

Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
April 26, 2017

Board Members Present: William Harris, Frank Boehm, Steve Meinbresse, Michael Bradley and Charlotte Peacock

Board Members Absent: Steve Turner and Bettie Kirkland

Metro Legal Advisor: Mark Murray in the absence of Josh Lee

Mayor Liaison:

Commissioner Harris called the April Metro Social Services (MSS) Board of Commissioners meeting to order. Commissioner Harris thanked the MSS staff for all the hard work put into the Nashville Community Needs Evaluation and the Ride 2 Thrive event.

Commissioner Harris made a motion to approve the February Meeting Minutes. The motion was moved by Commissioner Boehm, seconded by Commissioner Bradley and accepted unanimously.

Finance

Lisa Ricketts begin by stating her report is through the end of March 2017. The expenditures by program are under budget however some of the invoices have not been paid, some open positions and special projects have not started which will come out of these funds.

MSS Donation Funds, Camilla Caldwell and Meals on Wheels, have a total of \$26,327.33. Metro Homelessness Commission Donation Fund has a total of \$75,890.21. The Metro Homelessness Grant Fund has a total of \$345,115.71

Commissioner Harris asked for a motion to approve the February Finance Report. The motion was moved by Commissioner Peacock, seconded by Commissioner Bradley and accepted unanimously.

Homelessness Report

Judy Tackett began her report by thanking Renee Pratt for all the support shown to her since her appointment as Interim Director of the Homelessness Commission.

Judy stated today she will be focusing on Continuum of Care (CoC) which is used to help end homelessness and to do this; communities must be encouraged to create a "Housing Crisis Resolution System". Continuum of Care is also a term used to refer to federal funding that comes through to the community to different providers as stakeholders to

prioritize where the funds go. Here in Nashville, MDHA has been elected by the Continuum of Care members to serve as the collaborative applicant to U.S. Housing & Urban Development (HUD).

Judy stated that some people may wonder where the Metro Homelessness Commission (MHC) fits in and Judy sees MHC as the backbone. The monthly meetings involve a large number of stakeholders that come together to discuss where things are and which direction to go. Additional collaborative options besides MDHA will be MSS and Catholic Charities. The main vision for MHC is to build a housing crisis resolution center that prevents homelessness.

Judy then went into more detail as to what the proposal would look like if MHC staff worked for the CoC/community.

MHC would still fall under MSS but would work closely with the community when it comes to policies, outlines, direction and building the policy for the housing crisis resolution system. All the committees and the Homelessness Commission itself would combine with the CoC Governance Board and they would work hand in hand with other committees which have not been totally worked out legally. Meetings are being held to determine what this would look like legally and what is actually possible.

Renee Pratt further commented that MHC is currently doing a majority of the work that the CoC would do around homelessness and it is more on the lines of planning and coordination functions. Renee stated back around 2005 when the MHC was formed, the role for MHC was to end homelessness. This effort is still being evaluated as a planning and coordination entity which is what the CoC does also.

Judy has been working very diligently, along with Catholic Charities and MDHA, with consultants Cloudburst who are providing technical assistance which is assisting with moving us in the right direction.

A meeting is scheduled for May 18th with the community to answer questions as to why we want to be the collaborative applicant in the CoC and then a vote will be held later in the year. Judy will provide an update at the June meeting.

Commissioner Meinbresse asked what are the current proposals and are the expectations that the CoC writes the contracts and MSS becomes the master entity for the federal dollars. Judy replied that currently the application for the federal dollars goes through MDHA and the dollars go directly to the providers.

Commissioner Boehm asked how does all this interlock with the recent release of the Tennessee overall plan to reduce and eliminate homelessness? Judy stated the plan is known as the Tennessee Interagency Council in which she is a member. Judy stated that at the last meeting there was some talk about how the CoC could have more influence around the Tennessee legislature to see how the state budget looks around homelessness. Judy suggested the Tennessee Interagency Council organize a one day workshop to help

prioritize and educate people based on these priorities. The goals the Homelessness Commission currently has are aligned with the Federal Strategic goals.

Commissioner Boehm then asked if there was a close working relationship between what Metro wants to do and the state. Commissioner Boehm then stated that he still sees a piece missing and that being the finances. People can talk about homelessness all day but unless the city or the state or someone is going to put up the money we will still be talking with nothing being done.

Judy agreed with Commissioner Boehm and stated that local funding along with being able to measure the outcomes are two components that are needed in order to start correcting the homelessness situation. Judy then asked the question, "What would a local investment need to look like if we were really serious about ending homelessness"? Discussions are currently being held on how to present the information to the Mayor's office.

Commissioner Boehm made mention of the figures that had been worked up about a year ago by the Board to prevent family homelessness. Renee will share this information with Judy.

Commissioner Meinbresse stated that the policy at the state level for the last 25 years has been that homelessness is a local issue and you spend the money any way you would like. Judy stated from the current meetings she sees the locals are pushing back with more attendance from the government level.

