

**SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
MINUTES
May 21st, 2008**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Angela Tucker Cooper
Rick Kavenagh
Bob Kulinski
Jim Lawrence
Linda Omobien
Bob Pfaff
John Saros
Brad Schroeder
Sandra Selby
John Sniezek
Karen Talbott
Bernett Williams
Barbara Vassel

DJFS STAFF:

Patricia Divoky

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Tom Armstrong
William Alford
Elizabeth Bartz
Michael Ho-Yong Byun
Connie Krauss
Don Davies
Jeff Heintz
Sarah Kisner
Nan McClenaghan
Gene Nixon
Elaine Woloshyn

GUESTS:

Tom Leffler

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME OF NEW BOARD MEMBER

Karen Talbott called the meeting to order at 12:09 p.m. with a quorum present. Karen welcomed the newly appointed SSAB member, John Sniezek, Executive Director of the Akron Community Health Resources (ACHR). ACHR is the federally qualified health center in Summit County. John described the current status of the dental clinic which just opened. There is a waiting list for dental services.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 16TH SSAB BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of the March 19th, 2008 Board meeting were unanimously approved as previously distributed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Karen Talbott reported that the Executive Committee met on May 12th and discussed some old business regarding the Center for Community Solutions' 2008 contract. The Committee members will be meeting with Russ Pry on June 18th. The Committee also discussed the future of the Finance Forum and will talk with Jean Van Ness regarding the possibility of the Finance Forum linking with the area Foundations group on their projects and initiatives. Committee members will also be speaking with Kirsten Toth from the GAR Foundation. Karen will be approaching Elaine Woloshyn

to see if she might be willing to take Jean Van Ness's place on the group that addresses the issue of out-of-County placements of children. Karen reported that agenda items for today's Board meeting were also discussed and a presentation to Summit County Council regarding the Summit 2010 Project is being planned.

B. BUDGET & LEVY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Sandra Selby reported for Elizabeth Bartz regarding the Budget & Levy Review Committee meeting held on April 22nd. The Committee met with the Executive Directors and the Finance Directors of the levy funded agencies and reviewed the schedule for this year's annual budget review process. The annual budgets for all three agencies will be reviewed on September 11th and the reporting period will be from January to June of 2008. The full Board will then be able to review the recommendations of the Budget & Levy Review Committee at its meeting on September 17, 2008. The Committee also discussed carry forward balances and the decision was to have approximately three months of a carry forward balance, varying by agency in regards to whether that is at the beginning or the end of the levy cycle. Changes from the 2008 budgets were noted; MR/DD had a 10% shortfall from the State, ADM will be affected by the change in Medicaid, and Children Services is dealing with issues regarding the conversion to the SACWIS data system as well as underestimation of the cost of building the respite/visitation center.

Sandra reported that the Board of Elections has levied a \$196,000 charge to ADM and Children Services without prior knowledge of the agencies or documentation. John Saros explained that the federal and State governments have increased the cost of elections because of the use of new voting equipment and an increase in the number of part-time staff. In the past, agencies were only charged for special elections, not general elections. However, the new State budget made this cost increase effective as of September 2007. The cost is a one time charge, but as the new charge was not expected, the costs were not built into both Children Services and ADM's levy requests. Karen called on Tom Leffler to comment on this issue. Tom Leffler stated that the ADM Board would incur these costs every time they are involved in an election. The Board of Elections has told ADM and Children Services that there was no option of installment payments over the course of the levy.

Karen asked Tom Leffler regarding Medicaid funding changes. Tom explained that currently, all providers are paid based on a fee schedule (which had not been increased in 12 years) or the actual cost of the service, whichever is lower. In FY09, all providers will be paid at the maximum of the fee schedule. This will result in additional matching money requirements for ADM of \$500,000 that was not anticipated in the levy request. There is a possibility that the State may be diverting up to \$700,000 of monies that would have come to Summit County to cover matching dollars for counties with no levies. In 2010, Medicaid claims will not be handled by ADM, but will go directly to Job & Family Services and the State will "absorb" the match. Tom said initial projections are a cost of \$700,000, which is more than the match monies currently expended by ADM.

B. HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Bob Pfaff referred Board members to the most recent edition of the Summit 2010 News and Notes for updates. Plans are in place to look at goals beyond 2010. The Early Childhood Committee has been addressing the low immunization rates and has developed two sub-committees-- one focused on social and emotional development of children under age 5, and the second, a cultural diversity committee which will focus on addressing barriers and enhancing learning programs and school readiness for families in which English is not their first language.

The three neighborhood groups are moving forward with a number of activities, and Bob deferred to reports in the Summit 2010 News and Notes for details.

Bob reported for Nan McClenaghan, who could not be at the meeting today and chairs the Income, Education & Workforce Development Committee. The Committee had the opportunity to host the Akron Area Society of Human Resource Management strategic planning event where Russ Pry,

County Executive, presented on the Summit 2010 Project. There were about 80 individuals present. The DJFS staff and consultants were thanked for helping to prepare for the presentation.

Bob reported that the Behavioral Health Committee met on April 29th at a retreat facilitated by Round River consulting. The next meeting to discuss the findings is scheduled for June 6th from 10-noon.

Bob stated that the Health & Human Services Committee has not met in some time in deference to the consultants work, but will be scheduled to meet in the near future.

OLD BUSINESS

Karen noted that Jennifer Brunner, Secretary of State, was in town recently for a meeting in regards to creating a life quality index for Ohio. Karen inquired if anyone knew any more regarding this, as it appears to tie in to the Summit 2010 Project. Pat Divoky stated that Donna Skoda attended the meeting and provided Jennifer with information on Summit 2010. The SSAB will await word on the life quality index initiative from Ms. Brunner.

NEW BUSINESS

Bob Pfaff updated the Board on activity at Metro since the levy passage. Bob stated that service levels have been maintained. Money from the new levy will be received by Metro in September/October. Bob added that Metro is in the process of procuring additional busses. Several other changes were also described. The first phase will be changes in the routes that deliver service to Joy Park, allowing for increased service on Arlington Street. In June, there will be public hearings on these and North Hill route changes.

Bob also said there is a need for increased service at 12:30-1 a.m., and Metro is adding 2 additional busses for delivering workers to their homes at that time. Bob would like to increase ridership to the point that fixed routes, vs. zone routes are justified.

In January, the transit center will open at Broadway and Bartges. Prior to January, another set of public hearings will be held as routes will change when the transit center opens, and additional bus routes will also be added at that time.

The Governor has appointed and the legislature approved a 21st Century transportation task force whose responsibility will be to travel the State of Ohio and seek public input to determine what transportation should look like in the State. This includes highways, rail and other public transportation. Bob noted that public transportation State funding has dropped 62% in the last five years. In June, the task force will meet at the John S. Knight Center and Bob welcomed participation from Board members and all citizens.

Karen inquired about the impact of higher gas prices on the number of individuals utilizing Metro. Bob noted that the April ridership is up 7% and the service to Cleveland has been so increased that the parking lot has been completely full with overflow parking on Ghent Road.

OTHER

The Forum Planning Committee has not met since the last Board meeting.

Karen noted that the Department of Job & Family Services has had parking issues at times and thus the Executive Committee has been looking at several alternative meeting locations for SSAB such as Akron Urban League, the Food Bank, The Job Center, YRC offices and others. Board members will be notified of the alternative location.

Angela Tucker Cooper noted that May is Mental Health Awareness Month and her staff is willing to speak to organizations regarding the issues of depression and/or stress. Angela announced that there is a PBS show tonight featuring mental health issues, including depression.

Karen added that May is also Older Adult Month.

ADJOURNMENT

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

NOTE: The next SSAB Board meeting will be July 17th, 2008 at noon at the Akron Urban League.