

**United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley
Community Impact Committee Meeting
May 8, 2008
Minutes**

Members Present: Anna Colton, Ron Homer, Phillip Catchings, Caroline Chang, Denzil McKenzie, Debra Knez, Joyce Taylor Gibson, Myra Kraft, Terry Ann Lunt, Terry Kwan, Beth Smith.

Guest: Robert M. Mahoney, Chairman of the Board

United Way Staff Present: Michael Durkin, Jeffery Hayward, Peg Sprague, Tulaine Shabazz Marshall, Don Buchholtz, Diane Franz, William Marohn, Jeanne Maclaurin, Alison Beeaker, Carrie Weatherbee Cunningham, Elizabeth Curtis, Elena Sokolow, Merle Lindsay, Caroline Ross, Annie Chin Louie, Kory Eng, Donna Stiglmeier, Christie Getto Young, Lisa Pickard, José Ferrao.

I. Welcome and Announcements

Anna Colton convened the meeting. She reminded all in attendance about the upcoming *United for Children* event on May 28th.

Ms. Colton announced the \$295,000 DHCD Foreclosure Grant (the highest grant award in the Commonwealth), and Kory Eng, Director-Community Impact, provided background information. He reported that Massachusetts experienced 41,000 housing foreclosures in 2007. He stated that UWMBMV will be funding/leveraging the Mass211 information and referral line to screen and refer at risk homeowners (statewide) to the appropriate DHCD Regional Foreclosure Education Center or Individual Agencies (as appropriate).

Jeff Hayward encouraged all to read Peg Sprague's recent communication to Healthy Child Development Affiliates and Venture Partners. This document, he explained, was a good example of a document that explained, in layman's terms, the key measures upon which UWMBMV is focusing its current capacity building resources.

II. Data Reporting

Don Buchholtz presented an overview of the mid-year operating report, showing the measures in each impact area and the results to date. He explained that a webinar was being hosted by UWMBMV for agencies for the purpose of making this information useful to them and ultimately helping them reach their goals.

Mr. Buchholtz stated that the two key questions that are the centerpiece of this report are: (1) Are we on track? and (2) What are we learning?

Are we on track? Mr. Buchholtz indicated that half of the 27 measures are on track, with approximately one quarter of these in the "caution" category. Mr. Buchholtz explained that most

data issues were within public policy, which is difficult to track. These issues will be assessed as the year progresses. Overall, UWMBMV was pleased and comfortable with its progress. Mr. Buchholtz further stated that UWMBMV's role is to encourage agencies to "stretch," a relationship issue that will require more effort. Mr. Mahoney asked whether CI would select a different method if a measure wasn't proving useful after six months. Mr. Buchholtz explained that the biggest challenge was capacity to manage data. Ms. Lunt expressed that UWMBMV should be cognizant of the most recent information issued by the Commonwealth indicating that the economy is holding as is employment, and UWMBMV should be thoughtful about outcomes. Ms. Smith asked whether UWMBMV had used as a tool the most recent report on public policy issued by the Alliance for Justice. Ms. Getto Young explained that the Alliance for Justice report was used as a reference when the data collection tool was drafted. She explained that legislative timing (line items not known until the end of June) was a larger issue but informed the Committee that Community Impact was on top of the Committee's concerns.

What are we learning? Mr. Buchholtz stated that economic conditions have more immediate impact on agency work in housing and employment, presenting more immediate barriers to success. UWMBMV recognizes that it needs to clarify definitions and communicate more effectively with agencies—both a challenge and a best practice; policy constraints can hamper service accomplishments (i.e. funding eliminated for homeless prevention, limits on enrollment in adult diploma programs, etc.); agencies are beginning to embrace the UWMBMV-initiated practices, not just comply with them.

Who are we serving? UWMBMV agencies reach 1.3 million people, the most reached population being children and youth. Forty percent are in priority communities.

Within the impact areas:

-HCD – one cautionary note is the number of staff trained in social-emotional development (at 53% of target); we are reaching 14% of children who reside in our priority communities. As to the number of children in quality programs, progress to date is at 76% of target. Mr. Homer asked whether the number of children in quality programs could be tied to a specific demographic and asked whether there was qualitative data on the people served. Mr. Hayward stated that UWMBMV is looking at sweeping data and the fact that the quality of agencies' data collection has risen. Ms. Smith asked whether low-income data could be used for comparison to the number served, commenting that it was difficult to know what the target populations are. Mr. Buchholtz explained that UWMBMV went through an in-depth process to identify target communities, and the bulk of UWMBMV's investment is dedicated to these communities. Mr. Catchings stated that he believed measurement systems would evolve as the process moved forward. Ms. Kwan said that she had met with Diane Franz in Merrimack Valley and she believed Merrimack Valley's measures were sharper and more concise.

-IYO – Mr. Buchholtz expressed that the number of youth in high-quality programs was a 96% of target. The number of youth in agencies that track gains in positive youth outcomes was at 90% of target. The number of youth with supportive adult mentors was at 75% of target - recruiting mentors has been a challenge, but the number of afterschool staff is very engaged.

