

Minutes of the
MAG Human Services Technical Committee
August 13, 2020
Zoom Meeting

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Melanie Dykstra, Town of Gilbert

^Naomi Farrell, City of Tempe
[Nikki Stevens]

Autumn Grooms, City of El Mirage
Laura Guild, DES

Susan Hallet, City of Phoenix

*Mary Lynn Kasunic, Area Agency on
Aging

Jacqueline Edwards, Maricopa
County, Vice Chair

^Chris Lopez, City of Avondale [Edith Baltierrez]

Christina Panaitescu, City of Goodyear, Chair

*Debbie Pearson, City of Peoria

Leah Powell, City of Chandler

Cindy Saverino, DES

*Stephanie Small, City of Glendale

Jayson Matthews, Valley of the Sun

*Neither present nor represented by
proxy

^ Represented by proxy

MAG STAFF

Brandi Mead

Tina Lopez

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Christina Panaitescu, City of Goodyear, Chair of the Human Services Technical Committee (HSTC), called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. Introductions ensued.

2. Call to the Audience

No public comments were made.

3. Approval of the Consent Agenda

Melanie Dykstra, Town of Gilbert, motioned to approve the June 10, 2020 meeting minutes. Susan Hallett, City of Phoenix, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Discussion of Positive Changes in Regional Human Services Delivery

Christina Panaitesu, Chair, started the meeting asking the committee members questions of the topic, Effective service delivery in the era of COVID-19.

Question One:

What immediately comes to mind when you hear the words "effective service delivery?"

Responses:

Jacqueline Edwards, Maricopa County Vice Chair – timeliness and responsive to the client.

Leah Powell, City of Chandler – Networking and collaboration.

Autumn Grooms, City of El Mirage – Accessibility and trying new ways.

Melanie Dykstra, Town of Gilbert – Reaching out to those who can benefit.

Nikki Stevens, City of Tempe – Identifying gaps and coordination of needs.

Susan Hallett, City of Phoenix – leading families to a better place than when we started with them.

Jayson Matthews, Valley of the Sun – Effective impact, getting to the root of the problem, doing our best to go out and find solutions to make a tangible difference.

Cindy Savertino, DES – Collaborative system to meet the needs.

Edith Baliterrez, City of Avondale – Well-trained staff and trauma informed.

Question Two:

Specifically, but briefly, what are some of the things your municipality does to ensure effective service delivery? What have you seen others do? Or wish that more people/organizations would do?

Responses:

Susan Hallett, City of Phoenix – Automation was implemented due to COVID-19. There are online portals, questionnaires, portal for clients to upload their documents for the caseworkers. Responsiveness is at 95% for show rate.

Jacqueline Edwards, Maricopa County Vice Chair – Before COVID-19, very manual and limited. Automation is quicker and more effective. Forms are online, virtual meetings occur, response to staff, operation hours have been elongated. Hours are now more flexible as 85% of staff are teleworking from home.

Edith Baliterrez, City of Avondale – More accessibly since COVID-19. More online, email, phone opportunities. There is more daily assistance. Hours are now 8am-7pm Monday through Thursday and 9am to 5pm on Fridays.

Jayson Matthews, Valley of the Sun – Office is closed indefinitely as staff work from home. They do find that their client base often has no computer or internet

connection. More work over telephone with clients. Bridging gaps with those who have no technology is key. Shifts in service and flexibility has been implemented since COVID-19.

Question Three:

What is shifting? Where is there resistance?

Responses:

Susan Hallett, City of Phoenix – vulnerable people have less. Adjusting to new program eligibility.

Edith Baliterrez, City of Avondale – Data driven for decision making has increased. City relies on data for decisions much more than ever before.

Jayson Matthews, valley of the Sun – There are more instructional practices being made. Explanations of contacts, services, systems, traumas to the caller. Older clients want more during COVID-19.

Edith Baliterrez, City of Avondale – Tug of war with landlords and their responsibility of necessary paperwork.

Cindy Savertino, DES – The aging population are apprehensive on utilizing home health care or public transportation since COVID-19. The aging are relying on friends and family to help them instead. The aging are resisting change in the system due to COVID-19.

Autumn Grooms- City of El Mirage – Agrees with Cindy that the aging are not going to their medical appointments as needed nor the store via Dial-a-Ride. Transportation is an issue.

Nikki Stevens, City of Tempe, Challenges are to educate others of new ways due to COVID-19. Positive outcome of COVID-19 is that there will be qualitative and quantitative data to improve services. There needs to be client's stories and data combined for effective change.

Susan Hallett, City of Phoenix – stated that courts resistance for change in their virtual processes due to COVID-19. Timelines are delayed. There has been a shift in funding for drivers, vehicles, and food storage since shelter in place occurred. Food assistance has shifted to a more drive through approach. There is excitement to be "ready for anything" as COVID-19 has taught everyone. Systems were stale and stood firm. Now, the system seems more flexible and new innovation is popping up.

