

**SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
MINUTES
May 10th, 2007**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

William Alford
Tom Armstrong
Elizabeth Bartz
May Chen
Angela Tucker Cooper
Don Davies
Delores Jones
Sarah Kisner
Jim Lawrence
Nan McClenaghan
Vivian Celeste Neal
Gene Nixon
Katerina Papas
Karen Talbott
Cheryl Urban

DJFS STAFF:

Pat Divoky
Julie Seeley

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Jeff Heintz
Connie Krauss
Jean Van Ness
Sandra Selby
Bernett Williams
Bob Pfaff
Elaine Woloshyn

GUESTS:

Tom Grande, ADM Board
Tom Leffler, Manager of Finance, ADM
Gary Binns, Director of Finance, CSB
Rita Fongheiser, CSB Finance Dept.

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME OF NEW MEMBERS

Karen Talbott called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. A quorum of members was present. She welcomed Nan McClenaghan, a new member of the SSAB.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 21ST, 2007 SSAB BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of the March 21st, 2007 Board meeting were unanimously approved as previously distributed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & MEETING WITH MR. MCCARTHY

Karen Talbott reported that the Executive Committee met on April 9th, 2007 and reviewed the Summit 2010 Staffing Plan. Karen reminded the Board that they had given the Executive Committee the authority to review the Transition Plan drafted by the Center for Community Solutions and to approve the Plan, which they did; but, the Committee had some issues in relation to the staffing portion of the Plan. The staffing plan originally detailed that the SSAB Director would only coordinate the Summit 2010 Project; but, the SSAB Executive Director's role has been expanded to include all SSAB activities. The revised staffing plan has the Executive Director of SSAB devoting 60% of his or her time to the Summit 2010 Project and 40% to other SSAB activities. The revised plan also includes expansion of support staff time to 75%. A meeting of the Executive Committee was held with Mr. McCarthy on April 18th. He was supportive of the Transition Plan with the revised staffing plan and the role of the SSAB as a "Super Board", with first-hand knowledge of health and human services issues in Summit County. He saw the SSAB Executive Director

as the go-to person in regard to health and human services in the community. The SSAB Executive Director would report to the SSAB Chair, but be a County employee. The SSAB Executive Director's office would be at the Department of Job & Family Services. A position description has been drafted and details were discussed with Karen Doty, of the County's Legal Department.

Also discussed at the April 9th Executive Committee meeting was a report from Jean Van Ness on the special task force that is looking at residential placement of children outside of Summit County. Vivian Celeste Neal and Randy Zumbar have also been involved in this effort. The Executive Committee additionally discussed the need for an update (progress report) on the Summit 2010 goals before appearing before the Akron Beacon Journal Editorial Board and County Council. Karen heard from Donna Skoda regarding the update report and Donna said it will consist of three sections; 1) infrastructure work on the various committees including how the goals were developed and the progress to date, 2) the long-term sustainability of the Project until 2010 and beyond, and 3) the progress of the Indicators and if that progress will meet expected deadlines. Bill Alford suggested sharing the Summit 2010 progress report with the Reporter & West Side Leader. Delores Jones also suggested possibly sharing the report at Akron Roundtable and Rotary meetings as well as other community groups.

The Executive Committee met with Directors of the three levy funded agencies and Sarah Kisner, Director of the Department of Job & Family Services, just before today's Board meeting (May 10) , to discuss funding of the SSAB Executive Director position and the Summit 2010 Project. The entire staffing plan is projected to cost about \$255,000 per year. The current cost for just the 2010 Project is slightly under \$250,000 per year. Mr. McCarthy supported extension of the Center for Community Solutions' contract from July until October of this year, along with hiring of the SSAB Executive Director during that period. Each of the agencies and DJFS would be requested to contribute \$40,000 for the period until December 31, 2007. Funding requested beyond 2007 would be \$75,000-\$80,000 per year after that. Extension of the Center for Community Solutions' contract would be subject to approval by Summit County Council. The Directors of the levy agencies stated they need to return to their respective Boards for approval for the funding. The levy agency Directors suggested that the Executive Director be responsible for securing funding beyond 2008, but the levy agencies could consider providing some amount of reduced funding, based on their circumstances. Executive Committee members will attend the levy agency Board or appropriate Committee meetings to answer any questions. The Executive Committee hoped that there should be good indication of the funding status by the end of May.

