

Maricopa Association of Governments
Human Services Technical Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 17, 2005

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

ATTENDING

+Patrick Tyrrell, City of Chandler, Chairman
*Lorenzo Aguirre, City of El Mirage
*Nichole Ayoola, City of Mesa
Judy Bowden, Mesa United Way
Jeff Jamison for Moises Gallegos, City of Phoenix
Paige Garrett, Glendale Human Services Council
*Kate Hanley, Tempe Community Council
Carl Harris-Morgan, Town of Gilbert
Cindy Ensign for Connie James, City of Scottsdale
*Mary Lynn Kasunic, Area Agency on Aging
Barbara Knox, DES/RSA
Margarita Leyvas, Maricopa County
John Paul Lopez, City of Tolleson
*Joyce Lopez-Powell, VSUW
*Dan Lundberg, City of Surprise
Doris Marshall, City of Phoenix
*Kyle Moore, DES/ACYF
Susan Neidlinger, DES/DDD

Sandra Reagan, Southwest Community Network
Sylvia Sheffield, City of Avondale
*Linda Snidecor, City of Goodyear
Keith Burke for Judy Tapscott, City of Tempe
*Wayne Tormala, City of Phoenix, Vice Chair
*Margaret Trujillo, Value Options
*Neal Young, City of Phoenix

OTHERS PRESENT

Robert Duvall, CIR
Teresa Franquiz, MAG
DeDe Gaisthea, MAG
Jose Mercado, City of Phoenix
Lynn Reed, Greater AZ Literacy Council
Ayanna Rutherford, AmeriCorps
Pam Smith, Greater AZ Literacy Council
Amy St. Peter, MAG

*Those members neither present nor represented by proxy.
+Those members present by audio/videoconferencing.

1. Call to Order
Chairman Patrick Tyrrell, City of Chandler, who chaired the meeting via audioconference called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. and introductions ensued.
2. Call to the Audience
No comments were made.
3. Approval of February 17, 2005 Human Service Technical Committee Minutes
Chairman Tyrrell called for a motion to approve the February 17, 2005 Human Service Technical Committee meeting minutes. Sandy Reagan moved to approve the minutes, Carl Harris-Morgan seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

4. Presentation from the Greater Arizona Literacy Coalition

Chairman Tyrrell introduced Pam Smith from Arizona Call-a-Teen Youth Services and Lynn Reed from the Greater Arizona Literacy Coalition, who presented on the status of adult education services in the County. Ms Reed thanked the Committee for inviting them. She said she would read a statement first, then would seek input on some of the difficult issues they are facing in adult education.

Ms. Reed stated that there are 36 state funded adult literacy programs that served 34,000 students with over 2.4 million hours of instruction. The courses are taught in a variety of ways, through computer-based training, classroom instruction, through tutors, or by distance learning. To qualify, one must be 16 and not enrolled in school. About 10% of program participants are between 16-18 years and have dropped out of high school and need a GED. The majority are between 25-45. 50% of adults enrolled in programs last year had educational gains of 2-3 grade levels. She also stated that of those who entered the program, 83% subsequently earned their GED, 77% who sought jobs found employment, and 84% who wanted to enter post-secondary education or training went on to further education.

She said that adult education is a sound investment and is cost effective. The current state budget is \$4.4 million. The cost to the state is \$129 per student. Her organization is responsible for at least 25% of high school diplomas in state. The impact of an illiterate population registers in social service agencies and corrections programs.

Interesting facts:

Many service recipients have noted problems with reading prescriptions. There is a significant cost to prisons, drug recovery, employers, accidents and lost workdays. 819,000 individuals, or at least 20.4 % of adults in Maricopa County do not have a high school diploma. Arizona has a high school drop out rate and adult education represents a component to help reduce this problem. Those who get GEDs see about a 35% increase in income over those who do not graduate.

Ms. Reed stated that she and Ms. Smith were here for advice. Unfortunately, lots of people don't know they exist or what they do. It has become a mission of the coalition to get out and explain what they do and how they are an important part of the continuum of education in Arizona today. She said they are also here because they are facing a funding crisis. In the last two years, \$4.4million for adult education has been deleted from the state budget, although some has been reinserted due to lots of work from communities. The national budget for adult education stood at \$569 million, but was reduced by \$369million in Bush's federal budget proposal for FY2006. The US Department of Education and the federal Office of Management and Budget have not gotten together on what adult education needs to show in outcomes in order to protect funding.

She repeated that they are here to ask for advice and would like in future for every city to consider funding adult education at a local level. In California, over 80 mayors work together on a California Reads program, similar to programs found in other states. She

added that adult education is really a workforce issue. She asked the Committee what they suggest her organization should do.

