

**Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
August 23, 2017**

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

**Board Members Absent:**

**Metro Legal Advisor:** Josh Lee

**Mayor Liaison:**

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

***Commissioner Harris requested a motion to approve the August Meeting Minutes. The motion was moved by Commissioner Peacock, seconded by Commissioner Bradley and accepted unanimously.***

Finance – Lisa Ricketts

Lisa Ricketts begin by stating her report is through the end of June 2017. The report shows MSS is currently \$259,506 under budget. By Program this is due to the planned spending for June to purchase the Little Houses in the amount of \$120k which did not happen. Nor did we use the Nutrition Program cost cutting to cover the \$195k indirect cost and Metro has \$97k to return and lastly we had \$57k in open positions in the Homelessness Commission. This makes up the \$259,506 under budget. The Revenue side is under budget \$7,146.00 due to the Choices Program closing.

MSS Donation Funds, Camilla Caldwell and Meals on Wheels, have a total of \$25,726.57. Metro Homelessness Commission Donation Fund has a total of \$38,139.04. The Metro Homelessness Grant Fund has a total of \$32,597.61 in the TN-CABHI Fund.

Burial expenses are \$89,672.00 over budget and we are under budget in personal services due to open positions. Contractual services is under budget \$58,424.00.

Lisa did a budget comparison from 2017 to 2018 with the majority of budget overage being from the Metro Homelessness Commission with an increase of \$367,000. There was a total of \$565,100 increase between the two year budgets.

Renee mentioned the \$120,000 that was to fund the Little Houses Program was never taken from the MSS budget. Instead the money was used in the How's Nashville Campaign to provide housing expenses, rent and other needs to Davidson County residents.

Commissioner Meinbreese asked if MSS had any flexibility for reprogramming funds. Renee stated that there are certain areas in which MSS cannot move funds, but funds can be moved within line items in the budget but generally not across programs.

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

## Program Reports

### *Family Support - Lonnie Wade*

Lonnie began his report by stating some of the trends that are coming into the agency.

- there has been an increase in single fathers who are homeless;
- more elderly homeless individuals are coming in for services;
- families with four or more children;
- landlords selling the property and renters are being displaced; lastly
- families with low incomes.

Lonnie then discussed some of the agencies we continue to partner with such as The HERO Program through the Nashville Public Schools, Jean Crowe Advocacy Center which deals with domestic violence, Public Library, Salvation Army Paragon Hills, lastly we are also a part of HUB Nashville which is the Mayor's Initiative which can be used to send out referrals. Renee further stated that we are one of five departments selected to work on HUB Nashville due to the number of referrals we already receive from the Mayor's office.

Lonnie then commented on the Life Management Skills Classes. These classes are offered to people that may want to learn how to deal with stress and better manage their time and finances. Lonnie further stated that MSS also works with employment programs that actually assist people with employment.

Other program incentives are ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) training facilitated by our very own Dinah Gregory. ACEs is a part of the MSS assessment along with the Arizona Self Sufficiency Matrix which has been integrated into the database. Lastly, we have the Boss Box, which is used to help the customer see that they are the boss of their situation. The Boss Box helps the customer determine how to go about dealing with different barriers and figure out what options or strengths one should use to eliminate those barriers.

Lonnie then introduced one of the newest employees, Marcel Rivers. Part of Marcel's job description is working and developing relationships with housing landlords, property managers or even realty companies. If MSS can develop relationships with these agencies it could provide us with more housing opportunities for our customers.

### *Nutrition – Carol Wilson*

Carol Wilson began by stating that Nutrition currently has two meal services. One being congregate meals in which there are 15 sites that provide hot meals to seniors. Nine of the sites are located in the local high rises and six are in community centers.

Carol further commented that Nutrition received the grant so that the Nutrition Program can continue to provide seniors with nutritional food intake. Transportation is also provided by MTA to carry the seniors to and from the center.

As of July, Nutrition has served a total of 679,000 meals to 579 seniors. The seniors also participate in various activities while at the site. MSS has 80 volunteers that assist at the sites and these volunteers also assist with food delivery to the seniors that are homebound.

Homebound meals are frozen meals that are provided by MSS through the grant. MSS has 2 van drivers that deliver five to seven meals to the homebound seniors and customers with qualifying disabilities. The congregate meal seniors are required to receive nutrition education which is one of the guidelines that must be maintain in order to keep the grant. MSS also provides meals to the 50 to 59 which is also known as the baby boomers.

We do have some seniors that give contributions for receiving these meals and Nutrition also takes donations from the public. The food vendor that provides all the frozen and hot meals to the sites is Piccadilly.

