

MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
HUMAN SERVICES COORDINATING COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 15, 2008

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Mayor Marie Lopez Rogers, Avondale, Chair
*Vice Mayor Rob Antoniak, Goodyear
*Councilmember Dave Crozier, Gilbert
*Councilmember Roy Delgado, El Mirage
+Councilmember Trinity Donovan, Chandler
+ Leslie Evans, Tempe Community Council
Laura Guild for Susan Hallett, Arizona
Department of Economic Security
+Councilmember Kyle Jones, Mesa, Vice Chair
*Vice Mayor Manuel Martinez, Glendale
* Carol McCormack, Mesa United Way
Donna Reid, Chair of the City of Scottsdale
Human Services Commission
+Councilmember Onnie Shekerjian, Tempe
*Supervisor Mary Rose Wilcox, Maricopa
County

OTHERS PRESENT

DeDe Gaisthea, MAG
Amy St. Peter, MAG
Renae Tenney, MAG
Jayson Matthews, Tempe Community
Council
Barbara Hill, Maricopa County
Theresa James, City of Tempe
Carl Harris-Morgan, Gilbert
Denise Borriteau, DES/RSA
Jennifer Dangremond, CASS
Sammi Curless, City of Avondale

+Those members present by
audio/videoconferencing.

*Those members neither present nor
represented by proxy.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m.

2. Call to the Audience

No comments were made at this time.

3. Approval of January 15, 2008 Meeting Minutes

Chair Lopez Rogers asked if everyone had reviewed the minutes and if there were any changes. Laura Guild, DES, motioned to approve the minutes as written. Donna Reid, Scottsdale, seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

4. Legislative Update

This item was taken out of order so the Committee could have the most recent update on legislative activity before addressing the proposed reductions to the Social Services Block Grant. Chair Lopez Rogers introduced Nathan Pryor, MAG Senior Policy Planner, who offered an update on human services related legislative activity at the state and federal levels. Mr. Pryor began by referring to the FY09 SSBG budget saying The White House has proposed a \$500 million reduction in SSBG. This potentially means an approximate reduction of \$10.3 million for the State of Arizona based on population. The total appropriations

were \$1.7 billion for FY07 and FY08 each year. He said the proposed \$1.2 billion appropriation for FY09 would be a reduction of 29.4 percent. Arizona's proposed allocation based on population for FY09 would be \$24.5 million. Mr. Pryor stated the FY09 budget is in doubt of being adopted until the next president is sworn into office. This means the budget would operate under continuing resolution which has been done before. He said the reaction to the White House proposal by the Chairman of the House Appropriations could be found at <http://appropriations.house.gov/pdf/Budget2008Release.pdf>.

Mr. Pryor handed out a summary chart for the Arizona legislation. He noted given the timing of the legislative session, many, if not all, of the bills in the summary are unlikely to advance this session. The chart shows bills that have not been heard and all look to be inactive for the remainder of the session. He stated MAG staff will continue to monitor the bills until the conclusion of the legislative session.

Chair Lopez Rogers inquired about the legislation to address graffiti abatement through parental responsibility. Ms. Guild provided a copy of HB 2740 and this was distributed to Committee members and posted on the MAG Web site. Chair Lopez Rogers said in her opinion the bill was not tough enough but that it provided a starting point. In the absence of a statewide law, graffiti abatement is left up to the municipalities and counties. This means it can be unaddressed or inconsistently enforced from one community to the next. Chair Lopez Rogers said this is and will continue to be an important issue for the region.

5. Revisions to the FY09 Social Services Block Grant Allocation Recommendations
Chair Lopez-Rogers stated as in previous years, the President is proposing to reduce the Social Services Block Grant. She said the MAG Human Services Technical Committee has prepared revised allocation recommendations to reflect the proposed change. She introduced HSTC Chair, Carl Harris-Morgan, to make a presentation on the revised recommendations.

Carl Harris-Morgan said the FY09 allocation recommendations were approved by Regional Council earlier this year. In March, DES notified MAG that a revised plan was due to them by May. The revised plan needs to reflect the 19.722 percent cut proposed by the President. As in the past two years, it is unlikely that the funding reduction will be implemented. DES will contract with providers on July 1st according to the plan approved earlier this year that does not reflect the proposed cut. Both plans will be sent to the federal government.

