able to utilize the entire \$23,000 by the end of the fiscal year.

Ms. McEwen is projecting revenue to be \$16,000 under budget. It is a combination of Nutrition and Homemakers but primarily within the options program.

Social Services Donation funds have approximately \$33,000, which is split between Camilla Caldwell and meals on Wheels. The Homeless Donation Fund has approximately \$84,400 and that is split between Project Homeless Connect and How's Nashville.

Commissioner Rolando asked how we publicize the donation fund. Ms. McEwen stated that Social Services Donation Fund is out on the web site and if people want to make a donation they do. We have some people that give regularly to these funds. However, the Homelessness Commission actively seeks donations.

Ms. Pratt stated that contingent on how financial assistant is addressed during the budget process, MSS may need to start an aggressive campaign to raise money for the Camilla Caldwell fund and determine how the funds could best be used.

Commissioner Rolando asked if we had any conversation about a link with the Community Foundation. Ms. Pratt stated no, but that the Homelessness Commission has had some conversation around this program. Commissioner Rolando asks if we could follow up with the connection with the Community Foundation and United Way.

Commissioner François asks if MSS has any limitations on whether we can provide funds from corporations. Ms. McEwen stated that we have a process for receiving these type donations.

Commissioner Rolando stated that where there is a reduction, we might target those communities and industries to help make up the difference by making the appeal more targeted.

In closing, Ms. McEwen discussed the contract portion of her report. Funeral services seem to have declined and we are currently under budget and normally at this time we are over budget. The Day Center and Guest House expenditures represent July, August and September with only three months of billing. The remaining contracts are pretty much on target.

Commissioner Boehm stated that we are going to have to start looking at outside sources more and more. Do we have any chance or having our Commission meetings televised? Commissioner Rolando stated that we would have to operate from a position of strength and look at what it would take to be a Commission member. Commissioner Rolando stated we should have this discussion when more members can be present and also review the time of the meetings to make sure it is convenient for everyone.

Program Reports

Homeless - Commissioner Boehm began his report by providing numbers from September, when there were 108 open cases and we obtained housing year-to-date of 17 since July 1. Then it was 17 obtaining housing to 32, so that was 15 in a month. However, November stated at 32, so from October to November it did not change at all. Then December went to 36 which are 4, so for 6 months we obtained housing for 36 individuals/families. Ms. Pratt stated that we need to include our Rooftop numbers because we do assist a lot of individuals/families with housing. Rooftop has a cap of 40 each month and most of the time we met that goal. Commissioner Boehm stated that we should gather and report all the data from both the Homeless Services and Rooftop.

Nutrition - Commissioner Johnson's report was given by Commissioner Rolando in her absence. Commissioner Rolando began by stating the total number of senior customers was 1,009 in December for both congregate and home delivered meals, with a total of 5,576 to December. The total number of new customers enrolled for home delivered meals year-to-date is 79 and new customers enrolled in congregate sites 15. A total of 14,092 meals have been served in December and between July and December, 88,513 have been served. Total number of Nutritional Supplement/Ensure sold was 61 to 19 unduplicated customers. Commissioner Rolando then asked the question as to what alternatives would people have if the Ensure program goes away? Ms. Pratt stated that customers would have to buy it elsewhere at retail cost.

Planning and Coordination - Dinah Gregory reported on P&C in the absence of Commissioner Kirkwood. Mrs. Gregory stated that P&C is in the process of completing the Community Needs Evaluation, continuing with formatting and editing. Ms. Pratt is scheduling a meeting with Metro Council in order to present the Community Needs Evaluation with a public event to be held in early April.

Ms. Pratt also stated the Community Needs Evaluation has an expanded section on the "Evidence Based Practice" also along with "Understanding Poverty".

Indigent Burial - Carol Wilson gave the report on Indigent Burial in the absence of Commissioner Harris. For the month of December the total amount of burials requested 32, and the total amount provided were 14. However, 10 of the requested burials were out of county and MSS was unable to assist with burial. For the month of December a total of 13 cremations were requested and only 1 cremation was provided. During the July 1 thru December 31 time frame, the total amount of burials were 53 in which there was a decrease with 13 cremations during this time period.

Ms. Wilson further stated with the prescreening process helped to decrease the number of burials provided because MSS was able to screen the request more carefully. Also, if MSS was unable to assist with the burial, the clients were referred to other agencies for services.

Homemaker - Patricia Wingfield gave the report on Homemakers. Ms. Wingfield reported that there were 198 adult customers with 62 on the children's case load. We provided 2,128.50 units of service hours with the adults and 44.25 units of service hours with the children. Since July 1, the Homemakers have provided 14,256 units of service for the Homemakers and Personal Care Program for 260 customers.

Ms. Wingfield stated that customers fluctuate month to month due to how the cases are closed. There are currently 149 people on the waiting list and as cases are closed we add new ones from the waiting list.

Family Support - For the month of December total number of contacts were 11,030. General gaps of service are employment, gas vouchers, affordable housing, health care

and household furniture. To date there are 148 cases open in the unit and for the month of December, 30 of the cases were new open cases.

Cases are closed when a worker is unable to contact the client, or has been unable to contact the client for 10 business days. If client completes all goals and has no further needs, the worker will close the case.

Director's Report

Renee Pratt began her report by stating that she would contact the commission after the meeting on January 27 regarding the budget reduction for the fiscal year 2015. Ms. Pratt also reported that 12 Social Workers along with 4 Homemaker Supervisors will be trained to enroll people under the Affordable Care Act and this service will start in February.

All Commissioners and participants should have received information on the next steps of the Strategic Plan in which Brad Gray will meet with the committee work on the 3rd and 4th of February to discuss next steps. This meeting will help to identify the keys goals for the next three years, and the Board received the committee information, meeting date and time.

Ms. Pratt also reported that the Homelessness Commission along with Social Services and other community partners are planning a two day boot camp which will define how better to serve the homeless customers and utilizing the vulnerability index to prioritize and enroll people in the process.

Lastly, the Community Needs Evaluation will go out to the Mayor's Office in March and will be presented to council and then the public event.

Commissioner Rolando called for the meeting to be adjourned.