



# MASW

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## MASW Affordable Housing & Homelessness Task Force

January 26, 2007 at 10:30am – 12:20pm

### Minutes

#### In Attendance

Jack Stretch, SLU, Chair; Edwin Cooper, MHDC; Michael Klein, Salvation Army; Sandy Wilson, MASW; Rosanna Cassidy, MASW; Dianna Moore, Central MO Community Action; Tom Gould, MASW; via phone Janet Becker, Affordable Housing; Major George Windham, Salvation Army; Gary Busiek, Salvation Army, St Louis; Jacki Langum, St Louis Legal Services; Father Bill Hutchison, Central Chapter; and Denis Rigdon, Project Hope

#### Review & Approval of Minutes

Mike moved to accept Minutes are presented; Edwin seconded. Minutes accepted.

#### HMIS Updates

Sandy talked about Boone county folding into the BoS CoC. Their decision to fold into the BoS brings another six agencies to the HMIS table. She said she'd begun to visit with them and has found so far that they are lacking somewhat in training and knowledge of the software in general, but having them enrolled already is a plus.

Sandy has requested a formal letter from the Governor's Committee to End Homelessness stating the inclusion of Boone County with the BoS CoC and asking the HMIS office to begin working with those six agencies effective January 1, 2007. She said she plans to talk with Deb Little, MISI, regarding any additional fees that may be attributed to their roll-in. She explained that if there are indeed any, they will be brought before the Steering Committee next month for their view and thoughts.

Jack asked if there had been an announcement regarding funding yet; Sandy said no and that it may not be out until February. Edwin confirmed this. Jack asked the amount requested, Rosanna said it was \$221,588. With the match, and two-year approval, the HMIS budget would be \$136,418 for April 2007 – March 2008 and \$144,967 for April 2008 – March 2009. MHDC committed to \$30,000.00 match per year for 2007-2009; after that is utilized, HMIS will have to compete for the match/funds. Sandy said she'd been requested to go visit the representatives at MHDC to explain the project, what we do, and how everything related to them, and specifically, to Edwin (BoS CoC Coordinator). Mike noted that it is important that there be good lines of communications between HMIS staff and MHDC. He feels if it doesn't exist, it needs to be created, and if it already exists, it needs to continue to be strengthened. He asked, how can we do that? How can we keep them aware? Rosanna noted that reports are submitted to them and Sandy added she speaks to them often.

#### Agency Interview Report

A copy of the report was handed out and reviewed.

### **Housing Trust Fund (SB 344)**

Jack said that he is proud of the Housing Trust Fund, what it does, and how far it's come, and he is also proud of the task force and MASW for all the work.

Mike said that he is still working endlessly on the work, but that there are still some serious road blocks in front of him. He said one of the biggest ones is the Realtor Association. They continue to hold their position, which is opposing any increase. He said that on the 18<sup>th</sup> representatives went through a wide variety of legislators and not to approve it giving their opposing argument for the fee increase. The next day, he made his rounds to find that the legislators seemed to buy in on what they had been told and stated they would not allow it to go through.

Senators Wilson and Justice said they were told not to support it, they plan to anyway. Sally Fay said she won't necessarily support it, but she will research it, Don Wells said the same thing. Dr Portwood said he wouldn't support, but he'd submit that anyone who pays the increased fee get a 100% tax deduction, this was rejected. Mike said he still approaches people with the what-is-in-it-for-them method. He said he's tried to reinforce the idea that the reduction of housing and homeless could increase the number of homeowners. Tom noted that regardless, not all the people coming up from housing or homelessness problems will become homeowners. Mike said that was true, but that there could still feasibly be enough to argue that point.

Jack asked if other realtors in other states supporting something similar to this. Mike said that IL realtors approved an increase. Jack said it'd be good to find out what other states have, as well as finding out what the opinion of the National Realtors Association's stand is.