Mr. Harris-Morgan reported that HSTC met last week to develop the revised plan. He referred the Committee to the handouts. The revised plan follows the same principles as the plan from the last two years. All target groups share the proposed cut equally. All service levels, with the exception of the services within Persons with Developmental Disabilities target group, share the cut equally. The remaining funding for the services within the Persons with Developmental

Disabilities target group have been collapsed into one service to maximize the funding available. This was at the recommendation of the Division for Developmental Disabilities at DES.

He presented the plan to the Committee for their recommendation for approval before it moves on to the MAG Management Committee and Regional Council next month. Mr. Harris-Morgan asked for any questions and thanked the Committee for their time.

Councilmember Shekerjian, Tempe, said she had not received the materials prior to the meeting. She requested that materials be sent prior to the meeting so the Committee members had a chance to review the information. Ms. St. Peter explained that the materials were currently available on the MAG Web site and that materials would be emailed to members prior to the meeting in the future.

Mayor Lopez Rogers said it is difficult to plan for funding reductions when the programs are so under-funded already. Councilmember Kyle Jones, Mesa, moved to recommend approval of the revised allocation recommendations as presented. Ms. Reid seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

6. Heat-Relief Planning Efforts

Chair Lopez-Rogers said a few years ago, this region received national attention when people died in record breaking numbers from the heat. Since then, the region has rallied to ensure this does not happen again. She noted many communities and agencies have really taken the lead to protect vulnerable populations from the heat.

Chair Lopez Rogers introduced Theresa James, City of Tempe, who presented information on heat-relief planning efforts to assist homeless people and other vulnerable populations during the summer months. Ms. James began by stating heat relief plans are gearing up for this summer. The City of Tempe Housing Services, Tempe Community Action Agency and TEAM Ministries has scheduled training for the faith based community on April 28, 2008 at the Grace Community Church located at 1200 E South Avenue in Tempe. The goal is to reach out to faith-based communities to expand relief sites. She noted Amy Schwabenlander from Valley of the Sun United Way is also partnering on this event. Ms. James invited members to attend.

Ms. James said April 25, 2008 will be the next Project Homeless Connect event. The event has been recognized as a national best practice model. Project Homeless Connect brings together agencies that provide services to the homeless population together in one place for the day. She stated over 150 attended previous events. The event will be held at the First United Methodist Church in Tempe. Ms. James commented this is a model that could be easily replicated to other cities.

Councilmember Donovan asked if the hydration maps would continue to be developed by MAG and noted them as an important community resource. Ms. St. Peter indicated MAG is developing them again. She explained that one map will feature the locations of hydration sites and respite areas and the second map will indicate the location of water collection sites. Ms. St. Peter requested that anyone wanting to add information to the map to contact her or Brande Mead. She also offered technical assistance for anyone wanting to provide heat relief services over the summer.

Chair Lopez Rogers introduced Barbara Hill from Maricopa County to offer a presentation on their heat relief planning efforts. Ms. Hill stated every year a heat stress presentation is given to drivers, dispatcher and STS staff. The plan includes heat welfare checks on the vulnerable and disabled population. Workforce development sites and Community Action Program offices will have resource information on water and distribution sites. Heat announcements are filtered through the department. Last year's water drive was donated to CASS. Home-delivering meal drivers complete well checks and reported any concerns. She stated outcomes include over 60 client contacts were made during heat watches and warnings. Utility assistance was provided to 49,000 households and 89 air conditioners were repaired. The plan for this year is to continue the effort and to coordinate with other agencies.

Chair Lopez Rogers thanked Ms. Hill for her presentation. She noted that a student council from a high school in Avondale is conducting their own homeless awareness experience. They will bring a coat and blanket and sleep out in the football field for a night. The next morning, they will donate the coat and blanket for homeless people. She reported that the West Valley Human Services Alliance will be focusing on homeless issues at their next meeting on April 28th at 9:00 a.m. at Avondale City Hall. She invited all to attend.

7. Report on the 2008 MAG Conference on Housing and Transportation Human Services Coordination

Chair Lopez Rogers said that on April 8th, MAG hosted a conference to help people better coordinate housing and transportation. She introduced Amy St. Peter to offer a report on the event. Ms. St. Peter thanked the Committee members for supporting the event through their attendance and sponsorship, noting DES as an important sponsor. The nearly 300 people who attended at the Desert Willow Conference Center consisted of elected officials, community members, nonprofits agencies and representatives from national agencies. The process has been a learning experience to ensure planning for future events are accessible for all populations.

