Metropolitan Homelessness Commission
Executive Committee Meeting
Feb. 14, 2017
Sonny West Conference Center, Howard Office Building
700 2nd Avenue South, Nashville

Present: Liz Allen Fey, Renee Pratt, Wendell Segroves. Kirby Davis
Staff: Judith Tackett, Jessica Ivey, Deon Trotter
Public: Steve Reiter

Minutes:

Meeting Called to Order at 8:40am

Approval of Minutes
Wendell Segroves motioned to approve the minutes of Jan. 13, 2017, and Feb. 3, 2017. Kirby Davis seconded the motion. All approved.

Governance Discussion Update
The executive committee discussed the different options:
Functions of the Commission

- Commission serves as the governance board – management sits someplace else (staffing functions)
- Commission serves as governance board and manager of funds, activities, accountabilities

Where is the commission housed:

- Does the commission stay with MSS?
- Does the commission move under the Mayor's Office?
- Commission Stand Alone?
- Commission placed somewhere else in Metro?

Judith Tackett said when looking at the board (Commission/CoC board) structure, there were two options she heard: A. the board is a community appointed board in line with a Continuum of Care Governance board, or B. it is a hybrid where some of the people on the governance board are appointed by the Mayor, which is in line with the current appointment of the Homelessness Commission, and the remainder of the board members are appointed by the CoC membership.

Liz Allen Fey noted: we need to look at a decision tree – organizing body and where those functions live.

- Liz Allen Fey wants to know the pros and cons off all options – What's the best option?
- We know one option is MDHA or Not MDHA
- Next Question is MSS or Not MSS (standalone or another Metro Department)
    - Question to Renee Pratt - How would it change you for the better and or the worse?
    - Renee Pratt's Homework – to look at the above questions

- Renee Pratt also believes that she needs her board to be on the same page as well

Liz Allen Fey suggested that at the next Commission meeting, there should be a facilitated discussion about the pros and cons for each option. No decision will be made, but it would allow for some feedback and different views from commissioners.

Purpose of the Commission Moving Forward

The purpose of the Commission will depend on the governance structure decision of the CoC. Liz Allen Fey asked Judy Tackett what the Commission was doing that is not included in the recommendation tasks. Judy Tackett responded those would include overflow shelter planning, cold weather planning, special task forces such as around encampments, and other gap fillers including the N.O.T.E. team. Other tasks would include internal Metro facilitation and coordination of departments around addressing homelessness, and responding to Metro constituents on specific requests.

Ms. Tackett said that unless the CoC backbone staff resides within Metro, another Metro entity would have to pick up internal Metro processes, policies and recommendations regarding homelessness. She said some of the tasks that the Commission staff is doing now would fall under the new CoC governance and align nicely with that.

Liz Allen Fey said the main question to respond to was, "How would it change Social Services to have the Commission remain in MSS and the whole CoC management piece would move under MSS?" Some of the following aspects would need to be considered:

- What MSS actually does and how it is viewed would be challenged.
- Judy Tackett believes legal needs to be involved in the conversation because she could see staffing being more aligned under the MSS board, but was unsure what that would look like with a separate CoC governance board.
- Identity of MSS would change.
- Other problem of direct services in conflict with the planning and coordination staff

It would need to be clear on how roles are separated so staff can be effective in the community. Also – with direct services we have to be aware of the conflict of interest.

Commission Meeting Structures and Discussions

Liz Allen Fey proposed that we talk about the options for the Commission and the pros and cons of options that were discussed today with the entire Commission Body.

For the March Commission Meeting, Liz Allen Fey proposed to structure it the following way:

- Where are we now – Let's look at the last ten years
- Five Flip Charts – Liz will be a facilitator to discuss pros and cons on each governance options as we see it
- Summarize input - What does it tell us

Ms. Fey said she will think more about how to approach Commission input best on the topic of governance.

Liz Allen Fay said that the Commission (and community) was in a gap from the old to the new – knowing several of us will not be setting around the table in the new construct. It was up to the

Commission to vote to disband or reorganizing, she said she was not sure on the proper language for this due to there needing to be a new ordinance.

Request for Public Comment structure from Steve Reiter. Liz Allen Fey read his proposal, which requests to restructure public input so that the Commission is more responsive to the public.
Liz Allen Fey said the challenge to address was how the Commission makes sure that the public voice gets heard and that the meetings are structured in a way to continue moving forward.
Kirby Davis said that Commission meetings as they were now were just information sessions. He said the Commission was way too big to do anything. He said to be effective, there would have to be working groups to do the work of what the board is trying to move forward. Renee Pratt said she did not believe there was a clear understanding in the larger community of the purpose and meaning of what the Commission is intended to do.
Steve Reiter said that one of the ideas was to take an action item and what the budget of that item was and then ask the public if there was a comment. He said commenting periods at the end takes away the public voice.
Judith Tackett said that the community largely has driven the Commission's work, though she said she understood that the community would not see it that way. She gave an example of the Commission being involved in Cold Weather coordination planning or last year's encampment task force.
Liz Allen Fey said that as the chair she was willing to try a new approach and said she was fine with offering the public comment at the beginning. However, if the public wanted to add items to the agenda, they would need to be submitted to Judy in advance, so that the agenda could be published in accordance with Metro requirements. She said the executive committee would be the decision-making body for what would be on the agenda and why certain agenda suggestions did not make it on the final agenda. She said this proposal would be brought up at the next Commission meeting and then starting with the April meeting, this could be tried out as a new approach for three 10-minute public sessions throughout the meeting. Judith Tackett asked what the end goal of the public comments were. "It has to go somewhere." Liz Allen Fey responded that its purpose was to spur a different way of thinking. Judith Tackett said she wants to make sure that the Commission sets clear expectations outlining whom staff was responding to – the Board, MSS, the public…

Liz Allen Fey gave a recap of what the next Commission meeting will look like:
- Public Comment changes will be explained
- Recap of the last 10 years
- Liz will do a facilitation around pros and cons
- Any other business
- Public comment

Announcements
Liz Allen Fey thanked Renee Pratt and her board for approving the budget

The meeting was adjourned at 9:43 am.