

MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
HUMAN SERVICES TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 16, 2008

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Carl Harris-Morgan, Town of Gilbert, Chairman
+Bob Baratko, City of Surprise
Kathy Berzins, City of Tempe
Kyle Bogdon, DES/ACYF
*Patti Evans, City of Goodyear
*Paige Garrett, Quality of Life Community
Services, Inc
+Joyce Gross, Town of Buckeye
Laura Guild, DES/CPIP
Jeffery Jamison, City of Phoenix
Tim Cole for Deanna Jonovich, City of Phoenix
Jim Knaut, Area Agency on Aging
Margarita Leyvas, Maricopa County
*Joyce Lopez-Powell, Valley of the Sun United
Way
Steven MacFarlane, City of Phoenix
Doris Marshall, City of Phoenix
Jayson Matthews, Tempe Community Council
+Joy McClain, City of Tolleson

Sandy Lopez for Sylvia Sheffield, City of
Avondale, Vice Chair
Carol Sherer, DES/DDD

OTHERS PRESENT

CJ O'Connor, AAA
Donna Crews, Advocates for the
Disabled
Diana Toussaint for Rex Critchfield,
DES/DAAS
Cynthia Zwick, ACAA

Rachel Brito, MAG
Amy St. Peter, MAG

+Those members present by
audio/videoconferencing.

*Those members neither present nor
represented by proxy.

1. Call to Order

Chair Carl Harris-Morgan, welcomed everyone to the meeting at 12:59 p.m. and introductions ensued.

2. Call to the Audience

There were no comments from the audience.

3. Approval of September 11, 2008 HSTC Meeting Minutes

Chair Harris-Morgan called for a motion to approve the September 11, 2008 meeting minutes. Carol Sherer, Arizona Department of Economic Security, made a motion to approve the minutes. Jayson Matthews, Tempe Community Council, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Crisis Management Strategies

Chair Harris-Morgan introduced Cynthia Zwick, Arizona Community Action Association (ACAA). Ms. Zwick gave a report about the September 29, 2008

statewide stakeholders' meeting that focused on the impact of the economy's downturn on human services delivery.

Ms. Zwick said the meeting was a result of discussions held during a recent ACAA Board meeting. At that meeting, ACAA Board members discussed the fact that more families were seeking assistance, resources were not available and families were being sent in a loop to seek assistance from unfunded providers.

The stakeholders group started a dialogue on a statewide basis to see what they could do as a community, to come together and engage others who were not yet involved. Ms. Zwick said 60 people participated and others have since joined in the effort. The group decided not to focus their discussion on how bad things are going but instead on what can be done to set aside territorial boundaries and work together to provide more efficient services. From the discussions surfaced four priority areas: food and nutrition, utility assistance, rent and mortgage, and transportation.

The Data Management committee works with AZ211 and Community Information and Referral to update information about available resources. They will ensure that agencies are included in the resource lists if not already included. They are also encouraging faith-based communities to become part of the network. The intent is to track who and what kind of resources are available on a real time basis.

The Direct Care committee assists individuals such as those who have never asked for help or do not know who or how to ask for services. They provide as many resources as available and help individuals navigate through the process. The goal is link the caller to available resources rather than passing them along. They will also keep track of food and cash donations as well as time volunteered.

The Messaging committee will work on developing a communication strategy with the understanding that the issues we are facing will not be solved in a matter of a few meetings. Ms. Zwick said the Messaging Committee had met the previous day. Their intent is to communicate what is happening in our economy and ask what is known about our community at large. They will focus on questions such as how much is known about our neighbors and whether or not they are struggling to eat or pay their utility bills. They will be moving forward fairly soon with a plan to ask for community wide help, whether it be by volunteering time, making a contribution, donating food or by offering any other form of assistance.

The committee also talked about evaluating how resources are working once the process has started. Ms. Zwick said everybody is very willing to offer support and services and added that we need to figure out how to maximize and manage resources to serve our neighbors more effectively.

Ms. Sherer, Arizona Department of Economic Security, suggested that AZ Links be included on the list of resources. She said their Web site is up and running and they also have a navigator system that would be a great resource.

