

**Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners
Meeting Summary
of
January 28, 2015**

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

Board Members Absent: Bill Sinclair, Chrissy Kirkwood and Kim Johnson

Metro Legal Advisor: Josh Lee

Mayor Liaison:

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

Commissioner Rolando made a motion to approve the December meeting summary. The motion was, seconded and accepted unanimously.

Finance

Pam McEwen projected that MSS will be approximately \$350,000 under budget through December and approximately \$347,295.80 under budget in projected revenue.

The MSS donation fund is at \$33,991.38 which is split between Camilla Caldwell Fund with \$19,856.00 and Meals on Wheels with \$14,132.26. The Homelessness Commission donation fund is at \$68,920.33. Project Homeless Connect is at \$7,875.72 and How's Nashville is at \$86,250.61.

The majority of the contracts are close to being on target. In regards to the Indigent Burial program it is under budget, although there was an increase in the indigent burial program for the months of November and December. However, in food preparation not all the funds would be spent from this contract, but a portion is being used for the food vouchers for the Family Food Program.

Program Reports

Homelessness - Commissioner Boehm reported that he will now be attending the Homelessness Commission board meetings and then report back to the board from those meetings.

Commissioner Boehm stated that 18 months of How's Nashville has been completed and more than 850 people/families with children have moved into their own homes with a 77% retention rate.

Commissioners Boehm also commented on the Safe Haven Family Shelter and The Salvation Army, which are now partnering with the Metro Homelessness Commission /How's Nashville campaign and how excited they are for this partnership.

Homelessness Report

Judy Tackett, the Assistant Director for the Homelessness Commission, presented in the absence of Will Connelly, Director. Judy made mention of the How's Nashville Campaign and that it is aligned with a campaign called the Hundred Thousand Homes Campaign. The Hundred Thousand Homes Campaign has launched a campaign called Zero-2016 and the Homelessness Commission is one of 69 cities that participate in this campaign with the goal to end Veterans' homelessness by the end of 2015 and end chronic homelessness by the end of 2016.

The Metro Homelessness Commission had the Point in Time Count, in which volunteers were out on Thursday and Friday nights conducting an outdoor homeless count. How's Nashville is coming together to determine the baseline for reaching the targeted goal. Will Connelly is working closely with the VA Hospital in order to provide the same service.

Judy further stated that after 18 months of How's Nashville, they are now able to focus on a step-by-step process to get people from the street into permanent housing, with ongoing case management to keep them in permanent housing. The step-by-step process was provided in a training curriculum and there is a monthly resident's meeting at East Park Community Center.

The \$1.5 million federal government grant has been awarded to Park Center and they will be partnering with Mental Health Coop. The grant will be used for ongoing case management.

Metro Homelessness Commission is currently working on the Strategic Planning Process with a group called Focus Strategies, a national company working with local agencies to help determine the next steps. The goal is to have this completed within the next 6 months.

Judy commented on the Ideas to Reality's Hospital to Home project. This project was used to assist hospitals that help people get permanent housing and is currently working with General Hospital. The plan is to put a team of community partners together to determine the process and MSS will play a key role in this project.

Judy stated that the cold weather coordination is being developed. Judy stated the data is being monitored, based on available beds and the percentage of beds occupied. Metro Social Services has stepped up to be on standby for which Renee has agreed to be a partner. In case of a 90% bed occupancy, which has not yet been reached, those involved will come together with the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management. The police department has also stepped up to make sure everyone is off the streets and know where to go when the temperature is dangerously low.

Commissioner Rolando asked about the results at the Count of Youth at Oasis last week. Judy stated that she did not have the results and that she should have an overall count by Friday.

Nutrition –Commissioner Betty Johnson stated during the month of December, a total of 15,374 meals were served to 977 customers and YTD is 5,947 customers received 92,074 meals. There were 176 new Nutrition customers, inclusive of both Homebound and Congregate meals. Twenty-two cases of nutritional supplement was sold during the month of December.

Commissioner Johnson further commented that during the month of December, 300 seniors received secret Santa gifts sponsored by Metro Social Services. During the month of December, 296 seniors received Nutrition Education, an increase from 284 during the month of November.

