

**Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners
Meeting Summary
of
August 24, 2016**

Board Members Present: William Harris, Steve Meinbresse, Steve Turner Michael Bradley, Charlotte Peacock and Bettie Kirkland

Board Members Absent: Frank Boehm

Metro Legal Advisor: Josh Lee

Mayor Liaison:

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

Commissioner Harris made a motion to approve the June, July Call Meeting and March meeting summary. The motion was seconded and accepted unanimously.

Finance

Lisa Ricketts reported that for year end, we have a total of \$319,683.00 returned to the general fund and the majority of that was for personal services. The revenue for the period ending June 30, 2016 was budgeted for \$1,083,300.00 and the actual revenue was \$1,044,807.00.

Metro Social Services Donation Fund has a total of \$29,723.83 and Metro Homelessness Commission donation fund has a total of \$81,361.27. The proposed budget for FY2017 has a budget of \$7,573,100.00. Some issues are still pending with the FY2017 budget and will be updated when additional information is available.

Lastly, the Nutrition Program funds were moved to the Nutrition Grant Fund from the Metro Operational Fund.

Commissioner Harris moved for adoption of the Finance report. The motion was approved, seconded and accepted unanimously.

Director Report

Renee Pratt began her report by welcoming our newest Board Commission Member Bettie Kirkland. Commissioner Kirkland is a long-time partner of MSS and the Director of Project Return. Commissioner Kirkland stated that she feels honored to be a part of the MSS Board of Commissioners.

Renee Pratt stated that the Homemaker Program is moving along and customers have been notified that the program will end on December 30, 2016. There are approximately 60 customers still on the program, with many on waiting list for other organizations. Out of the 60 cases, five of them are children's cases and we are working closely with DHS to make sure the children's cases will continue to receive services and a meeting is scheduled with DHS next month.

Renee stated that we are also in the process of discussing the budget for FY 2016-17. Mayor Barry did reallocate the Homemaker funds and allowed us to move funds to different areas and in doing so this would allow MSS to cover the following:

- Two Supervisors in the Homemaker program that will move to Family Support;
- Four Homemaker positions which will move to the new Intake Unit; and
- Hiring one new Social Worker.

MSS was able to keep the Financial Assistance Funds, better known as DAPP which amounts to \$50,000.00 plus the \$21,500 for our Hero's Program for families of students in Metro Schools. MSS did absorb the cost associated with the Fort Negley homeless camp where approximately \$50,000.00 was used for motels. Housing was found for approximately 55 people within 5 months.

MSS will be the primary agency to open the Warming Shelters this winter, which will involve hiring staff on an as-needed capacity for a 24 hour shift, with one manager and two coordinators. The Warming Shelter could be open several days, contingent on the weather. MSS reallocated some funds toward the cost of operating the Warming Shelter.

Renee then provided information regarding the budget. Renee stated that we were able to reallocate funding, but that does not stop the conversation around the need. We generally use the funding for the HERO program very quickly especially when school is in. So, this will continue to be an issue for us as we move forward.

Homelessness Report

Will Connelly began by stating that the Homelessness Commission (MHC) has been involved with the Youth Homelessness Conversation along with the OASIS Center and other organizations to help end Youth Homeless.

MHC also received some new funding for an Encampment Outreach Team. This team will work with homeless living outside to try and find them housing. Will stated that they are currently hiring for this outreach team and hope to have them in place by September.

Will further stated that like MSS, the MHC want to do more strategic planning to clarify where they can fit in the community by becoming more focused and setting some goals.

Strategic Planning

Renee stated that it was decided at a previous board meeting that at each meeting some time would be devoted to Strategic Planning. Each Commissioner should have received a report regarding Strategic Planning and the role MSS would like to play over the next 3 to 5 years.

In a brief recap of the retreat, Abdelghani Barre stated that MSS went from a budget of \$14 million several years ago to \$7 million today, with the staff dropping from 295 to 77 employees.

The Metropolitan Government contracted for a performance audit in 2004 Maximus. Planning and Coordination was not the only component the audit recommended that MSS decrease from \$14 million to \$1.9 million and that would include only 22 employees. MSS would plan services and give money to the private sector to outsource it. MSS would then make sure quality assurance is being done with referral services. At the time the MSS Commissioners did adopt this recommendation.

It was later determined that these recommendations were not the best situation for the agency. This is why we are in the position we are in today, for instance 86% of the people that walk in the agency today are in need of help with housing. Two of the main tools that help us would be financial assistance and housing availability.

