

MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
HUMAN SERVICES TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 13, 2008

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Carl Harris-Morgan, Town of Gilbert, Chairman
+Bob Baratko, City of Surprise
Kathy Berzins, City of Tempe
Kyle Bogdon, DES/ACYF
+Patti Evans, City of Goodyear
*Paige Garrett, Quality of Life Community Services, Inc
*Joyce Gross, Town of Buckeye
Susan Hallett for Laura Guild, DES/CPIP
Jeffery Jamison, City of Phoenix
Deanna Jonovich, City of Phoenix
Jim Knaut, Area Agency on Aging
Frances Delgado for Margarita Leyvas, Maricopa County
+Joyce Lopez-Powell, Valley of the Sun United Way
Paul Ludwick, City of Scottsdale
Steven MacFarlane, City of Phoenix
Doris Marshall, City of Phoenix

Jayson Matthews, Tempe Community Council
*Joy McClain, City of Tolleson
Christina Avila for Sylvia Sheffield, City of Avondale, Vice Chair
Martha Finnegan for Carol Sherer, DES/DDD

OTHERS PRESENT

Dan Lundberg, City of Surprise
Rachel Brito, MAG
DeDe Gaisthea, MAG
Brande Mead, MAG
Amy St. Peter, MAG

+Those members present by audio/videoconferencing.

*Those members neither present nor represented by proxy.

1. Call to Order

Chair Carl Harris-Morgan welcomed everyone to the meeting at 1:05 p.m. and introductions ensued.

2. Call to the Audience

There were no comments from the audience.

3. Approval of October 16, 2008 HSTC Meeting Minutes

Chair Harris-Morgan called for a motion to approve the October 16, 2008 meeting minutes. Jayson Matthews, Tempe Community Council, made a motion to approve the minutes. Jeffrey Jamison, City of Phoenix, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. SSBG Service Ranking Results

The results from the service ranking exercise were presented to the Committee, followed by discussion about how the results will be used in the process to develop allocation recommendations for the Social Services Block Grant.

Chair Harris-Morgan said the process was interesting and the resulting bar chart was informative. He noted that emergency-related services were grouped together at the top of the chart.

Mr. Matthews said it was a helpful exercise and that it confirmed a lot of what the committee already knew. He added that it was interesting to see different perspectives about this information and the relation of services and needs to each other. Mr. Matthews said he expected transportation to be ranked higher.

Jim Knaut, Area Agency on Aging, asked for clarification on how the results were calculated. He said he was surprised that the averages were not higher. Chair Harris-Morgan interpreted the averages being low because of the variety of services, needs and funds. He said he found it difficult to rank the services because he did not feel that he knew enough about each one.

Amy St. Peter, MAG, said that people ranked many different services within their top ten, thus driving down the percentages and accounting for the spread in scores. She noted that three main groups rose to the top which included services related to crises, stabilization and specialized needs.

Ms. St. Peter emphasized the need to take other data sources into account when reviewing the results of the ranking exercise. For example, extended employment services ranked fairly low at 2.0, but it has been identified as a critical service for persons with developmental disabilities for which there is no other funding source. If SSBG funds were to be reallocated from this service to one that ranked higher, there would be no way to supplement this gap in funding.

Doris Marshall, City of Phoenix, said it was a challenge to complete the ranking and that she approached the services holistically. She explained that the services are interrelated and dependent upon each other in order to be successful. Chair Harris-Morgan said he would have benefited from having the information shared at the meeting when he was completing the exercise. Joyce Lopez-Powell, Valley of the Sun United Way, via audio call, said that she appreciated Chair Harris-Morgan's position.

Paul Ludwick, City of Scottsdale, asked what instructions were given for the ranking exercise and how the question was phrased. Chair Harris-Morgan replied that committee members were asked to rank the services one through ten, with ten being the most important, and that no other information was provided for this specific exercise. It was noted that the ranking exercise is part of a larger and continuing effort to explore different alternatives for developing allocation recommendations.

Ms. Lopez-Powell expressed concern that the rankings were not weighted. She said the number of responses for each service area varied and that this needs to be statistically addressed.

Steve MacFarlane, City of Phoenix, said the process was basically a simple exercise in which respondents are given only ten choices. He explained that each choice is weighted, so a score of ten would be more valuable than a score of one. He said it then becomes a simple task of averaging across the number of respondents. Mr. MacFarlane suggested the committee keep the exercise in context as one piece of information.