Margarita Leyvas, MCHSD Community Services Division, asked Ms. Zwick what they would want the outlying areas to do. Ms. Zwick advised they are holding dialogue sessions within local communities and the goal is to use this as a model throughout the state. The intent is to give people the opportunity to donate or volunteer their time within their own community. The stakeholders' group will serve to facilitate the connection so that the process moves forward in a strong efficient way.

Chair Harris-Morgan asked the Human Services Technical Committee what role they would like to take in this effort. He questioned whether or not they want to follow-up on this issue by facilitating the conversation or helping provide information to service providers and others. Laura Guild, Arizona Department of Economic Security, questioned who the stake holders are, and what role the committee would take in the process.

Ms Zwick stated that there is a robust group of people including representation from the coalition, the state, DES, and the Governor's office. When asked, she further confirmed that the City of Phoenix and the Department of Housing are represented. She commented that more people are involved than expected, everyone is working together and they are all asking what can be done to find solutions for moving forward.

Doris Marshall, City of Phoenix Human Services Department, discussed the \$250 million dollar deficit faced by the City of Phoenix. She said departments are being asked for a 30 percent reduction in budget across the board. In terms of how the budget cuts will affect Human Services issues such as nutrition and transportation, Ms. Marshall said the Mayor and Council will make the final decision after the budget hearings. The final outcome will be known in March. She added that seniors who are ill and unable to advocate for themselves may end up in a further state of declining health if they do not receive the services they need. This will then result in a need for higher level of care.

Ms. Zwick said they have had a great turnout from many councils of government across the state. And, while the foundation community was not initially included, they now have a connection with them. She said this will be a great opportunity for funding and support and they are very excited to be working together.

Jim Knaut, Area Agency on Aging, congratulated and commended Ms. Zwick on the efforts. He asked if anything can be done to assist in this effort either collectively or independently.

Ms. Zwick replied that while ACAA convened the stakeholder group, they do not own the process. There is opportunity to be involved in the subcommittees as well as opportunities for leadership among this group. Facilitating information will be key

to sharing ideas, communicating the need and finding gaps. All ideas and different perspectives are welcomed and will help to strengthen the process.

Ms. Leyvas echoed the comments previously made by Ms. Marshall in regard to budget cuts. Further direction to prepare for budget cuts after the election and again in the Spring causes great concern for elderly and disabled adults in terms of services available. Ms. Leyvas stated there is a lot of opportunity and nothing is too small. She shared with the committee that their human resources person had registered them for a food drive. She further challenged everyone to do the same, stressing her earlier comment that nothing is too small.

Ms. Leyvas said it appears Arizona will receive a huge increase in LIHEAP dollars which will provide utility assistance to families in need. She added that they will be seeking volunteers to help targeted intakes. Bilingual volunteers will also be needed to assist with intakes and screening. Ms. Leyvas said she may be calling upon committee members to ask for assistance. As an example of no barriers and a reciprocal effort, Ms. Leyvas said the State CAA Directors discussed sending trained staff to assist in the process. Their efforts can then be reciprocated by doing different things throughout the state.

Ms. Marshall said the City of Phoenix is implementing cost savings efforts now rather than waiting until the new fiscal year. For example, they are testing a pilot program at the McDowell Senior Center that consists of serving meals four days instead of five days per week. Ms. Marshall said they surveyed customers to see if they would not only utilize a hot meal, but also a frozen meal and whether or not they would have a way to warm it up or freeze it if necessary. They are hoping the program does not compromise service to older adults. If they are able to reduce the number of days they serve, then they will also reduce fuel cost; therefore resulting in cost savings. She said they are looking for ways to provide service in more cost effective and efficient way. The pilot program, which started in September, is currently being monitored. They are also working with other area agencies and case management systems to look at how other people are doing things. She said they don't know which model is best, but will share results when they do.

Mr. Matthews came back to the question of what this committee can do to assist. He said the key thing that has been so beneficial is getting all of the organizations together to share the same kind of data. He asked the committee to be mindful of this economic downturn being good for the human service business. However, there are more and more people out there that need services and there are things all can do to help.

He shared, from the data subcommittee perspective, that there is now a growing need from middle income people. They are confused, as this is their first time needing assistance, yet they do not qualify for services. He said for those making funding decisions, it is important to go back and set priorities as this is absolutely critical.

