

**Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners  
Meeting Summary  
of  
May 28 , 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:** Jason Bobo

**Mayor Liaison:**

Commissioner Rolando called the May 28, Metro Social Services (MSS) Board of Commissioners meeting to order.

***Commissioner Rolando made a motion to approve the March meeting summary with the correction that Jason Bobo will not be replacing Josh Lee as the Metro Legal Advisor for MSS. Jason Bobo only replaced Josh Lee for the March meeting. The motion was seconded and accepted unanimously.***

Finance

Pam McEwen began her report by stating that MSS is approximately \$324,000 under budget with approximately \$250,000 in personal services at this time.

Ms. McEwen projected that MSS will be \$368,000 under budget, with \$350,000 being from salaries and fringe benefits. Ms. McEwen projected at the end of the fiscal year MSS will be \$18,000 under budget.

Ms. McEwen stated that MSS expects \$20,000 in additional revenue from GNRC. Social Services Donation funds have a balance of \$32,968.34 split mainly between Camilla Caldwell and Meals on Wheels. The Metro Homelessness Commission (MHC) Donation Fund, has a total of \$81,828.49 with most funds being "How's Nashville" and Project Homeless Connect (PHC). Ms. McEwen stated that an RFQ is currently out for bid with the deadline of June 3 to find someone to manage a PHC event.

In terms of budget reductions, Ms. McEwen listed out where the reductions are to date, with a total of reductions of \$145,200 and it has been broken down as follows: 3%=\$73,400; Internal Service fees=\$71,800.

The meeting between the Metro Council and Social Services was held on the previous day and Council asked that MSS prioritize the items that were offered for reduction in the order of the most negative to the least negative in hopes of restoring parts of the reduction.

Ms. McEwen reported that contracts are currently at 73% overall. Funeral services is currently at 70.77% which is very unusual.

## Program Reports

*Homeless* - Giovanni Achoe presented the Homeless Program report in the absence of Commissioner Boehm. Ms. Achoe reported that as of the end of April, Metro Homeless Services has 146 open cases, 38 new cases, 82% of the cases that came in were female with 18% being male, 82% were African American, 18% Caucasian and less than 1% were other.

Out of the 38 new cases, 34% were between the ages of 30 and 39, 39% of the new cases were between 40 and 59.

Year to date housing-related outcome are that 62 individuals receiving case management obtained public housing. The MSS Homeless Program is currently serving 33 homeless families which include 50 children.

The trends show that older individuals (50+) are seeking housing where in the past older individuals would come in for utility assistance. Rooftop statistics for April are as follows, 23 households avoided eviction, and customers who were referred to MSS from congregations in April owed a total of \$75,236. Some of the customers stated that they could contribute to their own needs totaling \$20,492. Rooftop paid a total of \$6,600 dollars for the month of April for individuals who met their eligible criteria. Applicants may not meet the Rooftop criteria due to owing too much, no income or the hardships are ongoing. The new partnerships are Urban Housing Solutions and Metro Development and Housing.

Commissioner Rolando felt it would be interesting to have some of the numbers relative to Rooftop in terms of the unmet need of the amount authorized through MSS as to the amount Rooftop pays as a reference.

*Nutrition* - Commissioner Johnson began her report by stating that the total number of clients served for the month of April was 968. The total number of meals served during the month of April was 15,982. Plus 128 cases of nutritional supplements sold to 36 customers. Year to date over 146,000 meals have been provided to 9,427 seniors.

This year, the Nutrition Program had 173 new home delivered meal customers and added 128 additional customer to the congregate sites.

The Choices customer program is moving ahead. The program now has 16 Choices customers, compared to the past 3 months during which there were a total of 10. This change is due to a presentation given by the Nutrition program to a group of choices coordinators and now they understand how to add candidates to this program. For the month of April, the Nutrition program received revenue totaling \$1,572 for Choices meals to be provided to 10 customers averaging \$157 per customer and the program is expecting an increase in revenue for the month of May.

