

Maricopa Association of Governments  
Human Services Technical Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
May 20, 2004

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS  
ATTENDING

Patrick Tyrrell, City of Chandler, Chairman  
Judy Bowden, Mesa United Way  
Joan Ellis, DES  
Moises Gallegos, City of Phoenix  
Steve Wise for Kate Hanley, Tempe  
Community Council  
Carl Harris-Morgan, Town of Gilbert  
Paige Garrett, Glendale Human Services  
Council  
\*Connie James, City of Scottsdale  
Jeannie Jertson, Maricopa County HS  
Jim Knaut for Mary Lynn Kasunic, Area  
Agency on Aging  
Barbara Knox, DES/RSA  
\*Ramon Leon, El Mirage Community  
Service Program  
\*John Paul Lopez, City of Tolleson  
\*Joyce Lopez-Powell, VSUW  
\*Dan Lundberg, City of Surprise  
Jose Mercado for Doris Marshall, City of  
Phoenix  
\*Kyle Moore, DES/ACYF  
Susan Neidlinger, DES/DDD  
\*Sandra Reagan, Southwest Community  
Network

Diane Smith for Sylvia Sheffield, City of  
Avondale  
Linda Snidecor, City of Goodyear  
Laura Guild for Mary Jo Swartz,  
DES/CSA  
Judy Tapscott, City of Tempe  
Wayne Tormala, City of Phoenix, Vice Chair  
\*Margaret Trujillo, Value Options  
Pat Nightingale for Neal Young, City of  
Phoenix

OTHERS PRESENT

Karla Averill, Governor's Office  
Joy Carter, MAG  
Debra Determan, MAG  
DeDe Gaisthea, MAG  
Lisa Troisi, PATCHS  
Anna Maria Maldonado, Pacific Care  
Bertha Martinez, PATCHS  
Allie Masters, Maricopa County  
Amy St. Peter  
Mindy Wakefield, Maricopa County

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

1. Call to Order

Chairman Patrick Tyrrell, City of Chandler, called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. and introductions ensued.

2. Approval of March 18, 2004 Joint Human Service Technical Committee Minutes

Carl Harris-Morgan, Town of Gilbert motioned to approve the March 18, 2004. Judy Tapscott, City of Tempe, seconded, the motion was approved unanimously.

3. Approval of April 15, 2004 Joint Human Service Technical Committee Minutes

Carl Harris-Morgan, Town of Gilbert motioned to approve the April 15, 2004. Jim Knaut, Area Agency on Aging, seconded, the motion was approved unanimously.

4. PATCHS

Chairman Tyrrell introduced Bertha Martinez, PATCHS Project Manager and Lisa Troisi, PATCHS Child Specialist, who provided a summary of the current effort by PATCHS to provide services to children who have witnessed domestic violence. Ms. Martinez provided a handout with referral information.

The PATCHS project, now located at the City of Phoenix Family Advocacy Center, began in 1999 with help from Laura Guild, DES. The focus had formerly been on working with DV shelters statewide. In 2002, PATCHS received a 4-year planning grant from the Governor's Office to help children living in DV shelters. 13 agencies have been involved in developing a system for assessing children's needs. This has been in cooperation with shelters, MAG, Blue Cross/Blue Shield and others.

2003 was the first year of implementation of the plan. It consists of three steps: 1) Hire a resource specialist, later upgraded to a child specialist with a Master's degree, who can interview families on how to reduce barriers. Ms. Troisi has filled this position. The interview process can take up to 2-3 hours to complete. 2) To link families with community agencies where they can receive services. 3) To bring the same model into different areas of Maricopa County in addition to Phoenix.

Judy Tapscott commented that assessment is the first stop in this process and then resources are given to the client. She asked if the families also received education. Ms. Martinez replied that education referrals are given on a case-by-case basis as needed. This can be for the child and/or adult education. Most families in DV shelters are offered no follow up education or counseling. Laura Guild also commented that for people who've gone through this crisis this is more of a stabilization program.

Steve Wise asked Ms. Martinez to speak further about referrals to health services. She replied that much of their efforts involve linking those without health insurance to low cost service providers. This may also involve looking at a client's existing insurance and determining the best place for them to go to receive services.

Laura Guild asked if the program did expand to other communities outside of Maricopa County, would there be resources available to hire more child specialists? Ms. Martinez replied no, that if other communities wished to become involved, the staffing resources would have to come from them.

Debbra Determan asked if a municipality would like to get involved, would PATCHS be able to provide the tools necessary to do so? Ms. Martinez replied yes.

