

**Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners
Meeting Summary
of
February 26, 2014**

Board Members Present: Mary Rolando, Frank Boehm, Betty Johnson, and William Harris

Board Members Absent: Renard François, Bill Sinclair and Chrissy Kirkwood

Metro Legal Advisor: Josh Lee

Mayor Liaison:

Commissioner Rolando called the February 26, Metro Social Services (MSS) Board of Commissioners meeting to order.

Commissioner Rolando made a motion to approve the February meeting summary. The motion was seconded and accepted unanimously. Josh Lee made one correction to the January meeting summary; the Metro Legal Advisor for the January meeting was Jason Bobo.

Finance

Pam McEwen stated that we are approximately \$230,000 under budget. There are a couple programs over budget due to January having three payroll periods.

Regarding budget projections, Ms. McEwen projected that MSS will be \$341,400 under budget, with the variance in all other line items of \$21,500.

Ms. McEwen stated that MSS plans to spend the majority of the funds and leave some flexibility in the agency. The budget has an increase of \$72,900 which is the 1 1/2 % employee salary increase received in January.

Social Services Donation funds balances were Camilla Caldwell, with \$19,595.98 and Meals on Wheels with \$13,215. The Homeless Donation Fund, for Project Homeless Connect had \$14,438 and "How's Nashville" had \$81,487 at the end of January. MSS will also receive \$200,000 grant from MDHA to support How's Nashville and the Homelessness Commission. To date \$2,642.95 has been spent out of this fund. Revenue for this program is received for a monthly basis. Contracts are all slightly under budget.

Lastly, Ms. McEwen commented on the budget that was submitted and it had a slight change due to the budget increase. So, the amount we were to submit was 188,500.00 an increase of approximately \$2,200 dollars.

Program Reports

Homeless - Commissioner Boehm reported that he requested an expansion on data at last month's meeting from the Homeless unit and this will be the format for future board reports. As of the end of January, there were 111 open cases and 20 cases were closed. A total of 20 clients maintained housing through Rooftop partnership. Four clients were provided with permanent housing, and year to date 41 clients have been provided with permanent housing. Of the 111 cases, 34 were chronic homeless; 26 families with a total of 59 children; and 4 ex-felons. Rooftop was able to service 196 families representing 393 children.

Commissioner Boehm stated on March 7, he along with Will Connelly will be speaking to the Kiwanis club regarding children and their families obtaining permanent housing.

Commissioner Rolando had a suggestion from Commissioner Kirkwood in which the MSS Department Managers would be asked what went well this month within their departments and what they would like to see improved upon.

In the absence of Giovanni Achoe, Manager of the MSS Homeless Program, Commissioner Boehm stated that he find that there is a lot of momentum and interest in this program.

Nutrition - Commissioner Johnson stated that a total 926 seniors were served in January, with a total year to date of 6,502. In January, a total of 13,880 meals were served, with a total year to date of 102,303. Also in the month of January, there were 75 nutritional supplements sold to a total of 21 unduplicated customers. A total of 88 new customers were enrolled in the home delivery program and 44 congregate programs year to date.

Also in January, a pilot project began with both the Nutrition and Homemakers program. The purpose of this program was to try and reduce hunger in the 50-59 year old baby boomer population along with the under 50 disabled population. Results to date include 24 referrals from the Homemaker waiting list in the 50 to 59 category and 7 for the under 50 category. Of the 24 referrals, 14 were assessed and 8 were approved for meals and 6 were waiting on their medical statements from their physician to enter the program after statement is received they will also receive meals. Under 50, we have 3 receiving meals and 4 waiting on medical statements from their physician. Due to funding this program will not continue to operate after June.

Planning and Coordination - Dinah Gregory reported on P&C in the absence of Commissioner Kirkwood. Mrs. Gregory began her report by stated that P&C works with existing structures of organizations that exist here in Nashville. Ms. Gregory stated that P&C works with systems and become integrated in the activities so they can share technical assistance and any additional assistance that would be needed. The Community Needs Evaluation has been submitted to the printer and should ready in a couple of weeks.

Ms. Gregory stated that Councilman Maynard invited P&C to come and present to the Health, Hospital and Social Services Committee and other council members. Ms. Gregory and P&C will have 30 minutes to present to the council and they are pleased to do this for the first time. On April 9 there will be public event, "The Magnitude and Patterning of Poverty" at the Martin Professional Development Center. Ms. Gregory stated sign up for attendance has been great.

