

MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
HUMAN SERVICES TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 8, 2011

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Deanna Jonovich, City of Phoenix, Chair
Mary Berumen, City of Mesa
+Kyle Bogdon, DES/ACYF
*Krista Cornish, Town of Buckeye
+Naomi Farrell, City of Tempe
Laura Guild, Arizona Department of
Economic Security
Jeffery Jamison, City of Phoenix
Jim Knaut, Area Agency on Aging
Margarita Leyvas, Maricopa County, Vice
Chair
Joyce Lopez-Powell, Valley of the Sun
United Way
Steven MacFarlane, City of Phoenix
Jayson Matthews, Tempe Community
Council
*Joy McClain, City of Tolleson
+Leah Powell, City of Chandler
+Cindy Saverino, Arizona Department of
Economic Security

Sylvia Sheffield, City of Avondale
+Carol Sherer, Arizona Department of
Economic Security/DDD

OTHERS PRESENT

Jonnie Arnold, U.S. Veterans' Initiative,
Phoenix
Tim Cole, City of Phoenix
Jennifer Manno, L4 Technologies

Rachel Brito, MAG
Leila Gamiz, MAG
Amy St. Peter, MAG

+Those members present by
audio/videoconferencing.

*Those members neither present nor
represented by proxy.

1. Call to Order
Chair Deanna Jonovich, City of Phoenix, called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.
Introductions ensued.
2. Call to the Audience
An opportunity was provided for members of the public to address the Committee.
No public comments were made.
3. Approval of August 11, 2011 HSTC Meeting Minutes
Chair Jonovich called for a motion to approve the August 11, 2011, meeting minutes.
Vice Chair Marge Leyvas, Maricopa County Human Services Division, motioned to
approve the minutes. Jayson Matthews, Tempe Community Council, seconded the
motion. The motion passed unanimously.
4. Municipal Aging Services Focus Group
Chair Jonovich invited Leila Gamiz, MAG, to offer a report on the Municipal Aging
Services Focus Groups including trends and topics discussed. Ms. Gamiz
acknowledged the Virginia G. Piper Foundation for support of the project. MAG

staff has conducted several focus groups and the stories heard from participants are illustrative of the work that needs to be done. Ms. Gamiz advised the purpose of the project is to help determine the best and most effective role of local government in meeting the needs of older adults. Conducting the focus groups is the second phase of the project which will lead into the third phase the development of a model local governments can use when meeting the needs of older adults.

Ms. Gamiz reported eight focus groups with 111 individuals overall have been conducted. The experience has been impactful in terms of input received and stories shared by participants. Participants range from those who are very active to others who are not as active due to age, ailments and different interests. Many of the concerns expressed relate to transportation, socialization, and the ability to interact with others. Key aspects of the discussion have included loneliness, feeling left out, and feeling forgotten by society.

Ms. Gamiz commented focus groups have been heavily concentrated in Phoenix and the East Valley. She requested input from the Committee on opportunities for focus groups in the West Valley. Ms. Gamiz provided an overview of the Senior Centers where focus groups have been conducted. She noted the number of participants may be affected by the return or departure of winter visitors.

DeDe Gaisthea, MAG, has participated in the focus groups to offer information on transportation resources available. She shared a “Liver and Onions” story from one participant who noted the need to speak out. The story is impactful as many participants feel they are not being heard. Ms. Gaisthea discussed the Transportation Ambassador Program (TAP) as an opportunity for involvement, information sharing and making connections. Follow-up calls have been received from participants requesting additional information on resources.

Ms. Gaisthea noted at a recent Valley Metro meeting, a Dial-a-Ride customer service survey was being developed. It was noted senior centers had been given as a response in a test survey asking “*Where did you hear about services?*” Ms. Gaisthea said the project has been a great collaborative effort. Additionally, staff has been invited to return to the senior centers to offer presentations on transportation resources.

Amy St. Peter, MAG, shared a comment from a focus group participant, “*What we really need you can’t give us and that is time. What you can give us is quality of time*”. She noted improving the quality of lives is the goal of the project. Ms. St. Peter referred to the handouts noting six focus groups remaining, with the possibility of additional groups to be scheduled in the West Valley. She gave a brief overview of the format, issues that have been discussed, and possible outcomes to consider. One such example is a “one-stop shop”. Ms. St. Peter shared discussion regarding an “Aging Connect” event, similar to Project Connect. Aging Connect would bring programs to senior centers that may offer an eligibility determination for Dial-a-Ride, and early screening on-site. Input was requested on other possible outcomes.

Leah Powell, City of Chandler, advised a focus group was also conducted at the Chandler Senior Center. She offered to forward the details to staff. Ms. St. Peter noted guidelines for conducting focus groups are available on the MAG website. Agencies are welcomed to conduct their own focus groups and share information gathered with MAG staff. She acknowledged Ms. Gamiz for her time and effort on the project.

Ms. St. Peter advised ETC Institute is developing questions for the survey, however, input was requested on what the Committee want to accomplish through the survey. The survey will consist of a random sampling of older adults in Maricopa County. She noted previous discussion to expand the survey to age 55 and over, allowing for a comparison on which age groups are experiencing which needs. Sylvia Sheffield, City of Avondale, noted focus group results reflect disenfranchisement, not being listened to, and feelings of being the invisible generation. She asked that these issues be addressed in the survey. Ms. St. Peter agreed noting the correlation between socialization and transportation.

