

**METROPOLITAN ACTION COMMISSION
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
Board Room
August 21, 2008**

The Promise: Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community and are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

Present: Calvin Atchison, Awadh Binhazim, Barbara Clinton, Jennifer Cole, Karen Doty, Keith Durbin, Dale Farran, Florence Kidd, Robert McNeilly, Sandra Moore, Adinah Robertson, Gerri Robinson, LaVoneia Steele, Robert Stockard, and Hobert Suggs

Absent: Brady Banks, Phil Ryan, and Maria Valentin-Pridgen

Staff: Tyronda Burgess, Marvin Cox, Karen Crook, Cynthia Croom, Keri Fowler (Metro Attorney), Lisa Gallon, Cassandra Johnson-Payne, Pamela Matthews, and Rickie McQueen

Mr. McNeilly called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

Motion: *Approve June 28, 2008, meeting minutes.*

Made by: *Hobert Suggs*

Seconded: *Calvin Atchison*

Passed unanimously.

SUCCESS STORY

Several of the 45 GED graduates shared their thoughts about the GED program and their plans for the future: James Greene said that the program is a stepping stone to change life and achieve goals. He is currently enrolled in Nashville State and will work to better himself. Nicole Simmons stated that the GED program "took and made me from nothing to somebody." She is enrolled at Tennessee Technology Center in the pharmacology technician program. Stephanie Phelps enrolled in the program with hopes to better her life. She will graduate from Tennessee Technology Center on Monday, August 25, 2008, with a degree in medical billing and coding. Kayce Benford is enrolled in Tennessee State University with the hopes of obtaining a nursing degree. Stephanie Norris is working at UPS while looking for a program or veterinary office where she can learn how to work as a veterinarian assistant. Colleen Whehner just had a baby in June. Cynthia Simmons is interested in enrolling in college and is also seeking employment. Mrs. Croom stated that in response to the success of the Agency's GED program, Fisk University has committed one full-tuition school per year to an Agency GED graduate.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR as reported by Robert McNeilly, Chair

Mr. McNeilly reported that it is with much regret that he accepted Dr. Binhazim's resignation from the Board of Commissioners. Dr. Binhazim stated that upcoming commitments outside the country will severely limit his participation on the Board and he would like to provide someone else the opportunity to actively serve on the board.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT as reported by Cynthia Croom

Frederick Douglass Head Start Center

The second newly built Head Start center opened on August 18. This new center located at 214 North 7th Street replaces the Ross Head Start center that was located on Ordway.

Agencywide Retreat

The Agencywide Retreat was held on Thursday and Friday, July 24-25. Mrs. Croom thanked those Board members who were in attendance at the opening of the Retreat. Also, thank you to Lisa Gallon for pulling together great sessions that focus on health. During the Retreat, staff that made healthy changes in their lives from last year's retreat were recognized and celebrated. Mr. McNeilly said that he was impressed with the friendliness and enthusiasm of the staff.

English Only

Mrs. Croom distributed an email that she sent to Metro Legal to inform them of the specific Head Start regulations that require Head Start programs to communicate with Head Start parents and children in their preferred or primary language. If the English Only legislation were to pass with no provisions for exceptions, Head Start funding would be jeopardized. Mrs. Croom reminded Board members that the one area in our federal review in which the program was cited was for the lack of sensitivity to the cultures of our parents. Ms. Doty stated that the legislation is no longer a Council matter, but will be on the referendum for the November 4 election. Mrs. Cole stated that Board members can share with others the impact of voting for the legislation.

Meet and Confer

Mrs. Croom and Mrs. Johnson-Payne continue to meet and confer with the Union and representatives regarding the employee policies and procedures, after which the revised document will go to the Personnel Committee and the Policy Council for their recommendation to the full Board of Commission. Expect to have everything finalized by July 1, 2009.

Poverty Symposium

On September 22 at the Convention Center, the Chamber Foundation in partnership with the Agency will host a poverty symposium. 300 people are anticipated to attend. Other agencies and organizations who have served on a committee over the past seven to eight months to plan this event include Metro Social Services, Catholic Charities, The Jewish Federation, to name a few. A number of committee members will attend a technical assistance conference in Charlotte, North Carolina that was made available to 14 cities nationwide.

