

**Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners  
Meeting Minutes  
February 26 ,2020**

**Board Members Present:** Michael Bradley, William Harris, Steve Meinbresse, Charlotte Peacock and Phil Orr

**Board Members Absent:** Brandon Thompkins

**Metro Legal Advisor:** Derrick Smith

**Mayor Liaison:**

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

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

Finance Report – Yuri Hancock, Interim CFO

Ms. Hancock began her report by stating that MSS has just passed the mid-year mark for this fiscal year and this report will be for the period ending January 31, 2020.

MSS is currently under budget overall by \$554,195.00 mostly due to turnover and vacant positions. Ms. Hancock further commented that the Overflow Warming Shelter and the Burial Programs are both over budget due to expenses with the number of burials and the number of cold nights that exceeded the plan.

On the Revenue side MSS is on target and the Donation Fund and the Nutrition Funds (Camilla Caldwell, Meals on Wheels and Two Generational Fund) have a total of \$28,945.66. The Metro Homelessness Special Donation Fund has a total of \$61,511.28 with the majority is coming from How's Nashville.

Lastly, Ms. Hancock stated that MSS continues to monitor expenditures from our current and open grants. So as of January 31, 2020, we have a balance of \$234,924.95. This concluded Ms. Hancock's finance report and then she asked if anyone had questions.

Ms. Pratt thanked Ms. Hancock along with the Commission for stepping up to assist in the Finance office with the retirement of Lisa Ricketts.

Executive Directors Report – Renee Pratt, Executive Director

Ms. Pratt began her report by stating that next week the Commissioners will be receiving a report on the State of Metro Social Services. Ms. Pratt stated that this is the report that

is prepared around this time every year to inform you as to what the MSS budget is looking like and providing a forecast about what is happening in the MSS department over the next few months and by the end of the fiscal year another report will be available to finalize the fiscal year.

Ms. Pratt stated that this report is first presented to the Commissioners for approval, then the Mayor's office and then to Council. Bonnie Campbell will send out the report to the Commissioners requesting any questions or concerns prior to it being released.

Ms. Pratt then stated with new administration coming in and not knowing what processes will be requested, she would conduct an internal audit for the department. Ms. Pratt stated with this audit the department would try to identify experts in different areas as it is related to the work that is being done here at MSS so we can determine if we are using best practice, are we headed in the correct direction? We will also be referencing our strategic planning and resource area. Ms. Pratt also stated that Lee Stewart with our Strategic Planning and Research department is also very familiar with how this process works. Our MSS Coordinated Entry and our Intake Staff will also be included in this internal audited.

Ms. Pratt further stated that with this MSS Internal Audit, we are trying to capture all the data we can so we can get it into our system. The Internal Audit process will be starting in the month of March.

Next, Ms. Pratt made mention of the Mayor's Cabinet meeting which is held every Monday morning in which she participates. The purpose of this meeting is to pull together critical departments that work in the communities and there are about 8 departments heads that attend this meeting along with Ms. Pratt, Chief Anderson and Chief Swann who provides the data reports for the week.

So, if there are any issues concerning MSS and the services that are being provided the Commissioners will be advised.

Ms. Pratt then spoke about the MSS Performance Metrics and how there will be a performance metrics for each department. Several years ago, we had Results Matter and then we had Ideas to Reality which produced some great ideas from Metro staff about things that need to happen in the communities.

So, now Metro is going back to the Performance Matrix and it will be monitored from the Mayor's office for all the departments in Metro. Ms. Pratt stated that MSS is already on track with the metrics because MSS continued to collect and produce output measures and outcome measures along with MSS internal metrics. This is information each Commissioner is receiving in their board packets. Ms. Pratt stated that we do have the detailed information that is also available to the board along with the metrics that are expected to be reported out on a quarterly basis and each Commissioner will receive a copy prior to the document being sent to the Mayor's office.

Ms. Pratt then introduced Kristen LaLonde who has worked with this department for many years. Ms. LaLonde is very familiar with the services Metro Social Services offers. Ms. LaLonde was a former Metro Social Services Board of Commissioner and Ms. LaLonde's new role is Shared Strategy & Impact which is shared between Metro Social Services, MDHA and the Mayor's Office.

Ms. LaLonde began stating that her main focus is poverty and homelessness. This is a shared role, however Ms. LaLonde is housed in Metro Social Services. Ms. LaLonde stated that she has spent a lot of time working with the cold weather shelter program and that involves multiple departments.

Ms. LaLonde stated to look ahead, a big part of what she will be doing is being point person with the Permanent Support Housing Unit Metro is building on 2nd Avenue. These units are being set aside for the most vulnerable persons in the Davidson County area and MDHA will run the building as to who will do what in the building.

#### Homeless Impact Division (HID) – Judy Tackett, Executive Director

Ms. Tackett begin by commenting on a February 5 a board retreat that was held with HID and the Planning Council where HID has applied for an Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) Capacity Grant that focuses around capacity building for HMIS. This will help to show homelessness and people at risk of homelessness.

This month the Homelessness Planning Council approved a set of legal documents that will allow the community to share data. This will allow Davidson County to have more data sharing without duplications and the community liked this. HID is now starting to work with other agencies in the Davidson County area and this will allow HID to produce unduplicated annual numbers.

Ms. Tackett spoke on Housing and Urban Development and the Point In Time (PIT) Count and the demographic breakdown which has 25% female 50% white, 45% black/African American (rest other races), and 23% chronic.

Ms. Tackett stated that HID has received a lot of complaints on homelessness. Ms. Tackett stated that HID did have two outreach workers on their team, and two outreach specialists, and most of their work is responding to complaints. There was a total of 31 complaints in February of this year which surpassed all the complaints totaled from last year. This really is not a bad thing due to the collaboration HID has put in with other departments to come to us and be more engagement driven. This also means our small outreach team was not able to keep up with the demand.