Moving forward, Nashville has other housing resources such as the housing authorities, Barnes Trust Fund and the Homelessness Commission. However, the problem that MSS is dealing with are the percentage of people that walk through our doors that are in need of housing and MSS does what it can in the community to find housing.

Commissioner Meinbresse commented that he had reviewed the Maximus Audit and the Strategic Plan that was prepared by MSS. Commissioner Meinbresse asked that we keep in mind that this Maximus Audit was conducted two administrations ago and no funds were put in place to implement the Maximus model.

Commissioner Meinbresse stated that it does make sense to look at what need to be our service delivery model for MSS in the current environment. Commissioner Meinbresse also recommended that the other Commissioner's take a look at the 2013 Strategic Plan.

Commissioner Meinbresse stated that MSS is a department that cannot say "NO", so how do we create opportunities out of this and do a high quality job? Commissioner Meinbresse stated that there are resources within Metro and a strong team within MSS along with leadership with what the agency can do.

Commissioner Meinbresse then asked if MSS has a good idea from the Administration to know what is coming in the future for MSS. He asked if MSS could take advantage of this opportunity to build on some of the leadership that has been asked of the department and will it take additional funds.

MSS needs to look at how and when to get the information presented to the right audience over the following months. Commissioner Meinbresse stated that he would like approval

from the MSS Board of Commissioners giving Renee approval to directly approach the Administration at the Mayor's office to discuss some of these issues.

The other part on the Strategic Planning side is to bring someone in to show what a more action oriented plan would look like. Commissioner Meinbresse stated that staff is increasingly called upon to coordinate activities and lead community meetings to pull teams together, and it could be helpful if staff were trained in communication methods. Commissioner Meinbresse stated that he supports redefining the model and that the Commissioners read through the document closely and ask questions.

Renee asked Lee Stewart to provide information on the Barnes Trust Fund, for which the Mayor allocated an additional 16 million. Lee stated that the fund is a combination of monies from MDHA, sale of the downtown Convention Center and funds from the Mayoral budget. Lee stated that Metro is now able to give away buildable surplus property to nonprofits. The Mayor also has a program to give for property developers as an incentive to include affordable units. However, without an official definition of affordable housing, it is difficult for this to happen.

Renee commented on the next steps for Strategic Planning. Renee has two goals that she would like the Commission and MSS to focus on and they are making Nashville a homeless free zone for families and how MSS can assist the working poor.

Renee Pratt asked for the Commissioners approval to proceed with presenting the document that was presented at today's meeting to Mayor Barry along with the information that was presented at the MSS Board of Commissioners Retreat. The motion was seconded and accepted unanimously.

Camilla Caldwell Funding

Renee Pratt began by stating that she met with Commissioner Boehm and Commissioner Turner regarding the Camilla Caldwell Fund. Camilla Caldwell Fund is a fund that is used for emergency assistance, used as a last resort fund here at MSS. This funding covers anything that we cannot cover in any with funding in the budget. It is used as emergency assistance with housing, homeless and relocation expenses.

We are now in a position where we would like to raise money for the Camilla Caldwell Fund and now Commissioner Turner will provide more information as to how we will go about raising money.

Commissioner Turner stated that what really surprised him the most was the reduction in funds and staff and the growth in the city. Commissioner Turner stated that he is just trying to find a way in which we can address our own budget shortfalls and to be able to set some goals.

Commissioner Turner commented on some key focus areas that were discussed such as temporary housing assistance, rent assistance and utility assistance. Some goals that they would like to focus the fund raising around are as follows:

Will identify 60 families that we are currently working with that need assistance

- Rent Assistance
 - rent assistance - \$250.00 per month/per 60 families
\$250.00 x 50 families = \$15,000.00 per month / \$180,000.00 per year
- Utility Bill Assistance
 - \$15,000 x 12 months = \$180,000.00 per year
- An additional \$140,000.00 for additional reserves for emergency community needs and discretionary spending.

Commissioner Turner stated that he wanted to present the Commissioners with this information to have a brief discussion about it and make a motion to formulate a Camilla Caldwell Committee for fund raising and work with the staff to expound upon this plan. There was a discussion about how the raising would in fit in with the proposed Strategic Planning.

Josh Lee with Metro Legal stated that all funds that come in must be appropriated by Metro Council before they can be spent by MSS.

A motion was made for Metro Social Services Board of Commissioner's to form a Camilla Caldwell Fund Committee to solicit funds with the help of the board. The motion was seconded and accepted with one obtained.

Commissioner Harris called for the meeting to be adjourned.