Karen will have information on the entire staffing plan e-mailed to the entire Board for any further review and comment.

BUDGET & LEVY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Elizabeth Bartz stated that the Budget & Levy Review Committee met with ADM and Children Services to discuss the levy proposals for the November, 2007 ballot. Elizabeth noted that information regarding the levies had been e-mailed to SSAB members and she stated that members of ADM and Children Services are present at today's meeting to answer questions.

Report on ADM Levy Proposal

The Budget & Levy Review Committee recommends ADM's levy proposal of a 2.95 Mill Replacement with Reduction levy for the November, 2007 ballot (motion). Elizabeth noted an article in the Akron Beacon Journal that explained that a Replacement with Reduction levy does not mean the taxpayers are paying less. ADM explained that a levy renewal would not generate enough dollars to sustain their level of services and a levy replacement would generate too much money. ADM's last levy was a 3.05 Mill levy.

ADM has completed polling and their results are favorable, with voters against increased taxes but not ADM. Polling suggested voters felt "it was the right thing to do" to support ADM. Currently, 35% would vote for a levy, 35% would not, and the remaining 30% are undecided. ADM stated there is an issue with employees at some of the agencies that ADM funds who are making very low salaries, with no medical benefits. ADM wants to use new levy funds to raise salaries to a minimum of \$10/hour, with medical

benefits. Performance standards would be linked to the increase. The Budget & Levy Committee members had suggested that ADM not promise automatic annual 3% pay raise increases after the initial wage adjustments for low salary workers. There are a number of programs that ADM is declining to support in this current levy proposal. A new public relations individual will be starting work at ADM.

Report on Children Services Levy Proposal

Elizabeth stated that Children Services' out-of-County placements are still 30%, and Jean Van Ness will report at the July SSAB Board meeting on the work that the Cluster Committee is doing to decrease the number of these placements. Children Services stated that labor negotiations were completed in spring of 2006, so this will not interfere with a levy on the ballot. Children Services has completed polling of constituents, but the results are not available yet. Children Services has a levy campaign dollar goal in place, which appeared low to the Committee members. There is a grass roots effort entitled Citizens of America, which is supporting the Children Services levy. Arlene Hunt is the head of the group. Children Services has retained Triumph Communications Inc. to also assist with the campaign. Elizabeth inquired about the status of Title IV-E funding. Gary Binns stated that IV-E funding has held steady, but there is always a chance the State may be decreasing this funding and a State audit, which could preclude further IV-E funding, is scheduled for the Fall. Karen questioned a \$1 million drop in IV-E funding projection in the levy proposal for 2007 from actual and then the drop being projected throughout the six year levy cycle. Karen noted that IV-E funding has apparently contributed to Children Services' large fund balance in the past. Gary responded that the IV-E increase to the fund balance occurred some years ago, and that Children Services is spending down that balance. In addition, because it is a six year levy period, the budget is more conservative. The Board expressed some concern regarding the possibility and the public relations impact to Children Services of another large carry-forward fund balance. Board members reinforced the need for a clear message by Children Services in the campaign.

Children Services current millage is 2.56 and last year their levy proposal was a Replacement with Reduction levy at 2.52 millage. They are now are proposing a 2.25 Mill Replacement with Reduction levy for the November, 2007 ballot.