Dianna asked if realtors profit off the interest on the escrows. She said maybe that could be funneled into the trust fund and that would be then a tax credit for the realtors. She said it may not bring in a whole lot of money, but it would bring in something, and something is better than nothing. Jack said it sounded feasible, but he'd still like to keep focus on the trust fund movement. He wondered allowed if there is a way to shame the realtors into supporting the increase. Father Bill agreed with Jack, saying it is not a time-worthy task to seek out another method that may only draw in a couple hundred thousands of dollars. Jack said he feels a letter should be written to the local realtors, explaining the increase request, try to get them on-board, and then get them to branch out to other local realtors and possibly to the bigger national level agency. Mike said he thought this was a good idea and asked Father Bill for his help; Father Bill gave Mike the names of two other people of whom he thought would be better suited to assist him. Tom suggested keeping Roy Jones involved. Mike said he is curious to know if there is a *higher power* within the caring communities to elicit support. Dianna noted there are only a few caring communities left across the state.

Jack noted that a lot of the work Mike is doing, and work that needs to be done, is not task force members work, but MASW staff work. He said that he intends to approach Bob Quinn, MASW Executive Director, about having someone specific assist Mike and/or the task force regarding tasks.

Tom noted that getting the *Missouri Shouts Out! Save Our Housing!* DVD really needs to be utilized. He said he feels it is a valuable tool. He feels that MASW should pick up the duplicating and dissemination fees; he feels that it wouldn't be that great of a cost. Jack made the motion that MASW fund the duplication and dissemination of the DVD; Mike moved; and Denis seconded it. Jack noted it was so accepted with the amendment of it being done February 1.

### **Census Update**

"The Welfare of the People Shall be the Supreme Law"

Tom reported that there have been five censuses, all between 1993 and 2001. He said that each of those was completed by going to each agency directly. In the meantime, HUD mandated that a Homeless Management Information System (hmis) be implemented in each state. He went on to say that MHDC included several items that can be collected from the HMIS for the census completion, hence making it possible to pull the information from the hmis systems across the state. He said because of all the changes over the years, he feels it best to go to each CoC and request the data requested. For the BoS, he'd request that data from the HMIS office, and what ever agencies are not using the system or up-to-date in the system, would be addressed directly. He was pleased to announce that he feels that he'll be able to get all the data from all the CoCs — he noted that right now, St Joseph is the only CoC left that he's not got confirmation from that they'll provide the data. He noted that there is a lot of hesitance with surrounding the data because of the fierceness of the competition — regarding funding. He noted that he only asked the CoCs to give him the information, but he did not ask them when they will give it to him.

He said, in addition to the census information, he intends to ask for contact information and their feelings about this type of meeting so that he'll have that data available. He said it is important for the CoC representatives to feel like their needs are met. He noted it is important to get this feedback anyway, because homeless manifests itself different in different areas. He asked for the task force's support. Mike made the motion and Dianna seconded it.

### **Fund Raising for Advocacy Work**

Sandy stated that she would like to seek out general advocacy funding and asked the group to provide her with some funding avenues that could be pursued. Jack said that the Missouri Foundation for Health had already contriubted funds for general advocacy and that he wants some of it, that the task force deserves some of the money, and that there should be someone doing the work. He said that each task force has a primary initiative, and the housing trust fund is a part of the Affordable Houing & Homelesness Task Force and therefore should have the funds at their disposal. He went on to say that it is not a sound method to have members of the task force doing the work that should done by staff. He stated that he would send a fomral memo to Bob asking that some of the MASW general advocacy funds be line itemed for this task force.

### **Other Issues**

#### *Official Name of the Task Force*

The official name is Affordable Houing & Homelesness Task Force and needs to be on any and all material related to the task force. It also needs to be names as such on the website and not shorthanded to Housing/Homelesness.

#### *Edwin Cooper, BoS CoC Coordinator*

Edwin said that he works with all the BoS funded agencies, will prepare Part 1 of the SuperNOFA, and work toward furthering options for the homeless. He said Valori Sanders is his immediate supervisor, and as of two weeks ago, he is housed in Kennett.

### **Next Meeting**

February 21, 2007, 1:00pm to 2:30pm