

**HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
February 18, 2014**

Present

Councilor Mike Beilstein, Chair  
Councilor Penny York

Staff

Jim Patterson, City Manager  
Ken Gibb, Community Development Department Director  
Carrie Mullens, City Manager's Office

Absent

Councilor Bruce Sorte

Visitors

Jennifer Moore, United Way of Benton and Lincoln Counties (UWBLC) Executive Director  
Lauren Caruso, UWBLC Community Impact Director

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**

	Agenda Item	Information Only	Held for Further Review	Recommendations
I.	Social Services Semi-Annual Report			Accept the Social Services first semi-annual report for Fiscal Year 2013-2014
II.	Meeting Time Management	Yes		
III.	Other Business	Yes		

Chair Beilstein called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

**CONTENT OF DISCUSSION**

I. Social Services Semi-Annual Report

Mr. Gibb said the staff report includes information about Social Services program funding and agency reports for the first semi-annual report for Fiscal Year 2013-2014.

Ms. Moore reported that the agency program reports are in the same format as the last funding cycle with the exception of one additional question related to significant program changes since the application was submitted. The new question was included to add context to the interim report and provide greater understanding of how the program is developing. Ms. Moore confirmed that the UWBLC Community Investment Council is reviewing all program reports submitted by each agency.

Chair Beilstein noted that some agencies did not understand the new question and, instead, provided information about the significant differences they made.

Ms. Moore and Mr. Gibb responded to comments and inquires posed by Councilor York:

*Do you have any areas of concern?*

Ms. Moore: No specific areas of concern have surfaced, although the reports are still under review. Agency responses reveal varying degrees of sophistication. Notes are taken during report reviews so that UWBLC can work with agencies over the next six months to gather better information for the next report. Every funding cycle results in improved ways to ask a question to obtain relevant responses.

Mr. Gibb: Part of the challenge is different agency staff assigned to different responsibilities. The person completing the report may not be the person who completed the application.

*The agencies are doing a lot and trying to do it efficiently.*

Ms. Moore: When the reports are reviewed, UWBLC continues to identify ways to streamline report format and questions. It is important that the report be simple and easy for agencies to complete.

*Are any agencies not complying with the mechanism and/or meeting the needs as requested by the City and UWBLC? Are there concerns about any agencies?*

Ms. Moore: The reports are still being evaluated; however, some programs will require a more in-depth review due to the interim report not relating to the initial application. UWBLC will work with these agencies. UWBLC may need to better word questions so that responses tie back to the application. It is a good way to determine if the program has changed and it sets the tone for the rest of the process.

*Does the reporting process make sense? Does the basic format help UWBLC report to the City in a manageable way?*

Ms. Moore: The report was completely overhauled from the previous cycle. It is too soon to know if the changes are an improvement. UWBLC has attempted to provide quality without overload.

Mr. Gibb: Quarterly reports were submitted previously. The volume of the semi-annual report is greater, but only submitted twice per year.

*The reports need to work for a lot of people. The summaries and significant backup data are important. Is the report review onerous to the City or can the information be reviewed for UWBLC needs at the same time?*

Ms. Moore: UWBLC appreciates the Committee's flexibility to edit application and report formats to provide ease of response and collection of information. A few minor changes to the application for the next cycle have been implemented and more substantial changes will be recommended for the 2015 cycle.

Chair Beilstein commented that the goal is somewhat contradictory in that the reports need to be simple and straightforward and include changes and challenges. Responses to the new question can provide notice to the City and UWBLC of differences in services. He admitted that he does not review the financials and assumed that UWBLC would identify any financial issues or concerns.

In response to Councilor York's inquiry, Ms. Moore said the 2014-15 process is on track.

Chair Beilstein added that when he reads the narratives he is always impressed by the quantity and quality of services that are provided to improve lives in the community.

Councilor York noted that, although some agencies do not understand the "units of service" question, they provide useful information. She added that it is important to identify impact.

The Committee unanimously recommends Council accept the Social Services first semi-annual report for Fiscal Year 2013-2014.

## II. Meeting Time Management

Councilor York inquired about how to appropriately obtain needed information during Committee meetings without becoming tied to a conversation that is difficult to end. She explained that it will be her turn as Committee Chair in a few months and meeting management is sometimes frustrating. She opined that it is appropriate for the three Council Standing Committees to have an opportunity to discuss topics in-depth before a recommendation is made to the full Council. Sometimes those conversations lead to a lengthy discussion with staff and/or the public that may not be relevant to the information needed by the Committee. She desires the opportunity to allow dialogue without being rude by interrupting a non-relevant discussion. She surmised that it may be the Chair's prerogative to end the discussion to allow time for the Committee to deliberate. She added that staff's role is to present a report and respond to questions.

Chair Beilstein said some discussions become frustrating due to the amount of time taken, although he sometimes enjoys lengthy discussions with staff about policy issues. He expressed concern that discussions about significant issues may be rushed due to the length of time given to other discussions on the same agenda. As Chair, he attempts to give the Committee as much time as they need for questions and deliberations.

Councilor York agreed that some topics are not thoroughly considered by the Committee when other agenda items become lengthy conversations. Sometimes she simply wants a yes or no answer instead of a long, drawn-out explanation.

Councilor York explained that she is less concerned about Committee member inquiries and discussions. She will discuss this issue further with City Manager Patterson.

The Committee agreed that the best solution is for the Chair to be more assertive during meetings.

IV. Other Business

The next Human Services Committee meeting is scheduled for 2:00 pm on Tuesday, March 4 in the Madison Avenue Meeting Room.

The meeting adjourned at 2:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Beilstein, Chair