Ms. St. Peter stated there were 14 workshops throughout the day, with three national experts and one local leader speaking at the luncheon plenary. She stated in the last plenary session, attendees were asked what impacted them the most of

the day and what strategies could be implemented. She said one outcome will be a report to offer models to replicate in the community. Chair Lopez Rogers thanked Ms. St. Peter for her report and said this effort is very much needed in the community.

8. Committee Updates

Chair Lopez Rogers said the other MAG Human Services Committees are engaged in important projects. She introduced Renae Tenney to offer an update on the Youth Empowerment Project. She reminded the Committee that this is a joint project between this Committee and the MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council.

Renae Tenney began her report on the MAG Youth Empowerment Project by offering a brief history of the project. The project originated when teens indicated they did not feel safe and reported a high prevalence of dating violence among their peers. The project was developed to offer tools to teens to build healthy relationships and end dating violence. A Public Service Announcement (PSA) Competition encourages teens to craft messages about dating violence and to drive teens to the project's Web site, WebofFriends.org.

Ms. Tenney reported on the Recognition Event. This event was held to announce the winners of the PSA Competition in March at the Suns Diamondback Academy. She said this site was chosen because many of the entries came from the school as a result of one teacher assigning the competition as a class project. Mayor Manross of Scottsdale, Chair of the MAG Regional Domestic Violence Council, emceed the event. She was joined by James Rivas of MEGA 104.3 and two young adults who gave powerful testimonials about their own experiences with dating violence. Ms. Tenney said American Express donated gift cards for the winners in the radio ad and electronic invitation categories. Raffle prizes were donated by the Phoenix Suns and Waterbird Studio.

The Committee reviewed the winning entries in each category and offered feedback. Ms. Tenney explained that the best elements from each of the top three entries would be included in the final production design. The final product will be distributed throughout the community.

The Committee offered the following suggestions for the radio ads. Chair Lopez Rogers said the exchange between the abuser and the victim was an important element to include in the final design. She said it was also important to highlight emotional and verbal abuse as being just as damaging as physical abuse.

Ms. Guild said the second place entry was the most effective for her. She noted the combination of verbal abuse with the slap as relaying the information in a way that would get teens attention.

Ms. Reid said all three entries were powerful and well done. She echoed Ms. Guild's praise of the second place entry. She agreed that the sound of the slap would be effective in getting teens to listen to the message.

Ms. Guild added that the role of the friend in giving support is very important to include in the final production design.

Ms. Reid noted that females can be abusers too and suggested working this into the ad as well.

Councilmember Kyle Jones, Mesa, agreed that the slap was important to include in the final production design. He said it is important to also include the friend as a witness and source of support. He encouraged the use of teens instead of adults for the final production. Ms. Tenney confirmed that teens would be the actors for the final product.

The Committee offered the following comments on the electronic invitations. Ms. Tenney explained the final product would look like an electronic greeting card with a few still frames, text and music. MAG's Web master is considering the final design now. Chair Lopez Rogers encouraged the use of photos instead of drawings to make it more realistic. Ms. Guild agreed and said that drawings might be associated with cartoons and fictional stories.

Jayson Matthews, Tempe Community Council, asked if Ms. Tenney could present the entries to Councilmember Shekerjian's Education and Technology Subcommittee. He said this would offer the subcommittee awareness on the issue and the resources available. He noted that the superintendents on the subcommittee might also be able to help with distribution of the final design and would also have good feedback on the entries. Ms. Tenney asked Mr. Matthews to send her the dates and times of the meetings so she could calendar them.

Ms. Guild asked about the distribution of the final product, noting that teens access most of their information online. Ms. Tenney agreed with that assessment and said the final electronic invitation would be emailed to all teens requesting them to email it to all their friends. This distribution would be an effective marketing tool for the project. She invited the Committee members to contact her with information about any other groups that might be receptive to message testing for the entries and final design.

Chair Lopez Rogers said homelessness is an issue that affects the entire region. She introduced Ms. St. Peter to offer an update on the MAG Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness. Ms. St. Peter thanked the Chair and the Committee for their time and expressed regrets from Brande Mead that she could not attend the meeting. Ms. St. Peter explained that Buckeye is developing a ten-year plan to end homelessness and that Ms. Mead was attending a meeting related to that effort.