Commissioner Johnson also referenced a question Commissioner Boehm had asked in the May meeting as to where MSS fit in the Nutrition world of Davidson County. Commissioner Boehm wanted to know the part MSS plays in feeding the hungry of Nashville and whether the contribution large or small. Commissioner Boehm further added could this be used as a bargaining tool.

Dinah Gregory had mentioned in terms of strictly providing services to those over 60, MSS is the larger provider by far. Ms. Pratt stated that Ms. Gregory had spoken with Commissioner Boehm and realized that this was a bit more complicated than they had expected. Looking at the different populations and how many providers actually serve, it is hard to pin that number down. So, it was decided that the MSS would approach the Food Policy Council, in which Julius Witherspoon of Planning and Coordination is a part, in hopes we can gather more information.

*Planning and Coordination* - Abdelghani Barre reported on behalf of Planning and Coordination (P&C) in the absence of Commissioner Kirkwood. Mr. Barre began his report by commenting on the Financial Assistance Coalition. P&C has seen a need for the coalition in that every year people use data in the Community Needs Evaluation. It shows a continuing need for housing related issues such as help paying rent and utilities. The financial assistance is sharing data to assess the need and resources. The role of P&C is to collect and analyze the data to determine the level of the need and identify when people are declined for services and why.

Mr. Barre then stated that he and Lee Stewart also with P&C were appointed by the Mayor's office to work with Innovation. Mr. Barre stated that he and Mr. Stewart are involved with a process called Continuous Improvement Collective Impact (CICI). The purpose of CICI is to look at the vulnerable population of services available through Metro Government. CICI is trying to find out the purpose of the metro programs and if the programs can document and track the activities. Mr. Barre and Mr. Stewart review documents for the different programs throughout Metro and the Mayor will chair the meeting once a month to discuss the findings. This is a continuous process and will continue through December of 2014.

Mr. Barre also discussed the April 9, 2013 Community Needs Evaluation event. Mr. Barre stated that approximately 127 participants were surveyed and about 80% stated the information was very useful. After the event another survey was sent out with approximately 86 participants and about 98.4% felt that the 2013 edition and previous editions were very helpful.

*Homemaker* - Commissioner Francois reported that during the month of August, a total of 275 customers were served; 223 from the Adult Homemaker Program and 52 from the Children's Homemaker Program.

Commissioner Francois then stated that Pat Wingfield would provide additional information for the Homemaker Program. Ms. Wingfield stated that there are currently 157 customers on the waiting list, recurring services provided to 296 customers, including 10 Medicaid Waiver customers, 21 Option Customers, 69 SSBG customers, 196 Metro customers, with 3 staff resignations and 1 staff person on family medical leave.

Ms. Wingfield further stated that 7 cases were opened during the month of April with 4 cases being closed. The trend is an increase in those who are young, disabled and those with mental health issues.

*Family Support* - Lonnie Wade gave a report on Family Support in the absence of Commissioner Sinclair. Mr. Wade noted that in the month of April, 22 of the 28 open cases were women, 6 were men, 86% were African American, 24% Caucasian and 1% other.

Mr. Wade stated there was an increase in the 50-59 age group pertaining more to housing related assistance. For the last month, Family Support has had a total of 3,333 contacts. Of those contacts, 516 were housing related, 227 actual housing was provided, 1% was healthcare, 21% transportation, 10% related to food, 26% employment and 521 miscellaneous.

Lastly, Mr. Wade commented on the continuing trends in the need for housing and housing related assistance.

*Indigent Burial* - Commissioner Harris reported for the month of April that year to date 20 burials were requested and 7 were provided; 15 cremations were requested with 4 being provided. Year to date, there were 90 burials (with 7 being out of county) and 29 cremations (with 8 out of county).

Commissioner Rolando stated that the Indigent Burial numbers are low and it is possibly due to the change in guidelines.

#### Homelessness Commission

Will Connelly reported that the end of the year is coming up for "How's Nashville", the housing campaign that was started in June of 2013. The Homelessness Commission is currently preparing data for the one year milestone. Mr. Connelly stated that the Homelessness Commission will be able to document that the Community has housed over 500 chronic and vulnerable homeless persons in Davidson County.

