

**Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners
Meeting Summary
of
August 8, 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 August Metro Social Services (MSS) Board of Commissioners meeting to order.

Commissioner Rolando made a motion to approve the June meeting summary. A motion was properly made, seconded and accepted unanimously.

Director

Renee Pratt began by commenting on the Homemaker transition plan. The Adult Protective Services contract ended on July 1, 2014 and the customer's has since been transferred from MSS and the additional MSS contracts will be closed or transferred by the end of September, 2014. MSS Homemakers will then be left with approximately 200 Metro cases which will end through attrition over the next 2 to 3 years. With these contracts ending, it will not result in any layoffs.

Ms. Pratt stated that she had a great meeting with Commissioner Johnson and her staff at Goodwill. Goodwill is on board to provide training and employment assistance to the MSS Homemaker staff and this process will start around the end of August. Ms. Pratt further stated that we will create the pool of part-time homemakers in case we need to have them cover slots that are vacated by our full time homemakers.

The Nutrition Program received a total \$21,000 from GNRC in which the funds will be applied to the 50 to 59 program and families with children.

A question was raised at a previous meeting regarding the Poverty Council. Ms. Pratt was able to speak with Christine LaLonde regarding an update on the Poverty Council. Ms. LaLonde is planning to meet with the leaders of the Poverty Council to get an idea of which direction the council need to move. Ms. LaLonde felt that the council should stay in place and have quarterly meetings. Ms. LaLonde further stated that she will provide updates by either attending the MSS board meetings or provide information to Ms. Pratt to present to the board.

Commissioner Boehm stated that he would like the recommendation to be for the Poverty Council to come back to MSS for guidance or for oversight. Commissioner Rolando suggested that a sub-committee be formed to speak with Kristine LaLonde regarding the direction of the Poverty Council.

Ms. Pratt stated that MSS is now on Facebook, Twitter, Channel 3 and several ads in area papers along with the Tennessean online impressions. The MSS Annual Report has also been distributed and each Commissioner should have received a copy in your board packets.

Commissioner Rolando stated that Facebook page look really good. Commissioner Rolando also felt that everyone should think of additional content that could be added to the Facebook.

Strategic Plan

Ms. Pratt then brought attention to the Strategic Plan and that she and staff are currently working on the action steps under the five goals that were identified at previous meetings. A sub-committee regarding Goal 1 of the Strategic Action Plan will be compiled of various area partners along with employees. Ms. Pratt further commented that Goal 2; the Marketing goal is currently being addressed with staff along with the Communication Plan in Goal 3.

Commissioner Rolando commented that she was glad to see action take on Goal 2. Commissioner Rolando also stated that any work regarding the Poverty Council may need to be added into the Strategic Work Plan.

Audit

Next, is the Audit of Metropolitan Social Services (MSS), Ms. Pratt stated that it has been 7 years since MSS has been audited. The audit had 12 recommendations for the organization which are included in your board packets. From these 12 recommendations the most important is pertaining to the Nutrition Program with the use of volunteers and the possibilities of serving hot meals.

MSS responded to the audit with reasons as to why using volunteers would not be in the agencies best interest given that we cover all of Davidson County in our delivery area and food temperature and delivering the meals in a timely manner.

The next recommendation had to do with the subcontracting of the Homemaker Program out to a non-profit entity in the city. However, the board has already voted on how we will proceed with this recommendation. So, the updated transition plan has been attached to the audit as a response.

A motion was made to accept the July 16, 2014 Audit Response of Metropolitan Social Services. The motion was properly made, seconded and accepted unanimously.

Homelessness

Will Connelly began his report by stating that housing is still being tracked. The first housing retention report is around 75%. Around 600 housing placements have been documented since June of 2013.

The Homelessness Commission is also starting to have focus groups with new tenants that have gone through the "How's Nashville" program along with the service providers, TSU and the Health Department.

Mr. Connelly further commented that he attend "The National Alliance and Homeless Conference" in D.C. and gathered a lot of information from the various workshops. Mr. Connelly also gave a presentation on "How's Nashville" while at the conference.

MDHA renewed the Section 8 Collaboration which means the Homelessness Commission will get another year of MDHA vouchers. Mr. Connelly stated that he is currently waiting to hear back on the federal grant which would assist with case management. More focus is also being directed toward the Veterans and trying to end homelessness.

Also, Judy Tackett presented a proposal to the Ideas to Reality Program through the Mayor's Office and Ms. Tackett's idea was selected. So, Ms. Tackett will be on a team with representation from the Health Department and Metro General Hospital. The focus will be on High Utilizers of the Emergency Department of Metro General for the homeless.

Commissioner Harris asked if Mr. Connelly could research the Hallmark Inn that was seized a few weeks ago to see if it could be used for housing the homeless.

Ms. Pratt then informed the Commission on how the MSS agency received a call from the Metro Police Department to attend a briefing regarding to the Hallmark Inn being closed immediately. MSS worked with individuals trying to locate temporary housing until people were able to come to MSS for housing assistance. The Camila Caldwell Fund was used to assist with placing individuals in motels for the night. Ms. Pratt complimented staff on a job well done. A meeting is currently scheduled with Commissioner's Rolando, Boehm and Johnson to discuss how to leverage resources in emergency situations.

Finance

MSS ended the fiscal year 2014 with about \$368,000.00 under budget with the majority being in salaries and fringe benefits with a total of \$74.41 left remaining in all other.

As far as revenue we ended up collecting more revenue than what was budgeted through several different sources. At the end of the fiscal year services donation fund (Camilla Caldwell, Frist and Meals on Wheels) has approximately \$33,130.27. Homelessness donation fund (Project Homeless Connect, How's Nashville and MDHA) has approximately \$72,028.64.

The budget for next fiscal year is \$7,883,100 and this is after Council Reductions, Internal Service Fees and the Salary/Fringe Addition. Lastly, is the contracts and most of them were at 100%.

Program Reports

Homeless - Commissioner Boehm commented on the June overall report and the numbers are about the same with 177 open cases. Commissioner Boehm then commented on the four centers in the Davidson County that deal with families and how he has been able to visit the different sites. The centers being Safe Haven, Salvation Army Sophia's Heart and the Family Life Center. Commissioner Boehm was able to visit Sophia's Heart and stated that they accept all forms of families; men or women with children, married couples with children and they can stay up to one year. Commissioner Boehm also stated that Sophia's Heart will be opening 7 emergency suites that will be available for families for up to 7 days. Commissioner Boehm felt this would be a good resource for MSS and the Homelessness Commission.

The last center in which Commissioner Boehm has to visit is the Family Life Center. Commissioner would also like to come before the Commission and make some recommendations as to what can be done to help homeless families with children. Commissioner Boehm also mentioned another indirect agency that work with school children who are homeless known as the Hero Program. The Hero Program keeps the children in school by providing the necessary transportation so they can stay in the schools they are zoned for without changing schools.

Commissioner Rolando stated that due to time all other Commission Program Reports will be held until the September meeting.

Commissioner Rolando also stated that Commissioner Renard François resigned due to the number of obligations he has. Commissioner Renard François has been a very good Commissioner while he has been with MSS. Commissioner Rolando stated that a new Commissioner will be appointed.

Commissioner Rolando called for the meeting to be adjourned.