Lisa Troisi, PATCHS Child Specialist spoke next and stated that she has been contracted through Chrysalis and has been working for two months. Ms. Troisi receives referrals from many sources including schools, family advocacy centers, and shelters. She meets with families to do assessments and if necessary, does follow up to ensure the families have the resources they need. Diane Smith, City of Avondale, asked if they would work with victims if they go back to the abusers. Ms Troisi replied that yes they do.

5. Benefits Check-up Presentation

Chairman Tyrrell introduced Karla Averill, Governor's Office, who gave a presentation on the Benefits Check-Up Program that allows seniors to check on-line if they are eligible for benefits. The website is located at [www.benefitscheckup.org](http://www.benefitscheckup.org). The site itself is owned and operated by the National Council on Aging and is free to the public. Local benefit providers can be included in the database, and therefore searchable by the public, by becoming an "organizational edition". This status is free and will also provide organizations alternative entry to the site that will allow them to run reports and receive helpful information for grant writing. This might be useful for many types of organizations such as provider agencies, community centers, hospitals, and others. Anyone interested in becoming an organization edition should contact Ms. Averill at the Governor's Office to sign an agreement. She mentioned that the site is also available in English and in Spanish.

Jeannie Jertson asked if the public can access Arizona specific eligibility information? Ms. Averill said yes, all the information imbedded is Arizona specific. The inquirer would need to be sure and include their zip code to access the correct local information. She added that the key is to get help from someone who is familiar with the program for seniors that may need it. Her office is currently working to provide training on the site to Valley libraries and Life Options Centers.

Currently there are seven model states participating in this test phase of the site and Arizona is one of them. After testing, the project will broaden to include more states.

Jim Knaut asked if it would be possible to add links to this site, for example to city websites or benefits providers? Ms. Averill replied that they are currently working on that now.

6. Presentation on Arizona Community Action Association Partnership with Association of Arizona Food Banks and Current Initiatives

Chairman Tyrrell introduced Cynthia Zwick, Director of ACAA, who discussed ACAA's partnership with AAFB, current poverty related projects and the recent ACAA/AAFB conference held May 12-14, 2004. Ms. Zwick first showed a video that provided current statistics on the number of Americans living in poverty and how difficult it is to exist on a minimum wage salary. She stated that according to national

statistics, Arizona is 50<sup>th</sup> in the nation on how much we spend on social and human services. This demonstrates the need to form collaborations with other organizations to expand resources and to reach as many people as possible. She pointed out that there is also a need to partner with other than like-minded organizations like businesses, the media, and the public. ACAA and AAFB are working to do just that. Over 300 people attended the joint conference they held last week. It was the most successful conference to date, held either separately or together, and it was made so through their organizations' partnership because of the variety that it provided.

Ms. Zwick went on to point out the need to recognize that there are still others that have not yet been invited into the discussion. Partnering with unlikely organizations can lead to unexpected successes. For example, by working with farmer's markets, AAFB and ACAA have been able to find a way for them to accept food stamps. Another benefit of forming partnerships is the reduced cost of maintaining websites. If organizations can join together on the web, they can save by cutting down on the cost of maintaining duplicate or similar information.

Debbra Determan asked Ms. Zwick where she sees ACAA moving in the coming year? Ms. Zwick replied that they are planning to become a clearinghouse for poverty issues in Arizona. A wide variety of information will be available through their database. ACAA also wants to bring together community leaders to talk about where we go from here after the first 40 years of ACAA's existence. Part of this will likely be working to affect public policy. Groups like PAFCO do good work advocating for basic needs at the legislature. ACAA may partner with them to see what they can do to proactively affect change.

Ms. Zwick continued by explaining that ACAA may form a marketing subcommittee that would help the organization to "tell its story" better so that people can understand the impact of poverty. An issue committee may also be formed to help set priorities. Training and technical assistance may be offered to develop a curriculum for the year, which would be used to train volunteer, either on-line or face-to-face.

Paige Garrett asked if the committee could get copies of the video? Ms. Zwick said yes. Ms Garrett also mentioned that they were forming a collaboration for homeless providers in the west valley and if Ms. Zwick would be interested, she responded that yes, she would be interested.

Wayne Tormala pointed out that Ms. Zwick's presentation was very relevant to how the committee has been talking about better ways of doing business with each other and what things they can do that can have an impact on the community.

#### 7. Update on the Regional Continuum of Care Committee on Homeless

Chairman Tyrrell introduced Amy St. Peter, MAG staff, who provided an update on the activities of the Continuum of Care committee, including the homeless gaps analysis process and the HUD project rating and ranking process.