So, Ms. Tackett pulled nine outreach teams together to work together and they are even planning an all-day event to come together and bring the focus back on housing.

Ms. Tackett then spoke on the Cold Weather Ordinance which first calls on the Needs Assessments to find out where we are and secondly plan for next year. Ms. Tackett and Ms. LaLonde are working closely on this project.

The plan is also for HID to be housed in this building along with some additional services that are currently being discussed.

Commissioner Meinbresse asked if HUD is still concerned with HID not having a fully operational HMIS, stating that we were not making all the money we potentially could and is that still the issue. Ms. Tackett stated that she had did comparisons with other cities and some cities we are receiving less than other cities and Ms. Tackett stated she will get the numbers out to the board.

Ms. Pratt then thanked the Mayor's office for holding firm to selecting the dormitory at DCSO for the shelter location and how well it has served Davidson County. Looking at next year MSS will probably have to operate the shelter again.

Ms. Pratt then stated that since the Commissioners had so many questions around HID, we will dedicate the meeting in April meeting to HID. Ms. Tackett will also prepare a packet to be distributed to the board prior to that meeting.

#### Community Needs Evaluation – Renee Pratt, Abdelghani Barre

Ms. Pratt stated, it is that time of year to release the 11th Annual Community Needs Evaluation. The release date is scheduled for March 18, from 8:30 to 10:30 at the West End Community Church. The Commissioners should have also received a draft of the CNE for this year. The CNE will focus more on Equity this year and so are many other departments. So, Ms. Pratt stated that we would like to partner with those departments based on the information and data that we provide and the direction that the partners are moving in and how we could accompany them in any way with data or to help their process. As a convener once we put the information out there to bring people together that can make a difference.

Ms. Pratt then stated that Metro Action Commission (MAC) is responsible for providing a Community Needs Assessment to their federal funders. However, MAC has deferred to us to use our Community Needs Evaluation for their data and information that they relate to the Federal Government. Many other organizations are using this document also.

Also, at the MSS retreat we discussed redlining and that is what is being discussed in the Democratic debate.

Mr. Barre stated that Metro Social Services is the only entity in the state of Tennessee that puts together a Community Needs Evaluation (CNE) every year. Mr. Barre also added that by preparing the CNE we are fulfilling a Charter mandate and Mr. Barre then thanked his staff Garrett Harper, Julius Witherspoon and Lee Stewart for gathering all the data for the CNE.

Mr. Barre stated that his team documents all the data collected at the local level that show the vulnerable population in Davidson County. Many other agencies in Davidson County rely on this data. The question now is what are we going to do with the data?

Mr. Barre stated that there is still a large number of citizens who are still deprived of a reasonable share of the benefits of community life. Some of the people that face deprivation have limited education, employment, or some face sub standard living conditions. Some of the social issues which confront the community are intensifying rather than easing.

Metropolitan Nashville lacks a truly comprehensive and coordinated system to enhance its social welfare. Mr. Barre further stated that there is an adequate program of social welfare research and a method for establishing priorities. Social planning in the Nashville area is inadequate and is based upon a minimum foundation of research.

Mr. Barre stated in closing that the CNE document is still being revised and they hope to have it to the printer by next week.

#### Budget – Renee Pratt

Ms. Pratt stated that each Commissioner should have a copy of the budget submission. Ms. Pratt commented that MSS has presented the same budget for the past 2 or 3 years and even though we were asked last year not to ask for any new incentives, ~~but~~ we felt the HMIS system was important and that we had ~~what our~~ needs ~~are~~ around the HMIS system.

Some of the items on the budget page you have seen in previous budgets and we will need a vote on the budget today and the positions are as follows:

- First position is Director, Shared Strategy & Impact which will be covered half by MDHA and half by MSS and our budget was not impacted by this position, \$146,900
- Second position is the Homeless Impact Division and HMIS, \$354,200
- Third position is the Social Worker position, \$71,100
- Fourth is a burial position, \$140,000
- Fifth is the MSS Extreme Weather Shelter position, \$50,000
- Lastly, Sixth, is the position of Data Manager, \$111,700

Ms. Pratt stated if any of the Commissioners would like more detailed information regarding the budget request please let her know.

***A motion was made by Commissioner Bradley to accept the Budget Improvement Request as it was presented. The motion was accepted by Commissioner Harris and seconded by Commissioner Peacock.***

#### Nutrition – Renee Pratt

Ms. Pratt ask the Commissioners if they recall at the last board meeting, we were completing a Metro Internal Audit. The audit show Nutrition as being very costly based

on the number of people MSS Nutrition serves, the amount of people we employ and also the cost in general.

Ms. Pratt stated that MSS has had the Nutrition contract since the early 1970's and under the Nutrition grant, MSS was only required to make a 10% match. However, over the last few years MSS has provided over a 44% match for the Nutrition contract in order to make it work for the city. The contract comes out of Greater Nashville Regional Council (GNRC) who provides there funding through the state of Tennessee.

Ms. Pratt stated that we cover all of Davidson county, and when the auditors look at our overall expenses we were sited, for putting in the 44% to make it work. So, Ms. Pratt wanted to ask the Commissioners how should we proceed? Ms. Pratt stated that we did provide a response to the Nutrition Audit and MSS will proceed in applying for the grant showing the additional cost and the funds will be available. MSS will proceed with applying for that grant, hopefully within the next two months.

Ms. Pratt closed with saying our Nutrition staff play a major role in the lives they deliver to each day.

**Commissioner Bradley called for the meeting to be adjourned**