Ms. Leyvas offered to share information after the meeting with Ms. Zwick and Ms. Marshall about an allowance under HURF to purchase microwaves as part of the pilot program. Ms. Sherer said continuing to share information with each other is a good example of how to bring resources to the community. It is part of navigating and networking and the committee is obligated to bring back to the group any information that will be beneficial.

Ms. Zwick acknowledged the committee for all the work they do. She added that there are a lot of groups in the state that advocate for resources. She suggested that the community not wait another year to start advocating for resources because human services programs will always find themselves in a defensive position. Ms. Zwick said it could be a strength to collectively advocate for resources across the board and to identify what steps need to be taken.

Ms. Zwick said that the group does not want to lose sight of those families who have been and are still living in poverty. She added that ACAA is about to launch a campaign introducing the new face of poverty. The people in the ads are people who look like those in the mainstream. Part of this effort is to continue to raise awareness as most would not want to consider living under the umbrella of poverty. The goal at end is not to get people upset or scared, but to say that something can be done.

Ms. Marshall agreed and added that those in the room would not like to think of themselves under the umbrella of poverty. However, all it takes is one large catastrophic something in one's life and they would be on the other side. She added that many seniors who have never been in this type of situation before are now calling for assistance. Therefore, it is a challenge for everyone to look outside the box in how business is done.

Chair Harris-Morgan asked Ms. Zwick to let the committee know how it can be of assistance. When asked about sharing the MAG roster, Amy St. Peter, MAG, offered to send information out on behalf of Ms. Zwick.

Ms. St. Peter summarized that there were at least three areas focusing on data in which the committee can contribute. She informed the committee that she had received a call from a local foundation asking for information about unit costs (one night of shelter, food box, etc). She asked that committee members forward information on unit costs within the next week if they are not already doing so.

Also, she asked committee members to provide information pertaining to budget cuts within their agencies that will have an effect on services. This information will be gathered so that the committee may have a better understanding of the budget affects on services overall. Ms. St. Peter also requested that Ms. Marshall and others report back on pilot projects and best practices so this information could be replicated throughout the region.

Several committee members commented that budget information will not be available until March and while they can share information on projected cuts, the information is changing on a daily basis. Ms. St. Peter asked for a summary of budget cuts that have been confirmed to date.

Steve MacFarlane, City of Phoenix, stressed the importance of sending a message to the legislature that matching funds cannot be cut; doing so would eliminate entire programs. Ms. Sherer added that it takes work to make sure that does not happen.

Mr. Matthews suggested taking a page out of police and fire tactics. He said they are very good about educating decision makers about the cost of cuts. Using police as an example, if a certain number of police are eliminated; crime goes up by a certain percent. Mr. Matthews said this is an aggressive stance that has proven effective and something the community may need to start doing.

Ms. Leyvas said ACAA and state community action agencies met with legislative representatives early in the year. The purpose was to educate about community action and discuss areas of concern. Ms. Leyvas asked if a similar training can be put together for the legislature learn about human and social services, and the return on investment to community as whole by not allowing certain things to happen. Ms. Marshall questioned who the training would be for. Ms. Leyvas said the training would be for legislature and staff.

Mr. Matthews said it is a good model and frame work using this group or the messaging committee to educate the legislature, local counties and cities. Chair Harris-Morgan commented on the uncertainty of what government entities can do. Mr. Matthews agreed there is some concern, but added that these are instances where partnerships with non profits can help.

Mr. Knaut said the challenge is getting the right people to the table. Ms. Zwick said they are asking customers to call their legislative representative. As a result, they already know of one legislative inquiry about utility assistance. She said they cannot overlook the opportunity that people have to make a change right now.

Mr. Bob Baratko, City of Surprise, via audio conference, said this is extremely important and a great effort he would like to be involved in. Joyce Gross, Town of Buckeye, via audio conference, said it was refreshing to hear the people gathered at the meeting. She gave kudos to Ms. Zwick and is looking forward to next steps.

Chair Harris-Morgan restated the four areas of proposed activity assistance include data collection about unit costs, confirmed funding cuts, and best practice models, as well as exploring opportunities to offer information about the impact of human services. He asked for clarification on whether committee members should report confirmed budget cuts, proposed budget cuts, or both. Ms. St. Peter clarified that only information about confirmed budget cuts would be collected and reported.

