

**SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES  
January 19, 2005**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

William Alford  
Elizabeth Bartz  
Angela Tucker Cooper  
Constance Hesske  
Connie Humble  
Robert Kulinski  
Vivian Celeste Neal  
Gene Nixon  
Robert Pfaff  
Karen Talbott  
Randy Zumbar

**DJFS STAFF:**

Valorie Austin  
Patricia Divoky  
Sarah Kisner  
Julie Seeley

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:**

Thomas Armstrong  
Jeff Heintz  
Dr. Carl Simmers  
Bernett Williams  
Elaine Woloshyn  
Wayne Brennessel  
James Lawrence

**CALL TO ORDER**

Karen Talbott called the meeting to order at 12:19 p.m. A quorum of members was present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the October 20, 2004 meeting were unanimously approved.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES FORUM UPDATE**

Connie Humble and Angela Tucker Cooper are Co-chairs of the planning committee for the 2005 Human Services Forum. Connie reported the committee has met twice and the Forum will be held in the fall, although a date is not confirmed until a keynote speaker is secured. Julie has researched event locations and an attempt to obtain continuing education credits for legal, health care and social workers will be made to attempt to increase the number of attendees.

Jill Skapin is investigating the possibility of Senator Hillary Clinton as a speaker. Pat Divoky & Sarah Kisner are attempting to contact Senator Barack Obama. Other choices are Jesse Jackson, Jr. or a speaker referred by Mayor Plusquellic, as President of the National Conference of Mayors. Connie stated that she had researched several speakers' bureaus however; she stated that many are very costly and the committee would like to ensure that expenses do not exceed revenues for this year's Forum.

In speaking with Roslyn Bucy Miller, who organizes the Human Services Institute in Cleveland for the Center for Community Solutions, she suggested non-political speakers may be best. Connie stated that the committee discussed having breakout sessions this year, vs. a panel discussion and would like SSAB Board members to take responsibility for a breakout session, basing the topic on an area of focus in the Summit 2010 Project. Julie asked for Board members to volunteer in designating their staff to a particular breakout session around a topic of interest to their organization and related to the Summit 2010 areas, or suggest speakers or topics for breakout sessions. It is hoped that this approach will also draw an increased number of participants to the breakout sessions this year. Connie and Angela will be following up with the Board members regarding their participation in planning of the breakout sessions.

Karen inquired if a budget for the event had been developed and her desire to avoid any budget problems that occurred last year. Julie stated that a budget for the Forum will be developed after identification of the keynote speaker and location were confirmed.

Connie stated that the Committee has discussed increasing the number of sponsors, particularly targeting corporate sponsors in order to aid in underwriting the cost of the event. The keynote speaker and details of the event need to be compiled prior to solicitation of sponsors. Elizabeth Bartz volunteered to assist with recruiting corporate sponsors. She asked that the lunch prices need to be set at a rate that organizations can afford to send their staff.

Sarah Kisner suggested that a person from a major corporation be named Honorary Chairperson and have their staff assist the committee.

Karen thanked the committee for their work on the project thus far.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

There were no other new business items.

## **OTHER**

### **COORDINATION EFFORTS WITH AKRON CHAMBER**

Karen reported she and Elizabeth Bartz met earlier this week with Rob Malone, Connie Krauss and Dave Supelak, from the Greater Akron Chamber to discuss coordinating some of the SSAB efforts (through the Budget & Levy Review Committee) with the Chamber. The Chamber has a government affairs committee that reviews levy requests and the meeting was to discuss whether the process should be changed to prevent agencies from having to duplicate review of their levy requests with both the SSAB Board and the Chamber. In addition, the meeting was to share information about Summit 2010 in order to gain business support for those initiatives. The Chamber, or former Akron Regional Development Board, has unofficially had designated seats on the SSAB Board. Elizabeth came to the Board through that avenue, as well as former SSAB member, Kevin Breen. The Chamber has an interest in continuing that designation and in reviewing the levy requests under the auspices of the SSAB Board. The member would then return to the Chamber's government affairs committee and pass on the

recommendations from the SSAB to the government affairs committee. The government affairs committee would still retain the right to make their own decision regarding levy support. The idea is to streamline the process of levy funded agencies having to report the same information to multiple entities. In the same vein, the SSAB would like to coordinate some of the forms we use with the information that Linda Phelps, of the County Executive's office, requests from the levy agencies.