Last month, Commissioner Betty Johnson had questions concerning the Family Meal Vouchers and how many people had received vouchers since the program started. Renee Pratt stated that a total of 116 have been provided to families since the program first started in November.

Commissioner Boehm then asked the question if anyone had viewed the documentary "A Place at The Table". Commissioner Boehm suggested that this documentary be available for the Commissioners and staff.

Indigent Burial – Commissioner Harris began by stating for the month of November there were 9 requests for burials MSS provided 6. There were 9 requests for cremation with 1 provided. From July 1 to November 14, there were a total of 40 burials and 17 cremations.

For the month of December 2014, there were 26 requests for burials and 6 were provided and for cremations there were 7 requests 1 provided. From July 1 through December 31 there were 48 burials and 18 cremations.

On November 10, orientation was held for the new vendors in the Indigent Burial Program.

Commissioner Rolando asked why people are being excluded from eligibility. Commissioner Harris stated that in a number of situations people do not meet the criteria.

Planning & Coordination – Dinah Gregory stated that the Community Needs Evaluation is complete and ready for printing. Dinah commented on the P&C Newsletter that was recently sent out. She reported that agencies such as Nashville Next Project, Nashville Chamber of Commerce, United Way and The HCA Foundation request additional information.

The Community Needs Evaluation will be released on April 28 at 10:00 a.m. at the Public Library. Dinah further commented that she and Abdelghani Barre were invited to film a show on channel 19 discussing poverty. As soon as the date and time has been determined, the board will be informed.

Commissioner Boehm asked Dinah to comment on the excellent results Planning & Coordination received regarding the survey and how it is being used. Dinah stated that in surveys, more respondents indicated the document would be used to shape policy positions from the top down. The list of agencies was impressive and people thought it was very beneficial to them. The document is also used often for grant application information.

Homemaker – Pat Wingfield reported that the Homemaker Program is providing services to 147 customers. Several Homemakers have found other employment and 2 are transferring to the Nutrition Program.

Commissioner Rolando stated that she is glad the staff and clients are being supportive through the attrition. She thanked Pat Wingfield for staying on top of things with the hard work it take to close a program. Renee also thanked the Homemaker staff for the assistance they are providing in other areas of the agency. Renee also thanked Commissioner Betty Johnson with Goodwill for all the computer training, digital imaging and the matching of Homemakers with job developers.

Adult & Family Support – Lonnie Wade stated that 51 new cases has been opened. For the month, there were a total of 1,805 contacts made regarding various services. Of those contacts 702 were for housing or homeless, 254 for financial assistance, 750 were follow-up contacts/case management, 14 related to transportation, 30 related to employment, 31 related to food and 14 related to medical.

Lonnie then commented on some of the barriers the program has come across as it relates to services. Some of the barriers would be shelters for customer with mental illness, housing for sex offenders and ex-felons.

Director's Report

Renee Pratt commented on the closure of James Robertson Apartment because the owners have decided not to renew their Section VIII HUD Housing Contract. This apartment will close April 21, 2015, leaving 110 residents without housing. MDHA has provided these 110 residents with vouchers. Metro Social Services, Metro Action Commission and other partners in the community are working together to assist these residents who are typically elderly, disabled or on a fixed income.

MSS Adult and Family staff will set up an office at the apartment complex in February. MSS staff will be at this location 3 days a week to assist residence with filling out applications, locating housing, obtaining various documents that may be needed and any other assistance the applicants need. The vouchers provided by MDHA can be used out of

county. Letters were placed on all the residents doors informing the residents of services and as of today 68 residents have called for services.

This is an extremely difficult task because of the severe shortage of affordable housing. It will be a major challenge for MSS staff to locate affordable housing.

Renee then commented on some concerns that came up at the Homelessness Commission meeting regarding the mental health problems some of these residents have. Some of the residents has lived in the apartment for the last 20 to 30 years and are comfortable in this area. For these residents to move may cause some additional problems for them.

MSS is working with Metro Homelessness Commission to try and contact some of the mental health resources in the area to work with MSS and MHC to see these residents. Judy Tackett also stated that MDHA hired a coordinator who is already in place to assist with any issues.

Commissioner Rolando stated that this could be a domino effect with these properties turning over and the question now is what interval the next property will fold. Commissioner Harris stated that something need to be done to find more affordable housing for the Davidson County area and Nashville needs to be creative to identify solutions..