Chair Harris-Morgan asked about the best way to conduct advocacy efforts. Ms. St. Peter said the committee could collect data about the proposed areas, prepare a report for approval and offer presentations as the committee is invited to do so.

Mr. MacFarlane asked that the committee specify a time period for which to report budget cuts. Ms. St. Peter said any budget cuts implemented from January to current should be reported to MAG. Mr. MacFarlane said their department had experienced five budget cuts with the last ten years.

Ms. Marshall echoed earlier comments that discussions about funding reductions are very fluid. Although staff makes budget cut recommendations, staff does not make the final decision. Mr. Matthews said he liked the idea of trying to get information to the regional council level, including some routine updates on what ACAA is doing as well. He said it is important to show what is going down the pike. Ms. Leyvas also suggest reporting the budget cuts from January 1, 2008 forward to keep the information current.

Chair Harris-Morgan asked for a motion on the four items being taken forward to HSCC. Ms. St. Peter stated that a motion would be a timely decision with the upcoming HSCC meeting scheduled for October 21, 2008.

Mr. Matthews asked for clarification on what is being requested of HSCC. Mr. Knaut asked whether or not Ms. Zwick would be making a presentation to HSCC. Ms. Zwick agreed to give a brief update to HSCC. Chair Harris-Morgan will also be giving a brief update on HSTCs efforts. Ms. Leyvas asked how the recommendation to HSCC would be worded.

Ms. St. Peter suggested the following for a motion: HSTC recommends approval to conduct the following activities in terms of assessing impact of unit cost, budget cuts, implemented since January 1, 2008, models and best practices as well as exploring opportunities to offer information about the impact of human services.

Ms. Leyvas made a motion to approve the motion. Mr. MacFarlane seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Chair Harris-Morgan thanked Ms. Zwick for being willing to give a presentation to HSCC the following week.

5. Zero-Based Budgeting Exercise Report

Chair Harris-Morgan advised the committee that Ms. St. Peter would present the results from the zero-based budgeting exercise. He thanked the committee for their efforts.

Ms. St. Peter presented the results from the zero-based budgeting exercise. She explained the aggregate spreadsheet of the committee members' responses compared to the actual allocations approved for FY09 and results for the 2008 Regional Human Services Survey. She thanked everyone for their participation.

Ms. St. Peter reviewed the Target Group Summary Table explaining what each column represented. She said the intent of the column labeled ZBB: Without Own Area was to remove potential bias and advocacy for individuals' own area of expertise.

Mr. MacFarlane offered advice on analyzing the data so that results accurately reflect removed bias for each target group. After discussing the suggestions made, the committee recommended that staff re-analyze the results and report back their findings. Ms. St. Peter agreed to have staff reanalyze the data and report back the following week.

Ms. St. Peter gave a brief comparison between the FY 2002 and FY 2009 as well as allocations approved and implemented. Looking at the results, she said, it would appear there are a lot of people whose area of expertise is in Adults, Families and Children while the target area for Elderly stayed fairly consistent.

Mr. MacFarlane stated that the greatest level of confidence in terms of how data was arrived is reflected in the first two columns of the summary table. He said the third column is misleading. He said survey results would also depend on who answered and what their affiliation was. Ms. St. Peter advised the committee that 600 surveys were distributed but only 70 were returned.

Mr. Matthews felt this was an interesting exercise and given that it was completed one month ago, he questioned what the results would show if the zero-based budgeting exercise were done again today. The committee agreed to have staff re-analyze the results of the exercise.

Chair Harris-Morgan asked the committee how the information would be used once revised. Mr. MacFarlane said this is not a high level statistical analysis, but it looks at averages across the target areas. It also removes bias by not allowing individuals to allocate to their own area of expertise. Ms. St. Peter agreed to have staff make the revision and provide an update to the committee.

Chair Harris-Morgan stated that the committee still has November to come up with a process for funding allocations. He said however, that the committee needs to be prepared to make funding recommendations in December.

Ms. St. Peter advised that HSCC would be voting at the October 21, 2008 meeting on the steps HSTC will be taking. Ms. St. Peter asked committee members to give her any feedback or guidelines to help develop allocations prior to October 21. She added that the government and legislature are also taking a zero-based budget approach over the next two years.

