

***SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES***

***Wednesday, July 15, 2009
United Way of Summit County
90 North Prospect Street
Akron OH 44309***

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bill Alford
Tom Armstrong
Elizabeth Bartz
Michael Byun
Angela Tucker Cooper
William Harper
Rick Kavenagh
James Lawrence
Nan McClenaghan
Gene Nixon
Linda Omobien
Robert Pfaff
John Saros
Karen Talbott
Barbara Vassel

DJFS STAFF:

Barb Alexander

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jeffrey Heintz
Sarah Kisner
Connie Krauss
Bob Kulinski
Julie Rittenhouse
Brad Schroeder
Sandra Selby
John Sniezek
Elaine Woloshyn

GUESTS:

Rich Marountas
Donna Skoda

Chair Karen Talbott called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m. with a welcome to everyone and an introduction of new Board member Bill Harper from the ADM Board. There was a quorum present.

Karen then asked for a review of the March 18th, 2009 minutes. There was a correction on page 2 of 3, paragraph 6, changing "Rick" to "Rich". Nan McClenaghan moved to accept the minutes as corrected. Gene Nixon seconded, and the motion passed with no objections or abstentions.

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Executive Committee Report

Karen reported that the Executive Committee had not met formally, but she and others spoke with County Executive Russ Pry on June 9th about open seats on the SSAB Board and Committee co-chairs (in light of Bennett Williams' resignation). She made the following motion:

"To nominate Elizabeth Bartz and Angela Tucker-Cooper as Co-Chairs of the Budget and Levy Review Committee; also to nominate Bob Pfaff and Sandy Selby to Co-Chair the Health and Human Services Committee."

Gene seconded the motion and it passed with no objections or abstentions.

Karen stated that Russ Pry is contemplating additions to the Board.

Budget and Levy Review Committee

Elizabeth Bartz stated that this Committee will meet right after the full Board meeting to hear suggestions from Donna Skoda and Rich Marountas and to plan the September meeting. Budgets will be in right after Labor Day. At this time there are no levy proposals planned.

John Saros stated that there is difficulty getting budget information from the State. Gene Nixon stated that the budget should be signed this week so we should know soon. Elizabeth stated that the Committee needs to get its work done by the middle of September.

John stated that the State is cutting support service funding and this could result in increased placements. We need accurate allocation numbers. The State was supposed to have the budget finalized by June 30th – it is three weeks behind. Elizabeth suggested just waiting to see what happens in the next few weeks so the Committee can obtain the precise information needed to accommodate County Council. Bill Harper pointed out that we are heading into uncharted waters with the overlapping at the State levels and that this may be a good local venue for these discussions.

Tom Armstrong announced that the official name of his agency will change to "Summit County Board of Developmental Disabilities", effective some time in October.

John Saros noted that we should be looking at a review of how the Summit 2010 Project will be funded. Elizabeth Bartz suggested that this be brought up with County Executive Russ Pry, since cutting things off may be detrimental as we have made commitments. Linda Omobien asked who was at the table when funding decisions for the project were decided upon. Elizabeth answered that it was Jim McCarthy and agency executives back in 2002. Tom Armstrong pointed out that although the project is very worthwhile; we are all making tough budget decisions. Karen Talbott stated that we may want to look into help from various foundations. Michael Byun suggested that we develop a contingency plan; possibly scale back and definitely

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evaluate all options. Nan McClenaghan pointed out that there is much involvement and support from the community.

John Saros posed the question of how to go forward; i.e., should we approach the County Executive now. Donna Skoda suggested waiting, since the project is under budget at this time.

Gene Nixon said that he thinks we need to do an assessment of what we have done over the past eight years and whether there will be increased value in the future. Linda Omobien suggested developing a plan to communicate the Summit 2010 Project's outcomes to the general public. It was noted that such reports have occurred.

Bill Alford stated that this group has been a big aid for his agency. All of the information made available from this group has been invaluable.

Donna Skoda gave a project update. She stated that they have studied committee structure to see what could be combined to prevent duplication and streamline processes. She met with County Executive Russ Pry on June 9th, along with Elizabeth Bartz, Karen Talbott, and Pat Divoky.

Donna stated that County Council has asked for financial information. She plans to provide them with both a programmatic report and an expenditure report. The contract is in the process of being signed.

Donna continued that in order to solidify the Early Childhood Planning Campaign, they will be repeating the gap analysis; 0-5, 6-12, and 13-18. Demo Solaru (Provider Gateway) is creating a modified program that will be more valuable. Sign-up is anonymous. This will help to avoid confidentiality issues.

Donna said that the Bridges Out of Poverty Conference was held May 14-15, with 150 people in attendance. She also reported on Medication Reclamation for Older Adults, which is essentially a strategy for self sufficiency, and neighborhood initiatives.

Rich Marountas reported that the Family Health Survey for Summit County has been completed, and the Behavioral Risk Factor Survey information is coming in. An updated mid-decade report is being worked on. They still want to add a qualitative piece to get a take on where we are, how we got here, and what to do next.

Rich stated they are also working on an analysis of the Access to Care Program. Data gathering has begun, and they will have something to present by mid-fall. They are also doing a data survey of seniors.

Angela Tucker Cooper reported on the Making a Difference Forum, scheduled for Friday, October 16th, at Akron Urban League. The guest speaker will be Dr. Bertice Berry. Angela stated that they are asking for sponsorships and need everyone's help. This year's forum will be a half-day event (no afternoon sessions), scheduled from 8:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.. CEUs will be issued. Karen stated that JFS will be helping.

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New Business

Donna announced that they need everyone's support on an upcoming vote headed up by EfficientGovNow, a program by the Fund for Our Economic Future, to reward efficient government in Northeast Ohio. There are 9 finalists that are up for \$300,000 in funding. The Health Department is Number 7 on the ballot. Donna distributed ballots and encouraged everyone to vote for Number 7 – the deadline is July 31st.

Bill Alford reported that the ELI Program has been eliminated. Head Start has had 116 early learning slots that have been applied for, and they should hear something by early September.

John Saros stated that as we gather data, we should be looking at the positive impact that this Board has had on our community. It was agreed by all that it would be a good idea to publish a report to indicate what has happened and what is going to happen in the future given the State budget cuts.

The Board meeting adjourned at 1:08 p.m. and was followed by a meeting of the Budget and Levy Review Committee.

Prepared by:

*Barbara Alexander
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