Dinah Gregory stated that in 2012, the Board approved a set of Policy Recommendations to the Metropolitan Government, based on the Community Needs Assessment. The recommendations included housing recommendations in favor of inclusionary zoning and the affordable housing trust fund.

NOAH and A VOICE are two organizations that work to advocate for affordable housing. Commissioner Rolando asks Dinah Gregory to bring the specific recommendation for these two organizations and the board can review the information.

Commissioner Boehm made a recommendation that Planning and Coordination put together a proposal that outlines the significant need for affordable housing and some possible solutions. P&C will bring the findings back to the February board meeting and if the board approves, the proposal could be submitted to the Mayor.

Commissioner Rolando suggested we find out who is in the center effort of affordable housing and is there a point of contact the board should know about prior to going to the Mayor. Is there some other agency already working in this area and if so what are they doing. Dinah stated that the Metro Council is typically the group that will make decisions about zoning and for increasing the budget for the housing trust fund.

New Business

MSS Policies

Renee commented on the MSS Policies that were located in each board member's folder. One is the Homelessness Commission Policy that describes the ordinance was renewed in 2014 and the other policy is Planning and Coordination and it describes the purpose of P&C. Renee is asking for a vote to approve this two policies.

Commissioner Rolando made a motion to approve the two new policies for the Homelessness Commission describing the renewal of the 2014 ordinance and the Planning and Coordination Policy that describes the purpose of Planning and Coordination. The motion was seconded and accepted unanimously.

Renee then asked for a vote to approve the Communication Policy.

Commissioner Rolando made a motion to approve the Communication Policy which is used to share information externally and internally. The motion was seconded and accepted unanimously.

Nominating Committee

Commissioner Rolando stated that the MSS Commission had a vacancy for the Vice Chair position because one of the Commissioners that had been in that role no longer participate with the Commission. The Nominating Committee met this week and Commissioner Frank Boehm was nominated to serve as Vice Chair.

Commissioner Rolando made a motion to approve the nomination of Commissioner Frank Boehm as Vice Chair of the Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners. The motion was seconded and accepted unanimously.

Old Business

Budget

Renee began by stating at the last meeting the budget approved three options for the budget proposal. Since then the Budget Kick-Off Meeting has been held and the Mayor asked for 3% reduction. After Renee had discussions with the Deputy Finance Director, it was suggested that it would be in the best interest of MSS to offer up the position vacancies currently in the Homemaker Program rather than the Nutrition Services. Effective July 2015, MSS will have a total of 9 vacancies in the Homemaker Program. Only 4 positions will be needed along with the downgrade of the Quality Assurance position and the Homelessness Commission Contracts to make up the 3%.

Commissioner Rolando made a motion to approve the revised Budget option of 4 vacant Homemaker position, downgrade of the Quality Assurance position and the Homelessness Commission Contracts to make up the 3% Budget Reduction for the 2015-2016 year. The motion was seconded and accepted unanimously.

Strategic Plan

Renee began by stating that each Commissioner should have received the Strategic Plan by email and it is in the board packets as well. The Strategic Plan is currently on target with the exception of two goals, including Goal 3 that deals with MSS maintaining technology. The manual is not complete due to changes that are still being made with the system. After these changes are made by April 2016, the Systems Manual can be completed. There is also an adjustment in Goal 5 pertaining to the sub-committees being put together to make recommendations for the department. All documents will be reviewed along with the Audit, Community Needs Evaluation and other relevant information as it relates to the department as to how MSS will move forward.

Camilla Caldwell Fund Committee

Commissioner Rolando stated that a proposal is in each board packet that the document proposes the following:

- \$250 .00 a month to assist in housing supplement for up to 60 families, for a total of \$15,000 a month
- The arrears will assist up to 10 families as listed up to the \$15,000 cap, which is another \$15,000
- And if you add them together it is \$30,000 for up to 36 months, which equal \$1,080,000

Commissioner Roland felt it may not be the best time to approach Administration with the Camila Caldwell Proposal based on the conversation that was held today regarding Planning & Coordination preparing a proposal for the significant need for affordable housing.

Commissioner Rolando called for the meeting to be adjourned.