Christina Panaitesu, Chair, agreed with Susan on more innovation.

Leah Powell, City of Chandler – more affordable housing discussion with elected officials. The officials are open to discussions and change.

Jacqueline Edwards, Maricopa Service Vice Chair, long term changes and answering the why and moving forward with new ideas. Funding has opened up which helps

more people. Human Service workers are actually considered second responders now than ever before.

Edith Baliterrez, City of Avondale- Because of more available funding, more people are open to change.

Jayson Matthews, Valley of the Sun – affordable housing gaps as there are 110,000 units in affordable housing needed in Phoenix. This issues is now coming back to the table for discussion.

Edith Baliterrez, City of Avondale – Landlords are shifting to be more resistant to lease to anyone.

Question Four:

Who benefits the most from “effective service delivery”?

Responses:

Nikki Stevens, City of Tempe- The staff are feeling the saying “all in this together”. She reported that the staff is feeling as they are doing something in an effective way.

Susan Hallett, City of Phoenix – The clients. The clients have more resources. The economy as there are more people working in the system. Employment overall benefits.

Leah Powell, City of Chandler – Leadership benefits as they see productivity and the system running well with no hassles.

Question Five:

What would it take to move these new strategies in place?

Responses:

Edith Baliterrez, City of Avondale – Write new strategies down and make sure every in the agency does the same way. Don’t consider it a fad but that it is new protocol or policy.

Melanie Dykstra- Town of Gilbert- Document and make a conscious effort to keep new protocols in place. Analyze what worked or didn’t work.

Jayson Matthews, Valley of the Sun United Way – Continue the conversations. Build on the processes that are newly in place. Learn and grow in the forums. Build off other’s models too. Being able to reach out and discuss new practices.

Question Six:

Which of these examples could/would most benefit the region?

Responses:

Edith Baliterrez, City of Avondale – Training for staff on self-care, to eliminate high turnovers.

Jayson Matthews, Valley of the Sun – Agrees more training and keeping staff more engaged for longer impact.

Susan Hallett, City of Phoenix – Also agreed with investing in staff. The opportunity for transferability of skills is a free resource to the system. There needs to be a strategy of staffing to keep system in place. Making adjustments of hours can make a huge impact of staff and servicing the public too.

Nikki Stevens, City of Tempe – Regional level decision makers and more networking among the service agencies. Supporting one another is vital for success. Example given was the train derailment and Melanie, Town of Gilbert reached out to see if there anything needed.

Jayson Matthews, Valley of the Sun – Communication of human service goals and getting together to shoot to the same star verses all of us doing individual work.

Edith Baliterrez, City of Avondale – stated celebrations foster others to celebrate.

Jacqueline Edwards, Maricopa County Vice Chair, combing services together through communities and counties will only ensure people more effective services.

Christina Panaitescu, Chair, stated that next month there will be a focus on collaborative trouble shooting, region wide. Training will also be discussed.

5. Lightning Round

Chair Panaitescu asked members to provide updates for the lightning round.

It was noted that there are funding strategies being discussed around the Cares Act funds. Food assistance and utility assistance is available. There is legal services and advocacy available. Senior Centers are still closed but arts and crafts are being streamed virtually. There are FEMA funds available that Valley of the Sun was able to obtain. Jayson Matthews stated that they were able to give mask, hand sanitizers, in-kind gifts. Extra staff has been made available for El Mirage. Jacqueline Edwards, Maricopa County, Vice Chair, working on direct service providers, positive sites and additional training with social equity. Edith Baliterrez, City of Avondale, working on increasing virtual programs and getting the word out of new programs. New programs are being offered such as coffee chats, bible study, virtual bingo, and grab and go meals.

Leah Powell, City of Chandler, stated that there is \$849,000 in funding that had to be allocated in two weeks in May 2020. In June, there was work on the allocation of 1.2Million dollars. A part of the allocation was \$300.000 dollars that went to non-profits for PPE and cleaning needs. There was some funding for two Community Resource Specialists who will be working with partners to assure their needs are met with new

resources. The CRS people will work on relations with the constituents and assist them. This approach will elevate traffic to the CAP office. CAP office has \$5 million dollars to spend before December 2020. There will also be hiring of two homeless navigators through a contract with CBI. There is funds for additional COVID-19 testing. Mobile units will be employed as low income have difficulties to get to testing sites. Additional funding for Family Self Sufficiency. More funds available for mitigation for landlords which hope to attract more to Section 8 programs. There is one million dollars in reserve for future food and rental assistance, child care, and after school programs.

6. Request of Future Agenda Items

None

7. Comments from the Committee

None

Adjourn

There being no further business, Melanie Dykstra, Town of Gilbert, made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Edith Baliterrez, City of Avondale and the motion was unanimously approved.