

**Metro Social Services Board of Commissioners**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**of**  
**January 16, 2008**

**Board Members Present:** Frank Boehm, Dot Dobbins, Howard Gentry, Gwen Harris, Mary Kate Mouser, George Price  
**Board Members Absent:** Barbara Toms  
**Legal Advisor:** Christy Feldman, Attorney for Metro Government representing Metro Social Services Board  
**Mayor Liaison:** Hershell Warren

**Summary:** The Board of Commissioners discussed two important issues: The Social Services Plan and the MSS Board Retreat.

Dinah Gregory gave a presentation on the Social Services Plan. The board is very interested in moving forward with the plan and determining the long and short term goals of the plan. Upon the request of the Commissioners, the Homeless Coordinator position will be added back into Social Services Plan.

The MSS Board Retreat is scheduled for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of February at the Downtown Public Library. Listed below is a draft agenda of the retreat:

Friday, February 1

9:30 - 10:00 Breakfast  
10:00 - 10:15 Welcome  
10:15 - 11:00 Review of Charter (Attorney George Cates)  
11:-00 – 11:30 Review of Legal Mandates (Attorney Keri Fowler)  
11:30 – 11:45 Break  
11:45-1:00 Working lunch, Dr. Lorraine Green Facilitator  
1:00 – 2:30 Results Matter (William Aaron)  
2:30 – 2:45 Break  
2:45 – 3:30 What We Do (MSS staff presentations)  
3:30 – 5:00 Recap and Assessment of Day’s Work

Saturday, February 2

9:30 - 10:00 Breakfast  
10:00 – 11:30 Governance Training (Ralph Schulz)  
11:30 – 11:45 Break  
11:45 – 1:00 Overview of Draft Governance Policy (Commissioner Barbara Toms)  
1:00 – 1:30 Wrap Up

## Discussion:

After the Board properly approved the minutes without any changes, discussion moved to the Director's Report. Highlights of the Director's report were as follows: (1:06–28:10)

- All Metro departments were asked to conduct a full scale data security audit and report back the findings to Sandy Cole, Director of ITS. MSS submitted a report to ITS within the requested time frame with a comprehensive internal review of all policies and procedures led by MSS. Q&A of staff is to be completed by February 14<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Robinson stated that the audit involved all MSS sites and followed COA guidelines at all sites. Ms. Robinson said that she felt that MSS was ahead of some of the other departments because staff is always concerned with HIPPA requirements and safety issues. To resolve some of the concerns, MSS installed panic buttons with staff that deal with the public on a daily basis.
- MSS is now tracking all gifts, donations and any contributions. A quarterly report detailing this information will be included in the financial report beginning in April.
- Ms. Robinson also brought to the attention of the board how the closing of the Boys and Girls Club will impact the economy. MSS partnered with this site by sending kids to camp with a funding cost of about \$70,000 between the two camps. However, Boys and Girls Club recently closed this particular site due to funding issues. Ms. Robinson said this incidence may just be one example of how nonprofits in the current downturn of the economy struggle with funding. MSS needs to be prepared to deal with more requests for help from clients who were turned away at other locations because of funding issues.
- Ms. Robinson stated that MSS is now starting to focus more on in kind contributions in order to try and expand its Nutrition program. The Nutrition program has partnered with various churches in the community with MSS providing the food twice a week and the church providing the staff. With this focus, if resources are not available in the private sector, MSS has other options to provide services to the community.
- Comprehensive Social Services Plan (see Dinah Gregory's report below)
- United Way issued an RFP which included unregulated child care providers. The training must be connected to a regulated provider or in a partnership with such a provider. \$150,000 will be available to fund three different projects. Commissioner Boehm asked if MSS was able to compete for this RFP. Ms. Robinson stated that MSS could not compete for various reasons: MSS is a public entity, Ms. Robinson is on the committee that prepared the RFP and Ms. Robinson is on the United Way Board.

Pam McEwen began her Finance Report by defining specific parts of the report as follows: (28:18–57:06)

- Expenditure by Line of Business – Total of 5 lines of business that accumulates all the different programs.
- Expenditure by Type – Tells how we are budgeted. Contributions are the biggest line item because it includes the summer camp.
- Projection for the Year – Even if it looks under budget, the money will be spent by the end of the year, and Pam project we will be under budget by about 250,000.
- 4% Fund (Program and Resolution Balances) – money that is budgeted for specific items or projects (printers, fax machines, renovations, etc.)
- Special Donations Fund – these are funds where the donor has specifically designated how the monies will be spent.
- Contracts – listed are all the current active contracts which are based on the balance or the budget. We have two items pending and not listed. The RFI (Request for Information) is not listed because it is pending in purchasing. An RFI is where MSS wants to get information from the vendor/public about the services that MSS is interested in providing.

The other item not listed is the RFP (Request for Proposal), which is used for training our board, director, etc. (40:01–44:23)

Commissioner Harris provided further discussion about the board retreat agenda. The retreat will begin promptly at 10:00 a.m. with breakfast at 9:30. Please see summary. (57:10–1:03)

Dinah Gregory presented the Comprehensive Social Services business plan which identifies the needs in the community and coordinates the delivery of services to meet those needs to effectively serve Metro Nashville. The unit provides social service planning and coordination, through participation in multi-agency alliances, technical assistance and informational products. The plan entitled Strengthening Davidson County's Low Income Residents and Families consist of four areas: Adult & Seniors, Children & Youth, Homelessness and Immigrants. The plan focuses on five key areas: access to services, education, housing, systems development, and workforce development.

Commissioner Gentry said he would access the plan that is given to him and see if the plan makes sense in hopes that the plan presented to him is the best plan. Commissioner Gentry will not micro-manage the director nor take her expertise and micro manage it to his decision. Commissioner Gentry stated that he cares about the MSS staff and the people the staff serve, and Mr. Gentry also stated that he would not tell staff what plan will work best since they are the experts at what they do. (1:33-1:35)

Commissioner Boehm said the plan was a very good plan to use as a bridge to the next steps; however, Commissioner Boehm stated that the board will need MSS staff to help with some of the fine points of getting to the long and short term results of the plan. Commissioner Boehm said the plan was a great starting place. (1:39–1:41)

Commissioner Boehm said that in his documents the Planning and Coordination unit was created at MSS and it included coordinators for Adult/Seniors, Children/Youth, Homelessness and Immigrants, however, a plan on was not presented on the Homeless.

Dinah Gregory explained that the audit recommended 5 coordinators the four listed above and the one for integrated services, but, the integrated services position was not filled. However, a few months ago the Homeless Coordinator position was transferred by the Metro Council to MDHA. In response to Commissioner Boehm, Mrs. Robinson said she will go back to the table, and MSS will create a homeless coordinator function. (1:41–1:46)

Ms. Robinson stated her direction from the board as she understands it, to operate the agency to the best of her ability and come back to the board for feedback. Also, Commissioner Boehm would like to see things back on track, and he would like to provide input in making this happen. Ms. Robinson said she feels comfortable with both request and that MSS will move forward and make all the requested changes. (1:46–1:50)

**Governance Committee Report and Implementation Strategies has been deferred until next meeting.**

**Motion for adjournment was accepted and approved.**