Randy Zumbar was not aware the Chamber still reviewed levy proposals. He liked the idea of establishing a relationship with the Chamber to assist with levy proposals. Connie Humble stated she asked to meet with the Greater Akron Chamber for their endorsement of the CSB levy. Elizabeth Bartz reported that the government affairs committee meets every month, and it is a way for the SSAB to know that the recommendations from the SSAB are being addressed by the Chamber. Karen stated that the late William Becker expressed concerns on the subject of the levy funded agencies needing to duplicate presentations of levy proposals to multiple groups.

The Board accepted the report.

#### **EXPANDED ROLE OF THE SSAB**

Karen Talbott stated that the idea of an expanded role of the SSAB, which had been suggested by Mr. McCarthy at a previous meeting with the Executive Committee, was also discussed with the Chamber members. At this point, we are not sure what the concept of an expanded role means specifically, but Karen would like to hold a strategic planning meeting of the SSAB Board members to clarify this concept. The expanded role may involve review of other levy requests. The schools and possibility the zoo, along with metro parks and the library are projected to be on the ballot in 2005. Elizabeth said that it would very helpful if we could get all of the levy funded agencies in the county on a schedule so everyone will not be on the ballot at the same time. Karen inquired if the Board had any concerns regarding continued conversations with the Chamber, and there were none expressed. Julie will be determining some dates for the strategic planning session as Mr. McCarthy is expecting the Board to come back to him with some ideas for an expanded role.

William Alford suggested that in light of the discussion of an expanded role for the SSAB, it may be prudent to add a Council member as a member of the SSAB to aid in the lines of communication between County Council and SSAB. Andrea Norris was the last County Council member to have a seat on County Council and the SSAB board at the same time. Karen stated that County Council was very interested in the Summit 2010 project when it was presented to them and asked a number of questions. This suggestion will be further pursued.

#### **BUDGET AND LEVY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

Elizabeth reported that the Budget & Levy Review Committee plans to appoint another Co-Chair of the Committee and also work with Karen Talbott in identifying new members for the Committee. Elaine Woloslyn resigned as Co-chair of the Committee

and the Committee is also losing Wayne Brennessel, as he is moving away. Elizabeth states the idea is to try to balance membership numbers of the two SSAB committees.

Gene suggested that a proposal be adopted by the Budget & Levy Review Committee that would address consistency in the balances of the carryover funds of the levy funded agencies in order to eliminate the wide variation in fund balances that exist at this time. Randy Zumbar suggested establishing a threshold above which it would be recommended that an organization should not go. Gene stated a proposal, giving some type of guidance to the levy-funded agencies, would be helpful so that the fund balance issue could be addressed prior to the annual review of the budgets of the three levy agencies.

Elizabeth Bartz stated the Committee needs to check with Tom regarding the status of the MR/DD's levy request for this year (2005).

Elizabeth stated there will be one or two meetings of the Committee scheduled before the April SSAB meeting.

#### **HEATH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Bob Pfaff reported the Health & Human Services committee has not met. Bob stated there were two items on the agenda relative to the Health and Human Services Committee:

First, Bob reported the Data Sharing Subcommittee (a subcommittee of the Systems, Management & Oversight Committee of the Summit 2010: A Quality of Life Project) has met and a recommendation of the subcommittee was distributed to Board members for their review. Bob asked that the recommendation be approved by the Board and be forwarded to Mr. McCarthy for his consideration.

Gene Nixon stated in paragraph 3, the recommendation needs to clarify which consultant is being referred to and how much time will be used by the consultant for the data sharing portion versus for implementation of the Summit 2010 Project as a whole. A change to the recommendation clarifying the time needed by which consultant, will be made by Julie, prior to forwarding of the report to Mr. McCarthy.

Connie Humble stated that clarification on who will be funding the data sharing consultant needs to be determined prior to an RFP being released. Connie wondered if only the levy funded agencies would absorb the cost, and she is concerned that the cost is not built into CSB's current budget. Karen added that it would likely be up to the County Executive, James McCarthy, to suggest funding for this project if he endorses this recommendation. Connie stated that CSB is in the process of installing a statewide child care system and even though she is enthusiastic about the project, she is concerned about the issue of funding.