### *Indigent Burial – Carol Wilson*

Carol Wilson began her report by thanking Commissioner Meinbresse for offering his assistance with the out of town Live Hospice issue. MSS has been receiving requests from Live Hospice for burials of people from out of town. However, after meeting with Commissioner Meinbresse, the numbers have decreased.

This past month the Indigent Burial Program received 20 requests for burials and provided 12 after reviewing eligibility. The trends for the Indigent Burial Program would be the increase in suicides in the 40 to 50 age group and some being homeless. We have had 11 requests for cremations last month and only provided 5 after reviewing eligibility. Carol Wilson stated that people today are moving more toward cremations than in the past.

Metro Indigent Burial is still in need of government property which would decrease the burial cost. Renee stated that she, Commissioner Bradley along with Abdelghani Barre did additional research by looking at how other cities operated and found that most cities are contracting with area vendors for cemetery plots the same as our burial

program. If Metro was to purchase land for indigent burials the land must be in Davidson and it would be very expensive.

### *Planning & Coordination (P&C) – Dinah Gregory*

Dinah began her report by commenting on the P&C newsletter that was sent out last week and it contained a wonderful guest column by Commissioner Kirkland. Dinah stated that this is a long uphill battle in dealing with people that have been incarcerated and when they are released it is like they are starting over. Dinah hopes to see improvements with the assistance of the Sheriff's Department.

P&C is involved with other organizations that relate to people's problems, dealing with Financial Assistance Coalition which is a group of agencies that have financial assistance they provide to people. Dinah stated that P&C is looking at ways to energize this group to make some alliances with other groups that may be doing something similar.

Another new initiative is the Coalition on Eviction which is being worked on by Abdelghani Barre and the Human Relations Commission. Eviction is not only the lack of housing, but a domino effect particularly with children in the household. Every time a child is moved from school to school, it is detrimental to the child's education.

Dinah stated that P&C have already started on the next Community Needs Evaluation (CNE) and the census should release the newest data in the next 2 to 3 weeks. Dinah is anticipating the Metro Health Department will assist with the CNE this year since that did participate last year.

Renee stated that the CNE will continue to partner with the Mayor's office and information is also possibly being provided by MTA as well.

Commissioner Bradley stated that the CNE is a valuable document and it has taken a lot to prepare. However, the CNE is meaningful in terms of other things that are going on such as transportation and development in certain areas of Nashville where developers say one thing and do something else because they do not have all the facts. That is why the CNE is so valuable because the time has been taken to gather all the facts and data.

### Homelessness Commission – Judy Tackett

Judy Tackett, Director of Metro Homelessness Commission (MHC) began her report by giving some quick highlights. MHC had a total of 5 openings on the board and they are as follows:

- Charlotte Peacock, who sits on the Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners
- John Krenson, Executive Director of Operation Stand Down Tennessee
- Bob Freeman, of Freeman Webb
- Tim Leeth, has lived experience

- Theresa Skiles, Contributor Vendor

Judy also stated that MHC just hired Nicole Williams as the data & performance coordinator, and is in the process of hiring an assistant director and a community liaison/office assistant. Judy stated that MHC needs a better infrastructure for data collection and this is where MHC is moving toward. All the data is moving toward the Homeless Management Information System, the official database for the community.

One of Judy's priorities is to work effectively ending Veteran Homelessness in conjunction with the VA and Operation Stand Down. The success of this priority is to be able to identify Veterans that are literally homeless and work toward finding permanent housing within 90 days or less.

MHC is also interested in launching a 100 day campaign to house 100 Veterans in 100 days and to identify additional units to house Veterans.

Judy stated in June a meeting was held with the Mayor's Interdepartmental Council on Homelessness. The Council then identified goals for this fiscal year and they are follows:

#### Long Term

- How can we network better within Metro agencies?
- Unsheltered Population – how can we reach out to other populations (cost, touching points)

#### Short Term

- Property storage, where can the homeless put their personal items.
- Role clarification, where do the different departments fit in?

Lastly, Judy commented on Continuum of Care (CoC). The group met and discussed three different models; 1) keep the MHC board and the CoC Governance Board separate; 2) combine the two boards (standalone board/department). The group right now is examining the combining of the two boards as the best option.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 12.

Commissioner Kirkland had a question regarding the incarcerated and when they are released from prison they are considered homeless as soon as they walk out of the gate, then there has to be a way to manage this looking at the number that walk out each year.

Judy stated to create a manageable approach you must go by the definition of literally homeless. (Literally homeless is defined as people that are on the streets, in encampments, shelters and cars or any place not meant for human habitation.) Judy stated one way to capture this data is to find a way to connect to the jail system to capture data as people are being released. Judy stated this is why Coordinated Entry is so important and the reason MHC is working on the master list.