Mr. MacFarlane said another question to consider is whether or not allocations for the four target groups should all include basic needs services that received high rankings from the committee. He added that case management may need to be funded within each target group as well because it opens up a large variety of services that are not known to the client. He said the case manager may help the client access more specialized services not funded by SSBG. Mr. MacFarlane commented it would be helpful to have case management experts attend the next Committee meeting and offer information about the services that ranked bottom of the list so the Committee understands what other resources are available.

Ms. Lopez-Powell said she had difficulty ranking the services because she did not know what was most important. She referenced the input received from the Arizona Department of Economic Security's Division for Developmental Disabilities last year in regard to which services were most important to them. Ms. Lopez-Powell said that kind of information would be very helpful to have for the other services and target groups.

Susan Hallett, Arizona Department of Economic Security, said some people complete a ranking exercise with a bias to their area of expertise. The question of what is the most important service then becomes a question of what area the respondent knows most about. Ms. Hallett said what she thought it was compelling that the majority of services that received higher rankings were reactionary versus some of the middle or lower services which related to stabilizing people and addressing specialized needs. She asked if this resulted in maintaining people in crisis as opposed to helping them address the root causes of their crisis and end the cycle. Ms. Hallett said it is interesting data to start the discussion.

Mr. Ludwick suggested a survey like this might be more helpful if respondents were given a set dollar amount and asked how they would distribute the funds among the services. He said when asking which is the most important, crisis shelter almost always rank at the top as they provide the most urgent services and are most visible to the community.

Ms. Lopez-Powell said another question missing in both scenarios is the end outcome of the funding. She said the lack of parameters around the expected end outcome results in people retreating to their area of expertise and forgoing the big picture. Considering this, she said she is still unsure of the value of ranking.

Mr. MacFarlane said the value of the exercise is the ranking prompts people to choose different values for different services. As a result, some services are excluded while others rise to the top. This forces a higher level of prioritization and it gives the Committee an additional piece of useful information.

Ms. St. Peter agreed that the rankings are one piece of information. She thanked the MAG Human Services Technical and Coordinating Committee members who turned in their service rankings. She emphasized that the exercise and Committee discussion in general are not complete without everyone's perspective. Ms. St. Peter said that while it is important to hear what DES wants to do, it is also critically important for the committee to lend their expertise and good judgment to the decision.

Patti Evans, City of Goodyear, via audio call, said the results of the zero-based budgeting (ZBB) exercise had ranked adults, families and children at the top; elderly second; and persons with developmental disabilities and persons with disabilities had been ranked equally in last position. She said she had tried her best to tie the service ranking back to the percentages from the previous ZBB exercise. She commented that the results of the service ranking exercise are consistent with the ZBB results placing families and older adults as the top priority.

Chair Harris-Morgan asked the committee how they see this information impacting the process to develop allocation recommendations. Ms. Evans suggested focusing funding on the services that were ranked above 2.0 and asked the committee for their thoughts. Chair Harris-Morgan said prior to making any decisions, he would prefer to have additional information on how those services below 2.0 would be impacted.

Deanna Jonovich, City of Phoenix, commented that the committee has had those conversations in the past and had gone full circle again. She agreed with Mr. MacFarlane's comments about the value of the service ranking exercise. Ms. Jonovich questioned why the Committee is considering funding services differently than what they had already identified as top priority.

Ms. St. Peter suggested another approach is to allocate funding for the top ranked services in all four target groups. She said if the committee looks at services in that light, then funding can be shifted as needed.

Mr. Knaut acknowledged that there are not as many people at the table representing persons with developmental disabilities and persons with disabilities. He said these groups were very upset in the past when their funding was cut to a greater degree than others. He noted that in the current process, these target groups are still not ranking highly either. Mr. Knaut suggested the committee may not have enough information to know if funding can be replaced or supplemented if SSBG is redirected to other services. Mr. Knaut said this is not an easy process and advised the Committee to exercise caution when making decisions.

Mr. Matthews said these are good tools to be used as a guide and that they provide another way of considering the allocation recommendations. He said the value of these exercises is that it considers the impact of the decision to redirect funding from one service to another. He suggested comparing what was funded last year against the service rankings and the zero-based budgeting exercise results. Those tools can then be used as a guide. He added that the Committee is obviously not following the same process as last year, but that there is some validity in considering previous allocations and the impact of changing them.