The Budget & Levy Review Committee encouraged collaboration between Children Services and ADM on the levy campaigns. Elizabeth stated this is the last opportunity Children Services has to go on the ballot as a replacement or a renewal. If the levy fails, it would be a new levy in 2008 and Children Services would use their carryover balance to maintain operations in 2008. ADM has until the end of 2008 to pass a levy, but that would leave only two subsequent opportunities to go on the ballot. Don Davies explained it was critical that ADM go on the ballot in Nov. 2007 because they will incur a \$2.5 million debt in 2008 to keep programs going, and if the levy passes in November, 2007, ADM can take a loan out against that. If it does not pass, programs will need to be cut. ADM is incurring the deficit because there is less levy dollars received from no new construction and the increase in local funds needed for Medicaid match. Currently half of Medicaid money goes to that Medicaid match.

Don Davies and Katerina Papas have both spoken to Summit County Council. Their conversations with Council indicate support of both the ADM and Children Services levies on the November, 2007 ballot. It was suggested that the rationale for the levies be sent in writing to Summit County Council, so that they are able to review prior to their voting on the levy proposals.

Karen called for a vote on the motion for a 2.95 Mill Replacement with Reduction levy for ADM on the November, 2007 ballot. The motion passed unanimously with three abstentions (Jim Lawrence, Don Davies, and Angela Tucker Cooper).

By motion of the Budget & Levy Review Committee's recommendation for approval of a 2.25 Mill Replacement with Reduction levy for Children Services on the November, 2007 ballot, the Board voted unanimously to pass the motion, with Katerina Papas abstaining.

Guests from ADM and Children Services were excused from the meeting.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Report on Finance Forum April 10th Meeting

Delores Jones said she was very pleased that all who were invited to join the Finance Forum have agreed to participate. Delores stated that the Finance Forum is bringing together 5 different stakeholders (faith-based, business, government, non-profit, and foundations) to work collaboratively on funding for health & human services in Summit County. Mr. McCarthy was present at the meeting on April 10th and the group discussed their mission and purpose. The stakeholders agreed on the need for this collaborative and that it should be carried on beyond 2010. A second meeting will be held next week.

Senior Independent Living Council (SILC)

Karen reported that she would be meeting on May 25th with Donna Skoda and Rich Marountas to explore how the Older Adults Committee and the Senior Independent Living Council (SILC) will relate.

OLD BUSINESS

2007 Making a Difference Human Services Forum Update

Cheryl Urban reported the Forum Planning Committee has been meeting. Information on Judge Steven Leifman, the keynote speaker, was distributed to Board members. Judge Leifman's presentation will be on de-criminalization of mental illness. The Forum will be held on Tuesday, October 23rd from 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Breakout topics have been identified which include cultural competence, transportation, Summit County's mental health court initiative, youth, leadership succession, and seniors.

NEW BUSINESS

Tom Armstrong announced that MRDD is doing some restructuring which is part of the efficiencies built into the previous levy campaign. About 40 degreed positions are being converted to para-professional positions, with about 17 positions that need to be reassigned into other positions in the agency. Tom said that everyone would have a position available to them, but 5-6 may be in a lower paying position. Tom asked anyone with questions to contact him.

OTHER

Karen announced that there is a transportation workshop sponsored by Metro for Summit and Portage Counties to discuss transportation needs. The Summit County event will be May 22nd at 8:15 a.m. at the Job Center, and the Portage County workshop will be May 23rd, at 8:15 a.m. at the United Church of Christ in Kent.

Julie Seeley commented on a "Street Card" of health resources developed by the Akron Minority Health Roundtable which was distributed to Board members. Julie said an "Akron Street Card", listing various resources available throughout Summit County, is also in the process of revision, and will be available within 5-6 weeks. Nan McClenaghan announced that the Income, Education & Workforce Committee of Summit 2010 will be working with others, possibly the Finance Forum, to develop a "Street Card" of employer and job seeking resources also.

NEXT SSAB BOARD MEETING: JULY 18TH, 2007

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m.