Renee asked Commissioner Kirkland if they could schedule a meeting to talk about how this information is captured regarding the prisoners when they are released and where they go when they are released. Renee stated that the prisoners that are released are a critical population.

Commissioner Meinbresse asked Judy if on paper people cannot be released to the streets, they must have an address listed, however they may not ever make it to the destination but an address must be listed to be released.

Judy stated even though they have an address listed, the problem still exists, even dealing with the hospitals. Once again, Judy stated why it is so important to have the local data base.

#### Director – Renee Pratt

Renee began her report commenting on the meeting she and Judy Tackett had with Dr. Webb, Administrator of General Hospital. Dr. Webb stated that General Hospital has been viewed as a safety net for people with no insurance in which the emergency room has been used as the primary care physician. Dr. Webb is looking for some type of referral process between MSS and General Hospital along with options for the homeless.

Renee then commented regarding Commissioner Turner and that he has relocated to Chicago. Commissioner Turner has reported this information to the Mayor's office and a recommendation for a replacement will go before Council on September 5 and then the MSS Board of Commissioners will be informed upon approval. The second Commissioner opening is Dr. Boehm's position in which he served for 9 years, and upon his departure he was Vice Chair. With this being said, a recommendation has been given that Commissioner Bradley become the new Vice Chair of the Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners.

Renee stated that Commissioner Bradley is very knowledgeable of MSS and he is still involved with the current Administration.

***Renee Pratt made a recommendation that Commissioner Michael Bradley become Vice Chair of the Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners. The motion was moved by Commissioner Kirkland, seconded by Commissioner Peacock and accepted unanimously.***

Renee Pratt thanked the board for the opportunity to meet one on one with each Commissioner to discuss the concerns as it relates to the department. Renee thanked the Commissioners for their commitments to the department and all the future endeavors.

The next scheduled Board of Commissioners meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 25<sup>th</sup> and we will extend the meeting time to 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. for our

Board Retreat. The focus will be around Strategic Planning and the Homelessness Commission will be included in this process.

At the last meeting it was discussed that MSS Administration was in the process of formulating a survey to send out to our Community Partners and our Stakeholders asking questions about their relationship with MSS. This will help MSS as we prepare for the Strategic Planning process. The survey will go out at the end of August and we will have the data regarding this survey by the October Board Retreat.

Renee also commented on the Indigent Burial Request for Proposal (RFP) and if we could proceed with a new RFP. However, after speaking with Metro Procurement it was determined that the current contract does not expire until 2020. So, in the interim Renee stated that she will set up a meeting with the current vendor and go over any concerns we may have.

Renee commented on the MSS Nutrition Program and what is happening in other cities as it relates to the MSS Nutrition Programs along with the budget for the Nutrition Program. Renee had provided information to each Commissioner regarding the Nutrition program along with MSS possibly submitting a proposal to the current administration about the MSS Nutrition Program and funding the program with local funding.

Hopefully by the October meeting we will have a proposal in place that we can discuss and bring to a vote if we would like to precede with making a proposal to the Mayor's office. If the Mayor makes a recommendation and would possibly like to see some changes, then it will all be taken into consideration and then speak with the Council.

MSS was presented with an opportunity by the Mayor's office based on our Strategic Planning at our June All Staff Meeting. At this meeting we were very fortunate to have both the Chief Strategy Officer and the Chief Resilience Officer from Mayor's Office. It turned out to be a very good meeting and the Chief Resilience Officer commented to Renee on how the vibe in the room was great, appreciated the culture of the employees and how much staff was sharing and the Mayor's office stated they were glad to be able to attend. They did not hear a lot of complaining it was a very positive meeting.

Bloomberg was also in attendance at this meeting and they conducted a portion of the training and felt the MSS staff was wonderful and commended Renee on how well staff shared information

Renee stated that the training around ACE's/Trauma Informed Care and the ARC/Accountability, Responsibility and Communication have been really instrumental in how we have conducted ourselves as it relates to Strategic Planning and the business MSS does every day. Renee then thanked staff for all the hard work.

Renee then made mention of a group called Socrata that is currently working with the Mayor's office. Socrata is providing information around the data sets in which the communities can access to see what is going on in various departments. Socrata is developing a new program to help with Strategic Planning and MSS was selected as one of the first departments to participate around gathering MSS data and looking at client base service and how we drive our service model. MSS has a total of 5 staff that will attend this training in October. More information will be provided to the Commissioner regarding Socrata at the October meeting.

Renee stated by the October meeting MSS should have data collected from Socrata, the survey information, information from the CNE and information collected from the All Staff Meeting.

***Commissioner Harris called for the meeting to be adjourned.***