Ms. St. Peter agreed that all exercises are tools and not the answer. She offered to have MAG staff develop a chart comparing the service ranking results with the actual allocations from January 2008. She asked whether or not the Committee wanted to use the results of the ZBB exercise in the comparison chart. Mr. Matthews recommended that Committee members use the ZBB results at their discretion, but that the results not be included in the comparison chart.

Chair Harris-Morgan said that discussion moves the Committee into item five on the agenda.

5. Process to Develop Allocation Recommendations for the Social Services Block Grant
The Committee reviewed the data collected to date to inform the process to develop allocation recommendations for the Social Services Block Grant.

Mr. McFarlane said it would be a helpful exercise to see how the allocations compared to the needs as perceived by the Committee. He cautioned that the Committee may need to consult with experts when considering funding cuts in areas outside the Committee's expertise. He also said the Committee may want to re-examine funding for entitlement services. Mr. McFarlane emphasized the importance of obtaining feedback from groups affected by proposed funding cuts.

Mr. Matthews supported the idea of comparing the service ranking results with the allocations approved earlier in the year. He said he also valued getting input on draft allocations. Ms. Finnegan, Arizona Department of Economic Security, agreed that it is a good idea to distribute draft allocations in December. She said it would give the committee time to figure out if there may be ways to cover other services with different funding sources so that the committee knows the impact of the decisions.

Chair Harris-Morgan summarized what the Committee was proposing for the next meeting which was to:

- Compare last years funding allocations to the results of the service ranking exercise;
- Prepare a draft of actual funding recommendations;
- Distribute the draft allocations in December to the service providers and public for comment.

Committee members asked how much public comment is gathered. Ms. St. Peter said if there were any target groups or services that are particularly affected, then public comment from that group would be solicited through the agencies that provide service to them.

Mr. Matthews pointed out that if there are any radical allocation changes, the Committee would need to consider the capacity of the agencies to deliver the services with the money remaining. He said some agencies may receive a lot of funding but may not be able to provide the services due to capacity issues.

Chair Harris-Morgan questioned whether a motion was needed for agenda item number four. Ms. St. Peter said if the committee wants to use the information to move forward, then they would need to have the overall approval of the Committee through a motion. Chair Harris-Morgan referred the Committee back to item number four on the agenda and asked for a motion to approve the SSBG ranking results as presented. Ms. Jonovich made a motion to approve the SSBG ranking results as presented. Ms. Evans seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Harris-Morgan referred the committee back to item number five and the proposal to move forward with developing draft allocations. Ms. St. Peter outlined the four steps being proposed by the committee:

- Staff will develop a comparison chart of last year's allocations and the service rankings;
- During the next HSTC meeting, the committee will develop draft allocations recommendations;
- The draft of allocations will be distributed to the public and agencies for comment;
- At the January meeting, the committee will review the comments and feedback received and then propose final allocation recommendations for approval.

Ms. Jonovich asked if the committee ever came to agreement on the validity of the ZBB exercise. She said she had concerns and wanted to be clear if the results would be included in the comparison chart.

Ms. St. Peter advised that the ZBB exercise does not need to be included in the comparison. She said the committee, during the last meeting, had motioned to reanalyze the data through the service ranking process.

Mr. Matthews said he would personally like to use the ZBB results as a tool to help make future decisions. Ms. Berzins agreed that it would be helpful in trying to move forward with a reasonable process and that it should at least be included in the discussion. Ms. Evans also stated that she would like to include it as a tool. Chair Harris-Morgan noted that there are concerns regarding the ZBB exercise.

Ms. St. Peter noted that one option is to use just the service ranking and another is to include the zero based budgeting exercise in the comparison chart. Or, since the committee has the results of the ZBB, they can refer to them if they choose to.

Mr. Matthews said as point of procedure, since the results of the zero based budgeting exercise were not formally approved in the minutes of the meeting, they should only be used as supplemental tool to help support the information provided today. Mr. Knaut added that it would be helpful to see the actual numbers from the service rankings, and not just the overall graph.