-AH – Mr. Buchholtz reported that the number of housing units produced, preserved or in property management is at 57%. The number of homeless services agencies operating under a Housing First

philosophy is at 78% of target, and the number of individuals who have retained affordable housing is at 31%.

-SE – Mr. Buchholtz stated that more information would be available at the second half of the academic year. He indicated that we were making good progress within the realm in which we're acting. Seventy-one percent have obtained job skills, and 47% have obtained employment. Ninety percent have achieved retention, upgrade, or wage gain.

-Basic Needs – Serving 130,000. The total number of people served is very significant. Some agencies are exploring ways to capture the number of people not served due to lack of resources. Processing of entitlements is a challenge. UWMBMV sits on a Food Stamp Access Coalition that seeks to address these barriers. Limited resources are available for direct client assistance/support.

Bob Mahoney and the Committee thanked Don Buchholtz and the CI staff for their excellent work. There then followed a dialogue during which the following questions/comments were asked/made:

- May need to elevate details – would be helpful to show five-year goal on summary snapshots.
- With regard to housing foreclosures, are we doing anything on the policy side? What is the extent of the problem in the communities we serve, and what is the impact of our work?
- Regarding youth – What is the drop-out rate and rate of those not pursuing college? Has UWMBMV addressed this as a potential area of investment? Peg Sprague indicated that these questions are on the table. UWMBMV funding supports youth when they are not in school rather than in school. UWMBMV's current work with Out of Harm's Way is making inroads toward a dialogue with the Boston Public Schools. Peg also indicated that UWMBMV is interested in working with Karen Pittman from the Forum for Youth Investment.
- Can we track how participation in after school programs correlates with success in high school?
- UWMBMV might learn more from the BELL Foundation.
- Bob Mahoney: The organization that proves it is making an impact on graduation rates should be funded.

III. Preliminary FY09 Program Budget

Mr. Durkin joined the meeting.

Mr. Hayward presented a draft of the FY09 program budget with a total of \$27.1 million pending approval by the Administration and Finance Committee. This budget includes \$1 million out of reserves, as previously approved by the Executive Committee. This \$1 million alleviated the revenue shortfalls. The operation portion fully funds year 2 of the 3-year schedule. Agencies will receive their funding as promised. The same is true for venture agencies. Further, Mr. Hayward pointed out that this budget meets the contractual obligation with Merrimack Valley.

In **Housing**, there is \$600,000 in initiatives which nearly funds Housing First. We are working with fund raising to acquire \$300,000 in additional funding. \$110,000 is allocated to Merrimack Valley, representing Housing First and the expansion of EITC.

In **Healthy Child Development**, some funding has been designated by donors. The Home Visiting Fund is new and donors have generously responded. Funding will partially cover work within Connected Beginnings and Early System of Care.

In **Youth**, we are in Year 2 of the commitment to MSTi in the Merrimack Valley. Today's Girls, Tomorrow's Leaders will also allocate funding to Merrimack Valley.

In **Sustainable Employment**, \$150,000 is available to fund a youth employment program for young people age 16-24.

In **Basic Needs**, Mass211's goal is to operate 24/7, 365 days a year. A DHCD grant will provide \$100,000. There is work in progress to display the Mass211 message on ATM machines and a plan to work with pediatricians so parents are of resources available to them. The Special Fund is designated by donors.

The **Millennium Fund** funds Connected Beginnings - \$250,000 is budgeted for an additional year's commitment, and it is hoped that an additional \$250,000 can be raised to make a significant impact.

Additional Areas to be Funded:

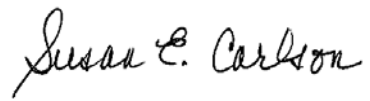
- Opportunity Agenda – a new partnership comprised of UWMBMV, The Boston Foundation, New Profit, CJP and Catholic Charities. The objective is to work together to make an impact in the community, creating a pipeline for children and adults age 0+. Every organization involved has been asked to make a significant commitment. This matter will be brought before the Board in June.
- Capacity-building > \$150,000
- Thrive in Five > UWMBMV has committed to be a full partner and will fund the Director's position.
- Consulting > Inspire4Life was funded by the operating budget. We are working with Administration and Finance to shift the funding to the community program budget.
- Another \$250,000 has been set aside for Basic Needs. Plans are yet to be determined. UWMBMV is watching community needs and may challenge other corporate partners to build steam under the basic needs agenda.
- Gifts-in-Kind > Tri-County United Way will take over this program.

Mr. Hayward informed the Committee that he will return to the Committee at its June meeting with the final budget, as approved by the Administration and Finance Committee. The final budget will detail where Millennium Fund dollars are allocated.

IV. Watch List

Mr. Hayward explained that only three agencies are currently on the watch list, none due to performance but rather financial condition. The agencies are: Urban Edge, XCEL and Lena Park. Details will be explained by a member of the Finance staff at the June meeting.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, it was adjourned at 10:15a.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan E. Carlson".

Susan E. Carlson
Executive Assistant—Community Impact
Transcriber