FINANCE REPORT as reported by Tyronda Burgess, Chief Financial Officer

The report disseminated reflects June 20 year-end. All grants have been reconciled with all dollars spent except for those grants/programs that either operate on a different fiscal year (CACFP) or that allow carry forward dollars (Watt Ads, Before/After Care). Anticipate ending the Summer Food Services Program on August 31 with a \$100,000 surplus, which will be transferred to the CACFP budget. Staff changes, a revision to the menu, decreased services during the summer months, and Admin dollars are other options available to bridge the CACFP

deficit. In-kind is at 106% of the budget. Mrs. Croom commended Mr. Cox, Mrs. Burgess, and Ms. Suggs for their work on the program. Last year was the first year that the Agency prepared and delivered the meals, and the program ended with a \$50,000 deficit. This year the program ended with a \$100,000 surplus, mainly in part to staff looking at ways to better administer the program, monitoring food items better, and using more shelf items. This same methodology will be utilized with the CACFP program to close its deficit along with adjusting some line items to the Head Start and Admin budgets. Mrs. Croom also commended Mr. Cox and his staff for petitioning Nashville Electric Service to change the eligibility criteria of the Watt Ad program to help more people.

ITEMS REQUIRING BOARD ACTION

Executive Director Evaluation

During an executive session, Dr. Atchison, as Chair of the Executive Director Evaluation Committee, presented to the Board a recommended Executive Director Evaluation.

Motion: *Accept Executive Director Evaluation Committee recommended evaluation of Mrs. Croom*

Made by: *Jen Cole*

Seconded: *Flo Kidd*

Passed unanimously.

Standards of Excellence

The standards were established to serve as a national benchmark of excellence for community action agencies. TACA paid for several agencies to participate. After the review committee receives the document, they will send comments and give suggestions for areas of needed improvement.

Motion: *Approve submission of the Standards of Excellence document.*

Made by: *Gerri Robinson*

Seconded: *Jen Cole*

Passed unanimously.

CACFP Application

As standard practice for the grant, Board members were asked to approve the submission of grant application for CACFP (Child and Adult Food Program)

Motion: *Approve submission of the CACFP application.*

Made by: *Lavoneia Steele*

Seconded: *Karen Doty*

Passed unanimously.

Approve Recommended Final Order – J. Harrison

As Chair of the Personnel Committee, Mrs. Clinton stated that the Personnel Committee met and reviewed the Recommended Final Order concerning the dismissal of J. Harrison. Ms. Harrison had appealed her termination to the executive director, who upheld the termination. The staff then appealed to the Civil Service Commission, after which Ms. Harrison submitted a request to

dismiss her appeal. The Civil Service Commission approved the dismissal of the appeal and the Personnel Committee voted to uphold that decision.

Motion: *Approve Recommended Final Order for J. Harrison*
Made by: *Barbara Clinton*
Seconded: *Adinah Robertson*
Passed unanimously.

PROGRAM REPORTS

Public Information

Online registration is available for the Poverty Symposium. www.nashvillechamber.com. The event begins at 7:58 a.m. and will end at 1:00 p.m. The Board Retreat is scheduled for Thursday and Friday, October 23-24, 2008. Report attached.

Community Programs

Report attached.

Head Start

Ms. Matthews gave thanks to the community, the Board of Commissioners, the Mayor's Office, and Metro Council for providing another newly built Head Start Center. The Frederick Douglass Head Start Center opened fully enrolled on August 18. Ms. Matthews also introduced Mr. Donald Parham as the interim Assistant Head Start Director. Mr. Parham has worked with the Agency's Head Start program for over 20 years, most recently as the center manager for Susan Gray Head Start.

Administrative Services and Operations

Ms. Crook commended Facilities Manager Thomas Cartmell, who did an excellent job ensuring that the Frederick Douglass Head Start Center was completed timely. It was noted that all Metro buildings built new are to meet Green standards. Lindsley Hall is still expected to be completed by March 2009. The transportation department was able to meet Metro's 10% fleet reduction requirement.

Human Resources

Supervisors attended a two-week workshop on the policies and procedures. From July 30 to August 8, Human Resources staff rotated to the various centers to provide to all staff a one-day training on the policies and procedures.

Meeting adjourned. Next meeting September 25, 2008

Minutes submitted by:

Barbara Clinton, Secretary
Board of Commissioners