Ms. Gregory also stated that P&C had called together all the providers that provide financial assistance type service to people in poverty in Davidson County. A steering committee was formed to identify a data collection process which would help determine how well needs are being met. Another meeting of the Financial Assistance Coalition is scheduled for next month for the steering committee to present the common spreadsheet on which agencies can enter information such as the reason the person asked for the money, denied or approved, etc. A test will be conducted to collect data from March through June and will report on the findings. The Steering Committee is being co-chaired by Julia Guildamizer and Charley Gibson.

Indigent Burial - Commissioner Harris reported that year to date there were request for 25 burials with 17 being ineligible; 11 cremations were requested with 5 being provided. Year to date there were 62 burials and 18 cremations. Ms. Pratt commented that the numbers are lower for some reason; however the numbers are starting to increase.

Homemaker - Patricia Wingfield gave the report on Homemakers in the absence of Commissioner Renard François. Ms. Wingfield reported that services were provided to 264 customers, 11 Medicaid customers, in which they receive services 2 to 3 days a week.

Monitors were recently at our sight to audit the SSBG grant in which we hope to have no findings. Monitors will also be coming from United Health Care next month for the Homemaker and the Nutrition programs. There are currently 145 on the waiting list.

Family Support - Lonnie Wade will give the report on Family Support in the absence of Commissioner Sinclair. Mr. Wade noted that a total of 155 cases were open at the end of January. Last month, a total of 31 cases were opened and 22 closed with 1,073 contacts for the month. Trends that were seen include homeless families seeking shelter, individuals seeking affordable housing, emergency food boxes, individuals seeking employment, transportation assistance, individuals seeking assistance with utilities/rent, and other rental assistant needs.

Gaps in service include gas vouchers, access to Affordable Care Act for which MSS staff were trained and are now navigators and able to assist clients with signing up for healthcare and help with any questions they may have. Two Social Workers have been trained on the new process "How's Nashville" due to the number of additional clients. . Also, the Life Management courses are close to completion.

Homelessness Commission

Will Connelly stated that last summer MHC set a 100 day goal to house 200 people in the launch Nashville campaign. This campaign ended in September and Housing Placement Data is being collected. In February of this year MHC held a boot camp in which another 100 day goal was set ending on May 30 (100 business days). The process is designed to develop a better system for the housing placements.

The new goal is to house 50 individuals and 50 families using an entry system using a collection of google documents and tools. they already started assessing people using the assessment tool. A spreadsheet is being used to document the information and giving an assessment of 1 to 20 with 20 being the most vulnerable. Landlords are also being asked to announce vacancies using a web form. Using the information gathered will help to best place a person in most suitable unit. The design team meets every Monday at 3:30.

Using this new system, the goal is to house the first person by March 10. The goal is to also access 150 people and that goal has already been met. The goal is to get 30 units donated to this cause by Friday of this week. Front line staff completes the assessment and there are about 40 to 50 on the front line staff. The assessments include health and wellness and how long they have been on the streets and the front line staff also assigns the identifier. Urban Housing Solutions will use the matrix/tool to determine the best match for the 300 units' availability.

The high point was definitely a segment on CBS's 60 minutes which was a very positive story. The low point was not being able to respond to all the interest. Commissioner Rolando stated that Will Connelly has done a lot in the short term he has been in the role as Director of the Homelessness Commission.

Director's Report

Renee Pratt stated that the Internal Audit will be at Metro Social Services for 3 months.

Ms. Pratt stated in an effort to save money and to become more efficient, she asked for the Commissioners vote to create a part time unit of Homemakers. We currently have three full-time vacancies and we would like to use these vacancies to create 10 part time slots. Most of the expense is in salaries or fringe benefits and with the ten part-time positions we will not have to pay for benefits. The classification will be changed to a group care aide and it would also lower the classification, but will not impact the current Homemakers on staff. However, once the positions are vacated, the classifications will be lowered. Ms. Pratt is asking for the Commissioners approval to move forward with this process and the next step would be to submit it to Finance for their approval.

A motion was made to approve the three vacant full time positions be created to 10 part time positions. The classification will be changed to a group care aid in which no current Homemakers will be impacted. However, once the positions are vacated the classifications will be lowered. The motion was seconded and accepted unanimously.

Commissioner Rolando called for the meeting to be adjourned.