

Barrier Busters Network Action Group

September 27, 2006, LLRC

1:30pm—3:00pm

BBN Attendees: Mary Beth Lampe, CSTS
Beth Manuel, Child Care Network
Paul Sher, Legal Services
Patricia LaGrand, NSS
Linda Bowman, NSS
Minsu Longia, Pediatric Advocacy Center
Pat Parker-Self, Veteran Services
Kate Fox, HelpSource
Anna M.Scharowski, HelpSource
Mile Bell, CIL
Sandy Reeber, ETCS
Jennifer Brown, Salvation Army
Jodi Barnhart, CAN
Mel Batkins, DHS
Lisa Anderson, UofM
Measie James, Washtenaw Health Plan
Paula Bartha, WCC
Annette Wilde, DHS
Mira Sussman, Jewish Family Services
Susan Gialanella, Public Health
Christina Oliver, SOS Community Servies
Pat Love, HARC
Cynthia Maritato, DHS
Harriet Bakalar, HBS
Helena Prince, Friends IN Deed
Laurence Simmons, HARC
Angela Edmonds, Women's Center

Staff Present: Mike Scholl, Staff Coordinator HSCC

Guests: Joe Ohren, EMU – Washtenaw County Consultant

I. Welcome/Introductions

- Co-Chairs opened the meeting
- The minutes were approved as written.

II. Public Comment

- None

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III. New Member Introductions

- a. *Salvation Army – Jennifer Brown*
 - The Salvation Army is a Church, Social Service Agency, and Community Center.
 - They assist people who need emergency assistance.
 - They are a hot meal site.
 - A question was asked regarding criteria for service.
 - Jennifer indicated that they assist people on a case by case basis.
 - The agency looks at the broad picture, they do not necessary look simply at income.
 - Each case is different and they approach it as such.
 - Jennifer can be reached at 668-8353.
- b. *Pediatric Advocacy Initiative*
 - Pediatric Advocacy Initiative is a program of the University of Michigan Law School.
 - They work with doctors, nurses and social workers to address the legal issues related to children.
 - The legal issues include public benefits, education, housing, family law and other miscellaneous issues.
 - They work closely with legal services.
 - Their services are free; however, their resources are limited so they cannot take every case.
 - They can be reached at 615-2450 x3 or pedlaw@umich.edu
- c. *UofM Hospital Social Work Department*
 - Moved to October meeting.

IV. Move in Update

- Sub group met and are working to move forward with the concept.
- Will be using the 211 system in combination with direct referrals to payee services.
- Determine what assistance needs to be provided and work to improve financial situation.
- The financial management services require a monthly fee paid by the consumer.
- The program is an individualized financial management program.
- Group will meet again, may be necessary to fine tune the program.

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V. Case Consultation

- We are looking at brain storming for a family that needs assistance with their housing.
- Looking at using the case consultation function to discuss difficult cases.
- Hope that as a group we can have open, respectful discussions about the needs of consumers.
- The request occurred as a result of the family needing assistance for an extended hotel stay.
- The family was waiting for a habitat for humanity home.
- There are multiple agencies involved.
- There was a concern that ongoing assistance would not make sense in this case.
- They was a concern expressed that the family had not always been honest or truthful with the agencies about their real needs.
- Need to be sure the family signed a release so that the case can be discussed.
- Cindy Maritato suggested that perhaps we consider a family consultation where we bring the agencies together with the family to look at solutions.
- We are looking at having the family work with B&B Payee services.
- The family had been in the shelter system very recently.
- Wait to see if the family will work with Bobby Johnson at B&B.
- Need to look into a sublet as a possibility.

VI. Fund Update

- We have expended out DHS contract funds for this fiscal year.
- The next fiscal year begins Oct 1, so we will have a lower cash flow in the next few months.
- The city of Ann Arbor funds should be available later this month.

Adjourned 3:00 pm

***The Next Meeting is scheduled for
Wednesday, November 22, 2006 - 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm @
LLRC***

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Washtenaw County Space Planning--Key Questions

Barrier Busters, 8/23/06

Jail

Should we expand the jail? If so, how large?

If we expand the current facility, should the existing building be brought up to the standards used in the expansion?

What alternative sanctions or diversion methods should be funded to support reduction of the jail population?

We need to focus on early education programs, fund alternative options such as community service as an alternative to incarceration. There should be more structured and perhaps more extensive work programs, even house arrest, as alternatives. There is a perception that some people will not do community service since they know they might be released early because of the over crowding problem at the jail; we need to be sure that those who can do community service, do it.

Farming people out to other jails is not an answer to the jail over crowding problem. It is more costly, cuts people off from local services and from their families.

How many people at the jail are there pre-trial? (perhaps thirty percent of those at the jail on average.) Are there ways to reduce that number, opening beds for those who have been adjudicated? Are there alternative ways to handle those that are returned to jail for probation or parole violations?

Can we distinguish between those who are incarcerated for violent offenses—who present a threat to themselves or to others—and handle them differently than others who might not need to be jailed?

We need to develop and fund (or perhaps revitalize) a street outreach program to support prevention efforts. We should develop an Options Center where people can be referred to local nonprofits for the help they need—mental health or substance abuse—rather than placing them in jail.

The state is developing a re-entry program to address the recidivism problem and we need to aggressively partner with them. We should be thinking about connecting any proposed jail expansion with efforts to support improved alternative diversion efforts.

Ultimately, we have to trust the recommendations of those who work in the jail and who provide services—the criminal justice officials have a better handle on the issues—and they need to provide recommendations on what needs to be done. And, they need to do a better job sharing information and making the case.

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Courts

What should the 14A1 District Court look like? Should the Juvenile Division of the Family Court be centrally located with other areas of Family Court? If not, where should it be located?

How might the existing Trial Court building downtown be improved?

There are real safety and security problems at the court at the Service Center; crime victims and families are abused a second time when they have to come face to face with accused or adjudicated felons.

The 14,1A court is a disaster—it needs to be at the top of the list in terms of funding priorities.

Parking is a problem at the downtown facilities; when we go down there to provide services there is no place to park, especially after 11am, or the alternatives are costly and come out of our pockets, cutting into the services we can provide.

We should avoid splitting up court responsibilities unless there is a strong recommendation for keeping family and juvenile responsibilities separate from other courts.

Towner

Should the 555 Towner facility be converted to Health campus and delivery center?

Would your clients or constituents benefit from satellite service delivery?

If converted to a health campus, where should the ETCS administrative offices be located?

The Towner facility is not currently client-friendly.

Providing a “one stop” service delivery center makes sense; we need to think holistically about client needs and provide access to services in an effective and efficient manner. This should include DHS and social services as well. At the same time, programs offered in cooperation with other organizations, e.g., faith-based and nonprofits, can also improve access and efficiency.

Some ETCS services are provided at the Towner facility—the “thaw” program, weatherization, and emergency cash assistance. It may make sense to link these services to the health services that are provided at Towner.

Does it make sense to consider co-locating some of the family support services at the jail site? Would this also be a way to improve service delivery?

Funding

How should we fund these proposed space initiatives?

What would be the impact of not funding these space initiatives?

A “big cookie sale”

There are no easy answers to the funding problem. A new millage would provide additional revenue to support infrastructure and facility needs, although there may not be sufficient support for it. Borrowing money using current funding streams could potentially mean a reduction in support for human and social service programs, which may limit our ability to provide the services that can really make a difference in people’s lives.

Whatever recommendation emerges, we need to do a much better job of communicating the need; the “story” in the earlier campaigns wasn’t being told effectively.