Chair Harris-Morgan summarized that staff would provide a SSBG tool kit that includes a comparison chart based on the current allocations and the results of the service rankings; the service ranking results chart and table; the ZBB results; and the four fact sheets for the target groups. He asked for a motion to approve the process of having the toolbox emailed to committee members, developing funding recommendations at the next meeting, distributing it in December for review and public comment and preparing final allocation recommendations in January.

Mr. Matthews motioned to approve the process as outlined by Chair Harris-Morgan. Mr. Jamison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Harris-Morgan thanked the committee. He said we will hopefully have a more reasonable allocation process for next year and that he is looking forward to the discussion next month.

6. MAG Transportation Ambassador Program (TAP) Update

Chair Harris-Morgan introduced DeDe Gaisthea, MAG. Ms. Gaisthea thanked the Committee for inviting her to provide an update on the implementation of the Transportation Ambassador Program (TAP).

She said TAP was identified in the MAG Human Services Coordination Transportation Plan as one strategy to help the region coordinate human services transportation. The purpose of the program is to increase knowledge of the existing transportation services, to provide updates on recent changes, and to provide the opportunity to network.

Ms. Gaisthea said the program targets the general population with an emphasis on older adults and persons with disabilities and/or low income. She also said participants will serve as resources regarding human services transportation opportunities to the communities they work and live in. Toolkits, quarterly trainings and monthly *TAP Into Service* newsletter will be available. The goal is to increase communication among providers and the public that will result in better coordination and identification of opportunities to improve services.

Ms. Gaisthea said she is very excited about the program and the opportunity to better coordinate services and share information with each other. Ms. Gaisthea reviewed

the agenda for the first TAP meeting scheduled for Friday, November 14, 2008. She said the agenda would include a cultural sensitivity training as well as presentations from Valley Metro, Metro Rail and AZ 211. They will also discuss strategies for the next Human Services Coordination Transportation Plan. Additional meetings will also be organized in the East and West valley.

Ms. Gaisthea thanked the Arizona Department of Transportation and the City of Phoenix for their assistance with the coordination process and the Virginia G Piper Charitable trust for their support in making TAP possible. She invited Committee members to complete the MAG Transportation Ambassador Program Participant Information Form and return it to her.

Mr. Matthews said TAP is a fantastic program and the newsletter is great. He recommended that everyone get this information to their respective city transit departments and liaisons that work with the Transportation Commission or Citizen Commissions. He said there is a lot of interest in Tempe to get people more proactively trained in these issues. Mr. Matthews complimented staff on moving forward.

Chair Harris-Morgan asked if the form is available on line. Ms. Gaisthea informed the committee that it is available on the MAG Web site.

7. Regional Homeless Planning Update

Chair Harris-Morgan introduced Brande Mead, MAG, and invited her to give an update on the calendar of events scheduled during Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week and to provide a report on preparation for the next Annual Homeless Street Count.

Ms. Mead thanked the committee. She said each Committee member had received the MAG 2008 Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week Calendar of Events which draws attention to events taking place throughout out community. She said the calendar is also available on the MAG Web site and can be emailed to Committee members if needed. Chair Harris-Morgan requested that the calendar be e-mailed to individuals attending via teleconference.

Ms. Mead said Councilmember Greg Stanton, City of Phoenix, is kicking off the event on Monday, November 17, 2008, at 9:00 a.m. and that Ms. Anna Marie Chavez will be issuing a proclamation from the Governor. Participants are welcome to bring items for the food drive. Ms. Mead thanked the Committee members who have been involved in the planning process.

Ms. Mead discussed the planning process for the January 27, 2009 Homeless Street Count. She said street count coordinators have been confirmed in 25 cities and towns across Maricopa County. She thanked Committee members who have assisted in the process.

Ms. Mead said the City of Phoenix has volunteered to share their methodology for conducting the Street Count, which has been recognized as a best practice model. The MAG Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness is trying to encourage a more regional approach to the Street Count. She said while the region conducts a quality count, there is always room for improvement. MAG will also be available to provide technical assistance with services such as mapping and statistical analysis to cities and towns that want to implement Phoenix's methodology of random sampling for the street count.

Trainings for Street Count coordinators will be held in December throughout the region. Ms. Meade encouraged Committee members to volunteer on the day of the Street Count.

8. Comments from the Committee

There were no comments.

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:07 p.m. The next Human Services Technical Committee meeting is scheduled for December 11 at 1:00 p.m. at the MAG offices, second floor, Cholla Room.