Ms. St. Peter stated that she's been with MAG since March 1, 2004. Since that time, she's been spending a significant portion of her time working on the local HUD application and how to make the application process better. She gave the committee a brief history of the Regional Continuum of Care Committee's involvement with the HUD process. As for this year, the most intense part is beginning now. There will likely be 50-60 agencies applying for funding, most of which will be seeking renewals for existing projects. She mentioned that HUD's focus has shifted somewhat in recent years to providing services to the chronically homeless population, as well as providing permanent housing for all homeless individuals and families. Ms. St. Peter said that she would soon be releasing the local application via email. Steve Wise requested that he receive it as well. A training date for all applicants has been set for Thursday, June 10. The applications will be due to MAG towards the end of June and they will be sent into HUD at the end of July.

Debra Determan asked the committee to let others in their communities know that the application is available. Often agencies must plan at least a year in advance in order to be well positioned to receive funding from HUD, but it is best if everyone is aware of the process.

8. Summary of Current Regional Human Service Initiatives and Possible Directions for HSTC

Chairman Tyrrell introduced Debra Determan, MAG Human Services Manager, who presented a summary of human service related projects that are currently underway in the community. Ms. Determan referred to a handout that listed all of the issue areas that were tallied from the ballot results and per comments at the last meeting. She briefly reviewed the handout and suggested that the committee attempt to prioritize the items.

Jeannie Jertson added that another issue is the lack of funding for transportation for home delivered meal programs. Jim Knaut agreed and thought that this issue might fall under the larger transportation category already mentioned on the handout. He added that the committee might need to look at contracting their efforts in some ways because as the population grows, there is less and less money available for services. He stated that the committee would need to think creatively. Chairman Patrick Tyrrell commented that human services often ends up getting lost in the larger issues surrounding transportation.

Paige Garrett suggested that the committee do some research on best practices concerning this issue and come back with suggestions.

Chairman Tyrrell agreed, but wondered how it could produce a tangible result? He suggested picking 2 or 3 committee members who could set a few goals that could be achieved in 6-8 months time. This might help the committee to see tangible results. He asked for volunteers to work with Ms. Determan on goals for the next joint

meeting in July. Steve Wise, Jeannie Jertson, Jim Knaut, Moises Gallegos, Susan Neidlinger, and Patrick Tyrrell volunteered.

Chairman Tyrrell went on to explain that he enjoys seeing projects come to fruition, but also enjoys receiving information at committee meetings that he is then able to take back to his community and use. He asked the committee if there were other things that the committee could be doing during meeting time that would be helpful?

Paige Garrett reiterated the need to achieve tangible results. Moe Gallegos agreed and stated that it's important to identify what the committee might be specifically trying to accomplish. Steve Wise pointed out that the committee is interested in becoming involved in every issue area mentioned on the handout, but it would be helpful to choose 2 or 3 tangible projects. Jeannie Jertson added that hearing about best practices is important as they did with the Tempe Senior Center and the City of Phoenix EITC campaign. Chairman Tyrrell added that it would be helpful to get more participation from the Human Services Coordinating Committee. He suggested setting aside time at each HSCC meeting for information on best practices. He added that maybe a volunteer from the HSTC could help with that.

Paige Garrett challenged the committee to form subcommittees that could do research on best practices on a national level. Each subcommittee could investigate specific issue areas, such as transportation. Chairman Tyrrell agreed as long as there would be an attainable, tangible result at the end. Maybe this could be based on a model from somewhere else.

Susan Neidlinger asked if it would be possible to have experts talk to the committee about each issue area? This would help members to expand their knowledge and to integrate more.

Chairman Tyrrell stated that the volunteer group would meet before the next meeting in June and come back to the full committee with suggestions.

#### 9. Call to the Public

Anna Maria Maldonado, Pacific Care, announced that her organization was undertaking an outreach initiative in the Phoenix area in July that would be related to the senior community. She said they are currently looking for partner organizations to work with and provided her contact information to staff members if anyone is interested. Pacific Care is interested in being a sponsor for events regarding senior services.

#### 10. Announcements

Chairman Tyrrell announced that the Chandler Center for the Arts would be providing free classes on the East Valley's HOA's this coming weekend on Friday and Saturday.

11. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 pm. The next meeting for the **Human Services Technical Committee is scheduled for Thursday, June 17, 2004 at 1:00 p.m. in the Cholla Room** at the MAG offices.