

MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
HUMAN SERVICES TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 8, 2007

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Carl Harris-Morgan, Town of Gilbert,
Chairman
Judy Bowden, Mesa United Way
Paige Garrett, Quality of Life Community
Services, Inc
Jayson Matthew for Kate Hanley, Tempe
Community Council
*Deanna Jonovich, City of Phoenix
Jim Knaut, Area Agency on Aging
Frances Delgado for Margarita Leyvas,
Maricopa County
*Joyce Lopez-Powell, VSUW
Bob Baratko for Dan Lundberg, City of
Surprise
Joy McClain, City of Tolleson
Jose Mercado for Doris Marshall, City of
Phoenix
Jeff Young for Sandra Mendez, DES/CSA
*Kyle Moore, DES/ACYF
*Sandra Reagan, Southwest Community
Network
Sylvia Sheffield, City of Avondale

Kathy Anderson for Carol Sherer,
DES/DDD
Keith Burke for Judy Tapscott, City of
Tempe
Wayne Tormala, City of Phoenix, Vice
Chair
*Patrick Tyrrell, City of Chandler
Patricia Nightingale for Neal
Young, City of Phoenix

OTHERS PRESENT

Teresa Grantham, MAG
Amy St. Peter, MAG
Theresa James, City of Tempe
Matthew Clark, MAG

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

1. Open Meeting for Discussion
Chairman Carl Harris-Morgan, Town of Gilbert, welcomed everyone to the meeting at 1:02 pm and introductions ensued.
2. Call to the Audience
No comments were made. Amy St. Peter, MAG, briefly explained the use of comment cards for future audience comments.
3. Approval of February 8, 2007 Human Services Technical Committee Meeting Minutes
Chair Harris-Morgan asked the Committee for any amendments to the February 8, 2007 meeting minutes. Bob Baratko, City of Surprise, noted the date was incorrect in the draft minutes. Chair Harris-Morgan called for a motion to approve the minutes

with this amendment. Bob Baratko made a motion to approve minutes. Jim Knaut seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously as amended.

4. Project Homeless Connect

Chair Harris-Morgan introduced Theresa James, Homeless and Fair Housing Coordinator for City of Tempe. She said that the idea for the project began when she attended the Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness conference last November and went to a workshop on Project Homeless Connect in San Francisco. The goal of that project, and the replication in Tempe, was to bring together several community entities in one day to provide immediate services for homeless people, rather than give out appointments or referrals. She noted that homeless people have many barriers and may not follow-up on future appointments. The event was similar to a stand-down event for homeless veterans. The overall theme was treating homeless people with respect and dignity, as well as bringing together the community. She invited members to research the San Francisco Project Homeless Connect online for more information on the history of the concept.

The first Project Homeless Connection in Tempe was held on January 22nd. They did not do a lot of advertising, but still had 110 individuals and three families attend and receive services. She noted the agencies that were there included: AZ Department of Economic Security, Social Security Administration, Veterans Affairs Hospital, US Vets, Tumbleweed, Terros, and Community Bridges. Private businesses provided free haircuts and massages. Food was provided by Pizzeria Uno and Santa Barbara Catering Company. PMT Ambulance did health checks and Homebase Youth Services brought their mobile medical van. They also had a senior kazoo band in the afternoon. There were 40 volunteers who performed 20 health checks, the VA did 11 intakes, and La Mesita took in two families. They also distributed sleeping bags and backpacks.

Ms. James said it was a phenomenal event and was very satisfying professionally. She wished everyone could experience her sense of fulfillment. She worked at intake and saw how thankful the people were for these services. The City of Tempe is going to do these events quarterly. The next will be on Friday, April 27. She stressed that homeless service providers were happy to collaborate and participate in the event even though it was in another city, and she encouraged other cities to replicate the concept with their local providers.

