

**Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners
Meeting Summary
of
June 24, 2015**

Board Members Present: Mary Rolando, Frank Boehm, Steve Meinbresse and Kim Johnson

Board Members Absent: Chrissy Kirkwood, William Harris and Betty Johnson

Metro Legal Advisor: Josh Lee

Mayor Liaison:

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

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

Finance

Pam McEwen began her report by stating at the end of May, MSS was \$457,000 under budget, with \$300,000 in salaries and fringe benefits. By the end of the year Pam projected that MSS would be approximately \$375,000 under budget, and revenue is still on target. However, GNRC did give an additional \$16,000 to the Nutrition Program which brought us a little closer to our target.

The Social Services donation fund has approximately \$33,000 and the Homelessness donation fund has approximately \$21,000. As far as contracts, they are coming close to where they need to be to close out the year.

Commissioner Rolando moved for adoption. The motion was approval, seconded and accepted unanimously.

Homelessness

Commissioner Boehm stated that he was glad to see the MSS report with the various department areas outlined for the Mayoral Candidates. Commissioner Boehm then made mention of a project overview named the Nashville Homeless System Assessment and Right Sizing Recommendation. The project launched in May, with the final report to be completed by December, and Commissioner Boehm stated that he is looking forward to the final summary. Commissioner Boehm also stated he felt that Social Services and the Homelessness Commission should continue to identify ways to convince Metro Administration to provide more funds to help with housing. Commissioner Boehm then commended Will Connelly and Eric Cole for the Homelessness Strategic Plan results.

Renee Pratt commented that Commissioner Kim Johnson, along with other MSS staff will take a trip to Kentucky to visit the Brighton Center. The Brighton Center provides financial assistance for families who are homeless. This center has a financial component that provides assistance, and MSS will be researching on how funds are administered, the outcomes, and any barriers along the way. Then this information will be presented to board

Program Reports

Planning & Coordination – Dinah Gregory began her report by stating that Planning and Coordination is in the process of gathering documentation for the next Community Needs Evaluation and the new census data will be available in September.

Dinah also stated that an updated food desert document is in the packet. The document provides a food access map which measures the distance to a store or by the number of stores in the area.

Lastly, Dinah commented on the Hunger Banquet that is coming up this fall. She noted that the previous Hunger Banquet was a very eye opening experience. This banquet will be targeted toward the police officers and the newly elected officials.

Homelessness Commission

Renee Pratt began by stating about a year ago MSS was given a goal within the Strategic Plan to become the Coordinated Entry Point of Homeless individuals. Renee and Will Connelly have met on this topic for the past 6 months, and Will Connelly will give a brief overview on how to move forward with this process.

Will began by stating that Coordinated Entry is described as a process for how people receive shelter, services and housing in a timely manner. In January 2015, it was decided that a planning group would meet every week to try and design this process. Two AmeriCorps Vista workers were also appointed to work on this idea and look at the investment and return on this project.

It was decided that the HMIS system will be used more to share data and it will become an open system in July of 2015. It was decided during the meetings to narrow the focus to family homelessness instead of trying to serve all homeless persons.

The group decided to take these next three steps: 1) MSS staff (Family Shelter Team) determine eligibility for shelter. All family shelter beds are to be recorded in the HMIS system. 2) Family Shelter Teams would look at opportunities to prevent homelessness or divert by identifying alternatives; and 3) Organizing the staff resources, staff time spent verifying and confirming information by getting agreements with landlords, cutting checks, etc.

If all these steps are taken, then the families can be tracked in the HMIS system for all the shelter placements. The Shelter Team would do the data entry and also do some research on calling around to find placements. Commissioner Boehm commented that Nashville should have some central process that at any given time someone should know which families are homeless and work with these families to find housing. The plan for the Coordinated Entry Planning Group is to assist with finding homes for families

Commissioner Kim Johnson asked if the process has changed from when the family is given contact information and the family calls to see if housing is available. Renee Pratt stated that Social Services could provide the family with a case worker which will be assigned to assist them with housing and other needs.

Commissioner Meinbresse asked what has been the question with MDHA about shifting more of the Emergency Solutions grant money to prevention activities, because it could eventually serve the population. Will stated that the Emergency Solution and the Rapid Rehousing are both being held up until the assessment is complete.

Commissioner Meinbresse also commented on the Family Violence Programs and their role in the HMIS. Will stated that the Violence Programs are not entered in the HMIS, but they do receive some HUD funding. Will further stated people can be linked to the HMIS if the families are calling asking for shelter and during the assessment the domestic violence issue come up. Commissioner Meinbresse suggested that someone speak with the family shelter providers to find out the barriers since it is all about housing.

New Business

Commissioner Meinbresse had made a suggestion regarding Social Services preparing a brochure to be distributed out to the Mayoral Candidates and also the Vice Mayoral Candidates. The brochure gives an overview of Metro Social Services and Renee asked the board to review the document and submit any comments and corrections to Bonnie by Friday.

Commissioner Rolando then asked for Renee and all staff to be excused to prepare for the Nominating/Personnel Committee report.

Commissioner Rolando called for the meeting to be adjourned.