Chairman Tyrrell thanked Ms. Reed for her presentation and asked if there were any questions. Ms. Reagan volunteered to field questions for Chairman Tyrrell as he was attended by audio conference. Ms. Reagan began with the comment that the statistics and data proves that the program is very, very important. She asked if adult education can be linked to community college or life long learning. She also asked how it impacts our immigrants and where there is much offered in the way of bi-lingual education.

Ms. Reed replied that the two largest adult education service providers are Rio Salado Community College and Pima Community College in Tucson. She referred to one of the handouts about all the programs in Maricopa County. She said that once a student gets their GED, her office works with Gateway and Rio to help them go on to college. Most come in at a very low reading level, between 5-6th grade level. When the student raises this level, they get passed on to college. She said all of their programs include a component to teach individuals to speak English. Of 34,000 learners, 19,000 were English language learners. 1600 were adult secondary education learners reading at a 10th grade level and were recent high school dropouts. With new legislation in Arizona House of Representatives, HB 2030 says that individuals that are not legally admitted or residents of Arizona cannot receive adult education services. She presumed this would apply to the use the \$4.4 million dollars.

Mr. Mercado asked if there is any fee for the Coalition's services. Ms. Reed replied that there is not, though there has been some discussion as to whether that should be changed. No one is totally against it, but the majority of their students could only pay \$10-\$20 total as most are very low income. At least 2/3 of their students work full-time.

Ms. Bowden asked if there are any national efforts to approach representatives in Congress to give them information to help change the situation on a federal level. She cited the example of cities fighting against CDBG cuts, which have since seemed to come down. She suggested advocacy at both the local and national levels. Ms. Reed said that she was in DC the week before last and spoke with education people for Arizona's senators and congress people. The Coalition also has a large letter writing campaign going on. Hopefully their voice will be heard.

Mr. Harris-Morgan said that earlier that day he had attended the Maricopa HOME Consortium, which is a group of most cities that receive home funds, except for Phoenix. They had talked about how the President's budget is not a reflection of how those programs are seen at a local level. There had been one person at the meeting who had been in DC recently and had talked with representatives of Arizona's elected officials. He suggested not sending letters in writing, but by email or fax. He said that print letters take too long to arrive because of security measures. Ms. Reed said the Coalition's letters are going out locally only. Mr. Harris-Morgan added that in many places, counties do use CDBG funds for adult education. He said that he runs that program for the Town of Gilbert.

Chairman Tyrrell added that the U.S. Senate has just today voted to take all cuts to Medicaid out of the budget. He added that regarding CDBG, Senator McCain was on the floor of the Senate opposing the cuts and advocating increased funding.

Ms. Reagan asked if the Coalition uses volunteers. Ms. Reed said yes, but they are hard to get these days. Volunteers need 18 hours of training to teach others how to read and speak English. Ever since 9/11 there's been a real reduction in volunteer availability, especially because they need someone with 2-4 hours available per week.

Mr. Matthews asked if they had considered working with the ASU College of Education. He said that many teachers go through student teaching internships. Maybe there is an opportunity to work with them so they can get credit and experience and the Coalition can get volunteers. She said she would love to get a phone number from him, though normally the university wants their student teachers in K-12.

Chairman Tyrrell thanked the Ms. Reed and Ms. Smith for their information. He then said he would need to leave the call for a few moments and asked Ms. Reagan to lead the meeting in his absence.

5. Historical Information and Potential New Directions for the Youth Policy Advisory Committee (YPAC)

Ms. Reagan referred Committee members to their handouts. She began by reminding the Committee that several meetings ago, the issue of youth was raised in this group and in the HSCC. At the request of the MAG Regional Council, the Youth Policy Advisory Committee (YPAC), which has been inactive since 1999, will be revived and folded into the HSCC. Councilmember Marie Lopez-Rogers from Avondale stepped forward to get involved and bring insight to revitalizing the youth group. Councilmember Lopez-Rogers and Ms. Reagan have met and staff has put together the historical information contained in the handout.

YPAC was originally founded in 1994 to focus on the juvenile justice system, but was then later expanded to include all youth. The group was very active. Ms. Reagan read aloud the list of their accomplishments from the handout.

She then read aloud the mission statement, which read:

To enhance the quality of life and safety of our communities and neighborhoods by proposing regional strategies for local governments and partnerships with other organizations and citizens to support the positive development of youth.

Ms. Reagan commented that she felt that the old statement covers all of the angles, though some progressive thinkers sometimes advocate for short, no longer than 5-word mission statements. She asked the Committee to consider the existing mission statement for adoption or if there is a need to enhance it.

She went on to say that some recommendations on focus and potential projects have been made, which she read from the second handout. She said she was impressed with the addition of America's Promise to Youth/Arizona's Promise because that group has a well-established reputation. It was developed by Colin Powell and had a wonderful kick-off here in Maricopa several years ago.