Ms. St. Peter said Ms. Mead had relayed plans for the Annual Homeless Street Count at the Committee's January meeting. She reported that the Street Count did take place on January 29, 2008 thanks to the generous support of the municipalities, the street count coordinators and a number of volunteers. Ms. St. Peter noted that only homeless women, men and children seen to be living on the streets were counted on that day. Encampments or other evidence of homeless people living in an area did not result in people being counted unless the individuals were actually seen. This number also does not include those staying in shelters because they are included in the DES Shelter Count. Ms. St. Peter said the street count also does not include those doubled up because The U.S. department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) does not consider them to be homelessness. They are counted by the Department of Education.

The street count is required by HUD in order for the region to receive Stuart B. McKinney funds. Ms. St. Peter emphasized the importance of this funding source, noting that the region received \$21.4 million last year. While everyone benefits when homelessness is reduced, many communities do not directly receive funds from HUD. Ms. St. Peter thanked all the communities who participated and supported this important regional effort.

This year's street count indicated a 15 percent decrease in the number of homeless people living on the streets. Ms. St. Peter said of the number counted, 71 percent were in the City of Phoenix. Phoenix reported a larger decrease of 23 percent, while the surrounding communities actually a slight increase of homeless people by 13 percent. Ms. St. Peter explained this could be the result of homeless people moving from Phoenix to the other communities. It could also be attributed to the other communities strengthening the number of volunteers from previous years and funding more homeless people as a result.

Ms. St. Peter said all subpopulations experienced decreases. The number of non-chronic homeless people, or those who have been homeless for a short time and are without disabilities, decreased by 15 percent. The number of chronically homeless people, or those who have been homeless for extended periods of time and who have some kind of disability, decreased by 24 percent. Ms. St. Peter said this number is particularly important because chronically homeless people access emergency services frequently which results in a high cost to the community.

Some populations are not represented as well in the street count. Ms. St. Peter referenced the challenges in counting homeless families and youth on their own. These populations do not want to be seen and are also more likely to double-up in housing and thus not be counted. The street count indicates that the number of families went down by 50 percent. Ms. St. Peter cautioned that this represents a very small number as the number went down from 20 to 10. Professionals in the field cite many more than just 10 homeless families in the region. Similarly, the number of homeless youth on their own went down by 54 percent. Youth under

the age of 18 are more likely to lie about their age because they do not want to be returned to their abusive homes of origin or to foster care.

Ms. St. Peter noted other factors that shaped the street count results. The weather might have contributed to the overall decrease. It had rained for several days leading up to the street count. Street count volunteers reported that several encampments had been washed out or were still under water the day of the count. This meant that homeless people had moved and may not have been included in the count as a result. Also, some communities changed their methodology and increased their coverage as a result of having more volunteers. This could contribute the increases seen in communities outside Phoenix. Finally, the street count took place during the NFL Experience the week before the Superbowl. It is common for homeless people to move or be moved from areas just before big events. This also could have contributed to the decrease in the numbers of homeless people found living on the streets.

Ms. St. Peter thanked all the street count coordinators, volunteers and municipalities for their support of the street count. She said the results would be available by city and subpopulation on the MAG Web site. Chair Lopez Rogers thanked Ms. St. Peter for her report. She noted that the West Valley Human Services Alliance would focus their next meeting on homelessness. She invited all to attend the meeting on April 28th at 9:00 a.m. at Avondale City Hall.

9. Comments for the Committee

Chair Lopez Rogers invited the members to offer comments for information only. Carl Harris-Morgan promoted an effort by the International Firefighters Union and Valley of the Sun United Way to provide pool fences for low-income homeowners. The fences are available county-wide. People can visit saveourkids.org for more information or call Marin Davis at (602) 631-4843.

Mr. Harris-Morgan also reported that the Arizona Foreclosure Prevention Task Force is having an event on May 10, 2008 at 1141 E Jefferson Street. The event will feature housing counselors and lenders to help people at risk for foreclosure. Mr. Harris-Morgan requested assistance in promoting the event. People can call 1-888-995-HOPE for more information. He said they hope to have a statewide Web site soon.

10. Adjourn

Chair Lopez Rogers thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She noted that the next meeting is scheduled for July 15th and would not need to be moved to June because the Committee has already addressed the proposed reductions to SSBG. The meeting adjourned at 11.08 a.m.