Mr. Baratko asked how they had 110 attendees without publicity. Ms. James replied that they did create a one-page invitation for homeless individuals that was passed out by hand through homeless outreach teams. She said there was no mainstream media advertising. He asked if the attendees were from Tempe or nearby cities. She said they did not ask where the people were from. Her perspective and the City's is that homelessness is a regional issue and that people need services no matter where they are from. Mr. Baratko asked for her phone number. She said (480) 858-2360 is her direct line.

Sylvia Sheffield asked what would be the options for homeless people to get to the venue if Avondale were to hold a similar event. She asked if Tempe provided transportation or if people mainly walked. Ms. James said there is a program in Tempe called I Help that provided assistance. On Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights, different churches each week provide lodging for homeless people. The Methodist church that was housing people that Sunday night brought in 20 to 30 people. There is also a shower program on Monday nights, so they knew there would be people at that location for this service. She said she does not know for sure how they all got there. The US Vets outreach team drove around that day looking for people and telling them about the event. Ms. Sheffield asked if the main idea would be to have it somewhere where homeless people are already gathered. Ms. James replied yes, and having one or two meals available helps as well.

Amy St. Peter thanked Ms. James for her report and noted that this was a project she wanted to present to this Committee because it is very mobile project. A city or town does not necessarily need a shelter in the jurisdiction to do this type of event. She said this first attempt in Tempe went well and thanked Ms. James for coming to the meeting. Ms. James said that in preparing for this event, she has been calling shelters and they have agreed to be there and have beds held available to take people in. She added the providers are very willing to participate and collaborate. Chair Harris-Morgan asked how long the first event was. She answered that they started around 5:00 a.m. because there were already people at the site who had slept there and were waiting for the shower program. The event closed at 4:30 p.m.

Jayson Matthews, Tempe Community Council, commended Ms. James and the City of Tempe on the event and everything they've done on behalf of homeless people. He noted that when she presented this information to the Tempe Community Council yesterday, the members and community volunteers were very inspired. He said that other cities will likely have an outpouring of public support from board members and community members if they were to take on this project.

5. MAG Human Services Coordination Transportation Plan

Chair Harris-Morgan introduced Amy St. Peter, MAG, who presented the final draft of the MAG Human Services Coordination Transportation Plan. She began by commenting that this has been a long process and would like to thank everyone who has been involved. She said many stakeholders came together to develop this responsive plan. The need for this activity has been known for about 30 years. Ms. St. Peter said if this goal was easy, that it would have been done 29 years ago. There are already plans to update the document next year. While the current plan is a good first step, it is definitely not the final step. She added that this is intended to be a tool for cities and towns to coordinate human services transportation. The plan provides specific strategies and the attachments, considerably longer, provide the detail to back up these strategies. The attachments will be sent out soon for review. The attachments include information like survey results, a needs assessment and descriptions of the three funding sources affected by the plan.

She stated that the plan was developed in compliance with SAFETEA-LU regulations. These new regulations mandate that funds for Section 5310 Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities; Section 5316 Job Access and Reverse Commute; and Section 5317 New Freedom must be coordinated with a locally derived plan. This plan should coordinate human services transportation with any agency requesting these funds. A diverse group of stakeholders has developed the plan. This group includes transportation service providers, non-profit agencies, municipal staff and elected officials.

The plan includes three short-term strategies. These strategies will lay a good foundation for additional strategies to be implemented in the future. The first strategy will be to track coordination practices already in place. Best practices will be identified and offered for regional replication. The second strategy is to conduct sub-regional meetings in the East Valley, West Valley and Phoenix to help familiarize providers with one another. These groups will work on specific action steps throughout the year. These strategies will be reported out at a regional meeting with all stakeholders next year. The third strategy will synthesize information about transportation services providers from the public, non-profit and for-profit sectors into one directory online.

Ms. St. Peter reported the short-term strategies have been approved by the MAG Regional Council already so training could be offered on the applications for the three funding sources affected by the plan. While some wanted more aggressive strategies, a foundation needs to be built first. The plan itself will be forwarded for approval by the MAG Regional Council in May. The plan needs to be in place by July 1, 2007 to comply with federal regulations. The plan will be updated next year with the findings from the RPTA paratransit study and the regional meeting.