6. Steps to Develop FY10 Social Services Block Grant Allocations

Ms. St. Peter commented that the committee has been considering the allocations differently from what has been done in the past. In looking at the information the

committee does have, she said, this is definitely thin slicing but that decisions can still be made in a reasonable and constructive way. Ms. St. Peter added that Kathy Levandowski, DES Rehabilitation Administration, is still willing to give a presentation because they couldn't attend the meeting when the rest of the target group presentations were made.

Ms. St. Peter referred the committee to the fact sheets and zero-based budget exercise for each of the four target areas. In addition to this information, the committee may want to allow for public comment and/or conduct focus groups. Ms. St. Peter asked the committee if there are gaps in the data that they would like to have staff explore.

Chair Harris-Morgan said it is difficult to find any consistent unit reported across all four target areas. He questioned whether the committee wants to try to report either on number of units, cost for service or something that might be able to provide consistency.

Ms. St. Peter said the working group met awhile back and discussed unit cost. They determined they could not identify one unit cost that could be defined consistently across all four target groups. They were also concerned about outcome measures, but found that they were very different in each of the four target groups. As a result, they took this discussion off the table. Ms. St. Peter suggested that HSTC can open these topics for discussion.

Ms. Leyvas said the target areas are four major areas that encompass a variety of services within each. She asked the committee if something across the board to reflect all four target groups can be found. Ms. St. Peter agreed and added that this is not the first body to struggle with this question.

Ms. St. Peter said in the past, the committee had ranked all services separate from their target groups. She asked if for the short term, the committee would want to change or shift allocations at the target group level and break into sub groups to determine allocations at the service level.

Ms. St. Peter acknowledged that part of the challenge to developing allocation recommendations has been the lack of time and resources to focus on one area at a time to determine the impact of each service. Focusing on services would then drive the target group funding. Mr. MacFarlane said the idea was intriguing and that it would not be a daunting task to rank services by priority.

Ms. Sherer added that the services would need to be generic and clear enough for the exercise to work. Mr. Matthews added that part of his frustration, from sitting on this committee, is that the committee spends considerable time discussing the allocations for SSBG, but ultimately does not make any changes to the allocations. He said it helps to understand what the service is and liked the idea of ranking all services.

Ms. Guild clarified that the ranking would be on what each individual determines to be effective use of dollars. Mr. MacFarlane affirmed this was the intent.

Ms. Sherer asked if all of the services would be ranked. She expressed concern about services that might fall under two or three of the categories, while others do not fall under any specific category. She said the exercise would still have disproportionate ranking and bias to certain areas.

Ms. Leyvas said there are 22 different service titles. The exercise would be a valuable indicator, but it is still the committee's responsibility to make informed decisions.

Ms. Marshall said she would be interested in knowing if there was a waiting list for services and if all money had been spent on the intent of service. She said this would influence how she ranked the service areas.

Ms. Leyvas gave an example of a waiting list in terms of weatherization. While they say there is a three year waiting list, people can apply for assistance today, but the work will not be completed until they have a certain amount of applications to respond to in the same area of service. The result is that the family in this example has to wait, not necessarily due to a waiting list, but because of an internal process.

Ms. Marshall commented that the information given is absolutely valuable and that the committee should be given the best information available to assist in making the best decision.

Chair Harris-Morgan posed the question to the committee of what to do? Ms. St. Peter summarized the next steps to re-analyze the zero-based budget exercise into five separate areas which are the four target groups and the generalists. She said the committee can rank the top ten services. The committee indicated they were willing to take on additional homework. Ms. St. Peter advised the committee that the service list would be provided by the end of the week and requested that committee members take up to one week to respond. Additionally, Ms. St. Peter said the actions steps would be forwarded to HSCC for approval.

Chair Harris-Morgan asked for a motion to approve the action steps discussed. Mr. MacFarlane made a motion to reanalyze the data from the zero-based budgeting exercise and explore a new approach through the service ranking exercise. Mr. Matthews second the motion. There was no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously.

Chair Harris-Morgan informed the committee they would have more data to review at the next meeting, including the top ten choices from the service ranking, to further assist them in developing steps for SSBG funding recommendations.

7. Comments from the Committee

Chair Harris-Morgan thanked the committee for their work on this process. The committee applauded Ms. St. Peter and staff for their work.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:47 p.m. The next Human Services Technical Committee meeting is scheduled for November 13, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. at the MAG offices, second floor, Cholla Room.