She discussed the proposed membership, which currently includes Councilmember Marie Lopez-Roger, Mattie McVey from the Department of Education, and Erin Hart from the Governor's Youth Policy Advisory Task Force. She added that it would be most important to have youth present. She asked the Committee to consider if others should be invited and who.

Ideas for projects included taking an inventory of after-school programs to be provided to the municipalities, and possibly healthy habits/lifestyles related projects. She then opened the floor for discussion.

Mr. Harris-Morgan asked if this would be a subcommittee of HSTC. She replied that it would be a special subcommittee of combined HSCC and HSTC members, similar to the domestic violence subcommittee that was formed years ago.

Ms. Knox suggested including Pam Smith, a guest at today's meeting. Ms. Smith works with Call-A-Teen and would be a good asset to the group. Ms. Reagan agreed and said that they would add her to the distribution list of membership.

Ms. Reagan then asked the Committee specifically about the mission statement. Marge Leyvas noted that it currently says that the group "will propose regional strategies to enhance quality of life and safety for youth". She asked if they would just be proposing strategies or if they would be implementing too. Ms. St. Peter replied that the group would likely be providing planning and coordination assistance to help cities make implementation happen, rather than implementing projects directly. Ms. Reagan added that many cities do already have youth committees and suggested supporting those cities and maybe looking into more global regional standardization. One direction might be to bring together the cities that already have youth commissions. Ms. Leyvas suggested that the word "proposing" does not define what Ms. St. Peter just explained, and suggested using language such as planning, facilitating, and coordinating.

Mr. Harris-Morgan asked if YPAC has looked over the existing mission statement and how they felt about it. He said that he felt members of YPAC should approve it first before bringing it to HSTC for approval. Ms. Reagan agreed, but said that they wanted some assistance with direction and input first. Ms. Harris-Morgan suggested that the HSTC provide comments and which YPAC could take into consideration. YPAC could then approve a final statement and bring the finished product to HSTC.

Ms. Reagan agreed and said that YPAC could work on the project ideas a bit more before bringing them to HSTC. Ms. St. Peter asked if there were any other areas that the Committee members would like YPAC to consider for potential projects. Ms. Neidlinger

asked if anyone had spoken with directly with the cities about where they're having issues with youth for ideas where we can help out. Ms. Matthews said that from Tempe's perspective, there have been some issues around the duplication of services by agencies, for example five or six agencies trying to target the at-risk group at the same school. Currently Tempe is trying to tackle how to best maximize those agencies for the broad all-inclusive group. He suggested that a possible project might be not only to take an inventory of services, but maybe look at the coordination of agencies to best maximize what they are trying to achieve.

Ms. Bowden said that in Mesa, they have an agency that provides 23 hours of detention for juvenile status offenders. The police can bring them in, drop them off in 5 minutes, and then they're back on patrol. She suggested looking for potential models for other communities.

Ms. Reagan thanked everyone for their good comments and said that it sounds like we need to have more people on this group.

Chairman Tyrrell suggested getting YPAC together for a meeting, allow them to have this same discussion, then request a formal approve of their membership from the HSTC. Mr. Harris- Morgan suggested contacting the youth advisory boards of some of the cities to invite their participation.

Chairman Tyrrell asked each member of the Committee to investigate if their municipalities have youth advisory boards and if so, to get the staff person's name and contact information to Teresa Franquiz at MAG by the end of the week. YPAC would then meet and bring an update to the strategic planning meeting in April.

6. Announcements

Ms. Leyvas gave an update on the President's budget and how it would impact CAP agencies. She said that she attended a national conference last week and made hill visits. CDBG is zeroed out in the President's budget proposal, but this was fixed after the move from HHS to HUD. She said there are many very concerned about the zeroing-out of CSBG. She said it looks promising and hopeful.

Ms. St Peter apologized for the confusion on the telecast of Strengthening Communities. She said that MAG has taped the telecast and it's pretty informative. It is about an hour long and MAG is in the process of setting up a viewing time. She also said that it will be available by video conference sometime next week and to let her know if there are any good or bad days to show the viewing.

7. Work Group Session

At this point, the HSTC went into their break outs groups, the data group remaining in the Saguaro Room and Aging Services going to Cholla. Ms. Reagan reminded everyone of the annual advance on April 14 at South Mountain Environmental Resource Center from 11:30am – 3pm.

8. Adjourn

The next meeting of the Human Services Technical Committee is the annual strategic planning advance with the Human Services Coordinating Committee, scheduled for Thursday, April 14, 2005 from 11:30a.m. to 3:00pm at the South Mountain Environmental Education Center.