Chair Harris-Morgan asked what the Committee members could do to support the plan. Ms. St. Peter asked the members to communicate with their municipalities to bridge any potential disconnect between technical staff and elected officials. She commented that sometimes very good technical strategies have little political vitality.

Mr. Baratko asked if a funding analysis of the strategies was included in the attachments. Ms. St. Peter replied that a funding assessment was in the original scope of work. The assessment is not part of the final plan because it might denote implementation of the long-term strategies and that would be premature. The short-term strategies do not seem to have significant financial needs. One local foundation has expressed an interest in supporting projects like this, so there may be opportunities to cover any costs associated with the short-term strategies.

Chair Harris-Morgan called for a motion to recommend approval of the MAG Human Services Coordination Transportation Plan. Jayson Matthew moved to recommend the plan for approval. Jim Knaut seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Exploration of the Fiscal Impact of Domestic Violence on Local Criminal Justice Systems in the MAG Region

Chair Harris-Morgan introduced Teresa Grantham, MAG, who presented a report on a recent study by the MAG Regional Domestic Violence (DV) Council. Ms. Grantham stated that this report offers an estimate of the costs to municipal criminal justice systems on the basis of a pilot study with four local cities. She commented that the Victim Services Stakeholders Group has been working since April 2006 on a report to highlight the fiscal impact of domestic violence, especially on local criminal justice systems. This is a joint project of the Victim Services Stakeholders Group and the ASU Partnership for Community Development.

Ms. Grantham stated that the overall goal of the report was to show at least a piece of how much money cities and towns spend in providing criminal justice services to DV victims. The group chose to focus specifically on costs to police departments, prosecutors and municipal courts. She added that this doesn't include all of the costs in providing the criminal justice response, but it was where we chose to begin.

She commented that the group developed a survey with the input of local criminal justice officials, including police officers, prosecutors, and municipal court judges. The original intent was to provide the survey to all of the municipalities in the MAG region, but after a small pilot study was done with just four cities, the group realized that gathering this volume of information within the allotted timeframe was going to be impossible. The group decided to concentrate on getting the best data possible for the handful of pilot cities that were initially approached to participate.

Ms. Grantham stated that in the end, the group surveyed the Cities of Avondale, Glendale, Phoenix and Scottsdale. She noted that this was not a random sampling that's meant to be representative of the entire region – rather particular cases to examine. She thanked the police, prosecutors, and municipal court officials in these cities who took the time to provide feedback on the survey instrument itself and to respond to the survey.

She said key points to keep in mind when reviewing the report is that very few studies like this have been done before. A number have been done on the fiscal impact of domestic violence upon victims themselves, upon private business, and upon the health care system, but not much has been done on the cost of DV to the public sector. One reason this might be is that it's actually really difficult to pull together standard data across different jurisdictions. This is especially true in the MAG region where there are so many different municipalities that are unique. Out of necessity, they all track this kind of data just a little bit differently. The attempt to glean information across jurisdictions using one universal survey tool was a difficult way to go about this type of study.

Ms. Grantham said this report just barely scratches the surface. There's a whole universe of costs out there that were not included within the scope of this study this

time around, including prison costs, costs of supervised probation, costs to family courts, etc.

The study found that:

- Taken together, the average cost to provide these services across the MAG region would at a minimum likely range between \$18 and \$26 million per year*.
- This range was arrived at by adding the costs to PD, municipal court and prosecution costs among the pilot cities, extrapolating to the whole population for the Region, and including a 20 percent variance either higher or lower.

*This is just a piece of the costs incurred by municipalities because of DV.

Recommendations include:

- 1) Additional Study – one municipality at a time, or a longitudinal study of certain cases.
- 2) Analysis of existing local policies and procedures to identify differences and commonalities
- 3) Identify and recommend applicable data collection and data sharing models

Jayson Matthews asked what the next steps are. Ms. Grantham commented that cities will move forward with additional local studies. There has been some interest already. The Morrison Institute is doing a study on the attitudes of prosecutors, judges, and court personnel about domestic violence, the victims and advocates experiences with the court system. Most decisions about how to move forward will happen after that study published.