Sarah Kisner expressed concern regarding the release of a specific case managers' name to another provider (5<sup>th</sup> objective on page two of the recommendation). Julie will eliminate this from the recommendation in the data sharing report.

The Social Service Advisory Board unanimously accepted the recommendations from the Data Sharing Subcommittee as modified, and agreed to the plans for forwarding them to County Executive, James McCarthy, for consideration and action.

A work plan of the three neighborhood areas (Barberton, Buchtel, and Lakemore) was provided to the Board for their information.

Gene Nixon excused himself from the Board meeting at 12:56 p.m.

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### **• COLLECTION OF DATA FOR SUMMIT 2010 PROJECT**

Karen reported that the Executive committee met on Jan.13, 2005. The Executive Committee members met first with Donna Skoda, who shared the issues of concern regarding collection of data in monitoring the ongoing progress of the Summit 2010 Project. Donna explained some of the items to be measured involve qualitative vs. quantitative information. Quantitative information used in the environmental scan came primarily from the census, which is only completed every ten years. However, for the first time the government will be providing more frequent updates on specific data, which will provide some measure of information on progress. Unfortunately, Summit County information will be combined with data from Portage County and may not be able to be separated out. Karen stated data may come from various sources. The agencies involved in achievement of the initiatives will need to be responsible for reporting data to whoever will be designated to collect the data, so that progress can be measured.

Connie asked if access to testing data from the Akron Board of Education would be available. Karen was not sure if that information would be available. Karen stated that Donna provided a list of Summit 2010 initiatives that require measurement and what sources of data may be available.

### **• OPEN SEATS ON SSAB**

Karen reported that the Executive Committee on January 13 discussed potential candidates for the nine vacancies on the SSAB Board. The Board has room for up to 25 members and Karen asked Board members to let her, Sarah, or Pat know of persons who may be interested and who they thought could bring value to the group. Karen stated that the Budget & Levy Review committee has an immediate need for members with a financial background. It was noted that local CPA firms bid annually on audit work for the county and so this could be a conflict with membership on the SSAB Board.

### **• UPDATE ON THE CONSULTANT TO THE SSAB**

Karen noted that an e-mail had been sent out to the Board members by Julie to determine if they wished to request a copy of the complete responses to the RFP for the Consultant to the SSAB for the Summit 2010 Project. The County received three responses for a consultant to the SSAB; one from Provider Gateway, one from Carnegie Consulting Group, Ltd and one from The Center for Community Solutions. A list of questions was generated from the review of the responses. The questions will be sent out through Karen

Doty's office after her review. A copy of the list of questions was distributed to the Board. Julie is also checking to make sure the proposals submitted met all required criteria. Provider Gateway works with the County in the information technology area. Carnegie Consulting Group's background is development of healthcare pathways. The Center for Community Solutions' proposal was broad and they have worked with the Summit 2010 Project from the beginning. Karen asked if the Board had any additional questions or concerns and then if the Board would be comfortable in authorizing the Executive Committee to review the follow-up issues and make a recommendation to Mr. McCarthy on behalf of the Board. A summary of the proposals was distributed to the Board members. The project is for one year that could be renewed.

There was discussion by the Board on the proposals. It was asked if presentations from each of the respondents would be held. Presentations have not been planned. A motion for the Executive Committee to follow-up on any questions regarding the proposals and the authority to make the recommendation to Mr. McCarthy on behalf of the Board for a consultant to the SSAB was unanimously approved. Julie will circulate the answers to questions asked by the Executive Committee to all Board members. Karen Doty will be asked if questions need to be asked of each of the potential vendors.

#### **METRO SERVICE LEVEL AND BUDGET CUTS**

Bob Pfaff announced to the Board that Metro is going on a public hearing circuit with a list of adjustments that may be needed to meet Metro's budget for this year. Some service levels will be cut. Bob stated that Metro is currently in labor negotiations and this will also determine the agenda for the public hearings. Fares for service will need to be raised, and one route will definitely be cut. Sunday service may also need to be cut. In February, Metro will be making recommendations to their Board of any adjustments to fees or bus service and routes.

#### **THANK YOU FOR SERVICE TO BOARD**

Karen asked the Board if they would agree to sending Wayne Brennessel a letter thanking him for his service to the Board and all Board members agreed. Julie will draft a letter.

#### **NEXT SSAB BOARD MEETING**

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 27, 2005 at 12:00 Noon.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.