Mr. Connelly stated that there were two main goals, to increase housing for the chronic homeless and vulnerable and also to help them stay in housing. So, this is the success story the Commission is looking for.

The Steering Committee will determine the benchmarks for the "How's Nashville" studies to help with this determination. Josh Lee stated that the data for "How's Nashville" is a fairly new model so there is really not a lot of comparison. Mr. Connelly stated that is evidence based practice in which clients are only followed for a few years.

Mr. Connelly stated that the commission is always on the lookout for Landlords and trying to figure out ways to connect with existing Landlords. The Commission is also, working on ways to develop more affordable housing in Nashville, and are currently not sure when the conversations will take place.

Homelessness Commission is currently working with Room in the Inn and Open Table on cold weather planning, trying to prepare for the winter in hopes to have a plan in place by September.

Mr. Connelly stated that by next month the Metro Homelessness Commission will be fully staffed. Internally MHC is trying to use the HMIS system to rental and utility assistance.

Lastly, 60 Minutes will be re-airing the story on the Homeless in Nashville around the middle of June. The Homelessness Commission also has a story in the New York Times. Lastly, Lee Stewart stated that the Housing Development Bulletin mentioned How's Nashville as one of the cities that was doing creative community collaborations with the chronic and vulnerable homeless.

### Director's Report

Renee Pratt began her report by stating that the Metro Auditors have completed their onsite process and a report should be available by the end of June. Ms. Pratt stated during the exit interview, they were very complimentary of MSS staff who were very experienced and knowledgeable, making it a pleasant experience.

Ms. Pratt then commented on the Strategic Planning process with documentation was located in each Commissioners board packet. Each Commissioner should have a copy of all five committee reports providing goals, strategies, timelines and next steps. The reports have not been sent out electronically yet. However, Ms. Pratt stated that she wanted to give the Commissioners an opportunity to look over the content. If any commissioner has questions or comments concerning either of the reports, please bring them to the June meeting.

Also in the board packets, Ms. Pratt stated that each Commissioner should have a background policy and procedure that requires the commission's vote. The policy was changed due to the fact that the Options contract required some information that we needed to include regarding the MSS background checks for the Homemaker Program and the Nutrition Program.

***A motion was made to approve the following changes to the Metropolitan Social Services Policies and Procedures. The changes were generated by the Choices Contract:***

- ***In addition, a background check inclusive of the List of Excluded Individuals/Entities (LEIE) check as well as the Excluded parties List System (EPLS) check will be conducted monthly for all current Social Services staff as required by Metropolitan Social Services' TN Care contracts.***
- ***PHSP's are located in Homemaker Service, Senior Nutrition Service and Family Support Service Programs.***
- ***TN Department of Health Abuse Registry (one of the pre-employment checks for PHSP staff in addition to requirements for all employees)***

***The motion was seconded and accepted unanimously.***

### Old Business

#### Homemaker Program

Ms. Pratt stated that a couple months ago each Commissioner was contacted to advise them of the recommendation of the Homemaker Program ending within a few months. Since then there have been several meetings with Kristine LaLonde, state providers, contractors as well as a meeting with the Deputy Mayor. The proposal on the table now for the MSS Commissioners is a vote for approval for the Homemaker Program to end through attrition over the next two to three years.

Ms. Pratt stated that MSS will continue to work with the external contractors over the next few months to end the contracts in order to bring some of the funding back into the MSS agency. All the contracts should be ended by September 2014, and at that point we will serve our local funded customers who will come off the program through attrition over the next two to three years. Notifications will be provided along with reassessment to see if the customers are eligible for any other programs that offer Homemaker services.

Ms. Pratt further stated that Metro Human Resources will be working with us to assist staff along with Commissioner Johnson with Good Will has offered there assistance with training programs. NCAC will also be working with us with some job placement. The Metro Social Services HR Manager, Yuri Hancock, will set up meetings with each Homemaker to assist with updating records to assist with preparing them for looking for further employment when it becomes necessary. MSS has also stopped accepting new clients. This proposal will require a vote.

***A motion was made to approve the proposal to end the Homemaker Program through attrition over the next two to three years. The motion was seconded and accepted unanimously.***

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