Chair Harris-Morgan asked what pieces of information would be most pertinent to the city councils if they are planning a similar study. Ms. Grantham replied that it is important to decide what information will be the most important to quantify and what would be the most useful within the municipality. The Victim Services Stakeholders Group chose to focus on criminal justice expenses because those costs were significant and criminal justice representatives were already involved with the group. She added that there are also costs to private businesses, health care and areas. Ms. Grantham recommended that others wanting to replicate the study should define the scope early and find out what information is already available.

7. Legislative Update

Chair Harris-Morgan introduced Matthew Clark, MAG, who proved an update on recent legislation affecting human services issues. Mr. Clark began by saying HR 840 the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act, or HEARTH act was introduced by Representative Julia Carson from Indiana and currently has 32 cosponsors. The bill was introduced on February 6, 2007 and was referred to the House Financial Services Committee. He said there are no hearings or mark-ups scheduled for this legislation at this time.

He stated the President's FY 2008 discretionary budget request includes reductions of \$630 million for the Community Services Block grant Program (CSBG). The mandatory budget includes \$17.1 billion for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, \$6.9 billion for Foster Care and related programs, \$4.0 billion for Child Support Enforcement and Family Support, and a proposed reduction of \$500 million to the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG).

Mr. Clark stated the President's FY 2008 budget request also includes reductions of \$735 million for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program for a total of \$2.97 billion. Other programs, including Brownfield's, in the Community Development Fund, would be consolidated into CDBG.

He added at the State level, the House and Senate are currently in the process of crafting the budget. Currently, two issues that are of importance to this Committee are not funded in the subcommittee appropriations approvals:

- Domestic Violence Shelter Funding - \$3.3 million from the General Fund to provide operational funding, for 283 additional shelter beds that would serve approximately 3,000 more victims of domestic violence victims annually. (DES)
- Independent Living Stipend for Foster Care Youth- \$2 million from the General Fund to increase from \$558 per month to \$1,078 per month for 319 older foster care youth. This assistance helps these young adults pay for rent and other living expenses. (Only \$1 million dollars or 50% of the need was included.) (DES)

Chair Harris-Morgan commented that proposed cuts to popular programs helps the President appear to cut the budget with the full knowledge that the cuts would not be implemented. Mr. Clark replied that yes, historically that has been true with this President and this assumption continues with this budget. The National League of Cities is meeting in Washington this week to stop these cuts. With a Democratic controlled congress it's not likely the cuts will go through. Mr. Knaut commented that it appears that the two parties within the State are working closer together and are less contentious because the State budget process is moving fast. Mr. Clark said the process is still in the discussion phase, so it is difficult to know for sure right now. He added that this is not an election year and because of the gains the Democrats made in the House and Senate this year may be smoother with fewer vetoes.

Chair Harris-Morgan asked about revenue projections. Mr. Clark commented that an increase in revenue is anticipated, although it will be much less of an increase than in the last two to three years. He added that projections are coming in higher than historical margins.

Ms. St. Peter asked if the Committee would like to hear about other legislative issues at the next meeting. Mr. Knaut said he would like another update like this one. Mr.

Matthews thanked Mr. Clark for this update. He added this allows committee member to update their local elected officials.

Ms. St. Peter said Mr. Clark was asked to provide this legislative update because these bills greatly affect the human services issues considered by this Committee. For example, the request for additional funds to provide more domestic violence shelter beds has serious consequences for how much municipalities need to address domestic violence through the criminal justice system as indicated by Ms. Grantham's report. If youth transitioning out of foster care are not able to support themselves with an adequate living stipend as proposed in the legislation, then many may become homeless. Chair Harris-Morgan thanked Mr. Clark for the legislative update.

8. Comments from the Committee

There were no comments or announcements at this time.

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:56 pm. The next Human Services Technical Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 13, 2007 at 1:00 p.m. at the MAG offices, second floor, Cholla Room.