Commissioner Meinbresse also asked if this is an issue MSS takes on, does it define homelessness as a Social Services problem rather than a housing problem and let MDHA off the hook. Judy replied that is why she is stressing the collaboration piece and the main builder for this population will be MDHA.

Director's Report

Renee began her report by stating a couple weeks ago the MHC Director position was posted and it closes at the end of the month. The interview panel will consist of one Commissioner from MSS, a Commissioner from the MHC along with the Chair of the MHC, a Councilmember and herself.

The interview process could consist of one full day and possibly two rounds of interviews if needed. The MSS Commissioner selected would make a recommendation and depending on the consensus of the panel a recommendation would then be made to the MHC Board and then after they vote it will come to the MSS Board for approval and this Board would inform the Mayor of the selection. Commissioner Peacock volunteered to represent MSS.

Renee then discussed the CNE release and felt it was the best one ever since we were able to close down the MSS office and allow staff to attend. This was the first year the CNE has been released in conjunction with the Health Department and the Mayor's office.

The MSS Nutrition Program changed to a grant funded program last year because the primary funding comes from a state grant that is administered by Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC). After changing to a grant funded budget we incurred some indirect cost and MSS had to come up with an additional \$195,000 in our budget. Since the \$195,000 is covered we now have next year's budget based on the grant and MSS will still have to find the indirect cost which is around \$300,000.

With that, Renee stated that she is going to take a long hard look at how the Nutrition Program is being administered. Each time MSS was audited, it was either the Homemaker or Nutrition Program that would come up with how much it actually cost to run each of these programs. Not only do we have to have a match for the program, we also have to come up with the indirect cost along with providing additional funds to cover the meals. Renee stated that she and staff will be researching ideas on what can be done or changed in administering this program since the grant is up for renewal in 2018. More information will be provided at the June meeting.

Commissioner Bradley asked about the source of the Nutrition grant. Renee commented it is state funding through the DHS Food and Nutrition Program along with MSS local money.

Renee then spoke on the new plan the Mayor had proposed around this time last year which was called the Public Investment Plan. With this plan, departments will look at innovative and new approaches to address community priorities and issues in the form of public investment plans that could possibly be funded by the Mayor's office.

With that being said, this year Judy Tackett with MHC proposed a plan that will be funded through the Mayor's office in the amount of \$225,000 for an incentive for bus passes for the homeless.

Judy stated that the proposal was to look for people experiencing homelessness or at risk of chronic homelessness. The proposal will start as a pilot this year. If the person is working with an agency toward housing and actively doing so, they will get a free bus pass. The bus pass will be an annual free bus pass so they can get to services and be able to look for housing. However, every 90 days the agency that is working with the person toward finding housing will have to check with MHC to verify the person is still actively working toward housing. This plan also involves a partnership with MTA to help look at the areas that have more homelessness. There is also a proposed program in which the MTA bus drivers that have interaction with the homeless will be trained on how to care for the homeless with trauma on a daily basis.

Judy stated that they will also be measuring data to show the outcomes of how long it takes people to find housing.

Renee continued her report by talking about the State of Metro Address which was held this morning and how the Mayor continues to enhance and put more money into the city around the people that really need it. Also, staff will receive a cost of living raise of 2% and those in open range will receive 2% for the next year. Employees that will receive step will receive 2% for next year. The following two years after next year there is a 3%

increase across the Board for each year. So, Mayor Barry has been extremely generous to Metro employees.

MSS as a whole has received a total of \$404,000 specifically for outreach workers for the MHC. MSS also received \$25,000 for the Warming Shelter and \$25,000 for the Direct Assistance Request. Lastly, MSS also received the \$60,000 for Indigent Burial Services.

Next, Renee ask the Board members to reference the Board Committee sheet with a description of each committee located in there Board packets. Renee stated that it is time to look at committee assignments and the assignments are made by the Chair and Executive Director. Renee asked if a Board member is specifically interested in a particular committee they would like to serve on to let her know by next week if possible. The committees only meet on an as need basis. Commissioner Bradley offered to serve on any of the committees, wherever needed.

Lastly, Renee spoke on Strategic Planning and that she had an opportunity to speak with Commissioner Meinbresse and had planned to work with staff on an exercise on what is next after the CNE release. Commissioner Meinbresse volunteered to work with staff around this topic and this will be discussed at the MSS All Staff Meeting. Renee will be working with the Bloomberg associate around eight disciplines here in the city of which Social Services is one of the eight. The request MSS is making for assistance is around best practices in other cities: Are there any other cities that operate like we operate? MSS is also looking at process mapping along with an annual plan. This information will be presented at the All Staff Meeting.

Commissioner Meinbresse asked Renee if the city was still going to be the beneficiary of other groups to help with planning. Renee stated that she has not heard anything else regarding the Resilient Cities as of yet, however once it starts we will provide the Board with more information.

Renee also stated that a Strategic Strategy Officer has been hired in the Mayor's office to work with the Chief of Staff to look closely at the public investment plans.

Commissioner Harris called for the meeting to be adjourned.