Jim Knaut, Area Agency on Aging, asked what direction has been received from the Virginia G. Piper Trust. Ms. St. Peter advised the Trust has been supportive of the project and has asked to see the results. She advised staff has discussed the project with Nora Hannah, Experience Matters, to ensure the project is addressing the needs of older adults. Laura Guild, Arizona Department of Economic Security, recommended broad categories of questions to collect quantify data on how often certain activities are done or not done. Ms. St. Peter noted the focus groups include a questionnaire that collects quantifying data. She suggested some of the questions may also be included in the survey. She recapped issues to address include loneliness, social opportunities, needs, and quantifying data.

Joyce Lopez-Powell, Valley of the Sun United Way, recommended gathering input from the faith community as well to identify differences in input received. Ms. St. Peter noted in speaking with the faith community, there is a much more recognizable commonly shared respect that is not always found in other communities. Steve MacFarlane, City of Phoenix, recommended approaching the survey in terms of either the senior centers not meeting the needs of citizens, or the perception of senior centers as many older adults do not view themselves as future participants in senior centers. He recommended questions addressing why someone has or has not ever visited a senior center, and expanding to include questions related to transportation.

Discussion ensued regarding the challenge faced by senior centers in addressing generational differences and how and who to cater services to. Mr. Knaut noted great attempts from senior centers to make the transition and blend services to a certain degree. However, communities are still faced with having to make difficult decisions. Mr. Matthews stressed the need to constantly be in an ever-changing and dynamic type of model. He said the best analogy is programs that work with children ages 0 to age five years and the different dynamics for addressing teenagers. He noted

today's new seniors have interests in job placement or skill training; the new model needs flexibility.

Ms. Lopez-Powell referenced Benevilla and the efforts by Michelle Dionisio to offer a childcare component and cross-generational support. Ms. St. Peter noted the model is supported by the City of Surprise and Rio Salado and offers the types of things that may be needed at varying stages in life. Discussion ensued on creating intergenerational community centers. Jeffrey Jamison, City of Phoenix, recommended asking for input on the top one or two items the project should first address to demonstrate older adults' concerns are being listened to and addressed.

5. Social Services Block Grant

Chair Jonovich invited Ms. St. Peter to discuss the Social Services Block Grant. Ms. St. Peter advised staff has received an invitation from Department of Economic Security to develop the SSBG allocation recommendations. She advised there is no funding available and expressed gratitude for previous funding received. Ms. St. Peter reviewed the process used to develop the previous recommendations and asked for input from the Committee.

There was consensus by the Committee to follow the same process and to rank all services. Mr. Matthews, Ms. Leyvas, and Ms. Guild volunteered to review the draft fact sheets developed by staff. Mr. Matthews made a motion to recommend approval of the process to develop the FY 2013 service allocation recommendations for locally planned Social Services Block Grant funding. Ms. Sheffield seconded the motion. The motion passed.

6. Leadership Human Services Tours

Chair Jonovich invited Ms. Lopez-Powell and Mr. Matthews to discuss the Leadership Human Services tours. Mr. Matthews advised the working group met to discuss how to educate and generate positive support for human services efforts. Concepts discussed include building upon existing successes such as Project Connect and inviting elected officials to attend and potentially participate. An added component would include targeted discussion regarding the human services system.

Ms. Lopez-Powell cautioned against focusing on any one service area, but instead, looking at the processes from a bigger perspective. Mary Berumen, City of Mesa, asked for clarification of the project. Mr. Matthews provided an overview of Project Connect noting the system of services can be used to demonstrate the impact made for people in need.

Vice Chair Leyvas asked about other potential tour sites. Ms. Lopez-Powell noted Project Connect is a starting point that can then be used to follow-up on other services. Mr. Matthews noted three initial considerations include the target audience, the availability of time and a general overview of Human Services. He discussed the constraints of timing when working with elected officials. Input was requested for other examples of multiple agencies work together to create a system that addresses

various age groups and needs. Ms. Sheffield recommended the Avondale Care 1st Housing and Resource Center and Mission of Mercy as two additional tour sites.

Ms. St. Peter noted these types of services, along with the North Tempe Multigenerational Center and Escalante Senior Center, resonate the partnerships between government, nonprofits and faith based communities. Ms. Lopez-Powell stressed the need to balance the importance of working with community partners without abdicating responsibility to provide the services to them.

Chair Jonovich expressed the need to be cognizant of all service areas and needs. She said targeting a specific sector would make it harder to focus on higher level, broader issues. Chair Jonovich questioned whether the Committee itself has identified the top five issues and the key message it wishes to communicate. Discussion ensued regarding a continuum of services including food, shelter, child care, and transportation with the goal being to help people understand the need is greater than just one specific thing. Mr. Mathews recommended the Committee provide feedback on the priorities to help inform the project. Mr. Knaut noted the importance of identifying the correlation between being effective, leveraging funds, creating public-private partnerships, and creating synergy.

Mr. Matthews said ultimately, the outcome is to build education and support with elected officials, demonstrate what human services does and facilitate conversation around the value of the system and the impact of agencies investing and aligning with the core values. Chair Jonovich thanked the Committee for their discussion. She reminded everyone to forward their priorities and/or suggestions to Mr. Mathews, Ms. Lopez-Powell, or Ms. St. Peter as requested.

Ms. Lopez-Powell requested input also be provided on who each Committee member views as the target audience for the leadership tours. She noted differences among Committee members on whom to target and at what level of government.

7. Request for Future Agenda Items

Committee members were given an opportunity to suggest topics or issues of interest they would like to have considered for discussion at a future meeting. Items noted include an update on leadership tours, the Municipal Aging Services project, and an update on the Social Services Block Grant.

8. Comments from the Committee

Committee members were given the opportunity to share comments or information related to community events. No comments were made.

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:09 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 13, 2011 at 1:00 p.m.