

DISTRICT VI
MICHIGAN COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES ASSOCIATION
Meeting Minutes
October 29, 2003

Members Present:

Doug Williams	Ingham County	Director
Renee' Hayward	Jackson County	Director
Ron Markowski	Jackson County	Board Member
Tanda Reynolds	Jackson County	Manager
Angelo Nicholas	Macomb County	Director
Cynthia Maritato	Macomb County	District Manager
Judith Williams	Macomb County	District Manager
Sara Chalgian	Macomb County	Board Member
Roger Facione	Macomb County	Board Member
Roxanna Transit	Macomb County	Board Member
Linda Girolamo	Macomb County	FIP/Adult/Vol. Mgr.
Carol Frederick	Monroe County	Board Member
Angie Jenerette	Monroe County	Director
Jeffrey Williams	Wayne County	CFS

I. Guest Speaker

Sara Chalgian, Macomb County Social Services Board Chairperson, welcomed everyone to Macomb County and introduced Sharon Gire, Director of the Michigan Office of Services to the Aging.

Ms. Gire shared her background and spoke of her knowledge of FIA services. She stated her role as director of OSA is to focus on issues of aging and those most in need, specifically, the aged who are impoverished, isolated, and/or minorities. FIA and OSA have common consumers.

Her office, along with input from the Area Agencies on Aging and other service providers, has developed a three-year state plan with five goals:

- Maintain and/or improve the health of older adults.
- Improve access to information and services. The public website is www.miseniors.net.
- Promote financial independence. Over 100,000 Michigan seniors live at or below the poverty level.
- Protect seniors at risk of exploitation (financial or emotional) by informing and educating the public. She is concerned about adult protective services staffing levels in FIA and is advocating for increased staff to improve and support the elderly population.
- Extend the time older adults can remain in their home, versus a nursing home or other facility.

Ms. Gire is hoping to hold an Aging Urban Housing Summit in the near future to explore alternative housing opportunities. A few years ago, a Rural Housing Summit was held, and using MSHDA and HUD funding, homes were built to house four unrelated adults.

There are two groups that drive the OSA; the State Advisory Council and the Commission on Aging. OSA has a relatively small budget of \$94 million. That budget will be cut by 12 percent for FY 2005. Ms. Gire thanked FIA staff for their hard work under ever-increasing workloads.

II. Business Meeting

Renee' Hayward, District VI President, began the business meeting by having each member introduce themselves.

III. District Representative to Board of Directors

The association needs another representative to the Board of Directors from District VI. The current district representatives are:

Cynthia Maritato – Macomb County
Don Dersnah – Oakland County
Mark Stevens – Genesee County
Veronica Madrigal – Wayne County

Doug Williams is the MCSSA Secretary, and on the Executive and Advisory Committees. Lloyd Fett (Ingham Board Member) is also on the Advisory Committee. Doug stated that recent changes to the bylaws include expanded membership. A Type A member is a county board member; Type B members are county directors, zone managers in Wayne County, district office managers, and now include second line program managers.

Renee' indicated that we still need a fourth representative to the Board of Directors. Angie will check with Joe in Lenawee County, and Renee' will check with Jim in St. Clair County. Doug noted that Jim Beougher in Lenawee and Washtenaw counties has tremendous children's services knowledge.

IV. Future Meeting Dates

Renee' asked for members to consider being the host county for future meetings. Discussion was held on whether there would be a meeting in December, and it was agreed that December would be skipped, and the next meeting would be in January 2004. Cynthia questioned if quarterly meetings would be acceptable. Doug would support discussion on setting a meeting schedule. There is no requirement as to the number of meetings held per year, each district sets their own schedule.

Furlough days, new executive orders (travel restrictions), etc. should be taken into consideration. Angie stated that with e-mail, teleconferencing, etc., there are alternate ways of communicating. Doug was interested in thoughts of board members, as their input is integral to a well-running organization.

Ron felt that meetings should be more frequent than quarterly, to re-group and re-establish the district. Renee' recommended that after January, the district should meet in March at the MCSSA Legislative Conference, then June, August (at MCSSA summer conference in Mt. Pleasant), and October.

Location ideas were discussed. Doug stated that the January meeting could be held in Ingham County, with access to state office staff, it makes sense to take advantage of available resources. Renee' suggested each county could rotate meeting coordination. Roger moved to hold January (28) and March meetings in Lansing,

with Ingham County hosting the January meeting. Doug supported the motion, and the motion was carried.

Renee' will coordinate the March meeting around the Legislative Conference. This will be strictly a business meeting, with no speaker, no meals. Georgia offered for Wayne County to host the June 23 meeting. Monroe County will coordinate the August meeting during the conference. Washtenaw County will be asked to host the October 27 meeting.

Renee' announced the following meeting schedule for 2004:

1/28/04	Ingham County	Agenda Items: CAN Project Update on state funding status
3/04	Jackson County	in conjunction with MCSSA Legislative Conference
6/23/04	Wayne County	
8/04	Monroe County	in conjunction with MCSSA summer conference
10/27/04	TBA	

Discussion followed as to the length of office for District VI officers. It was agreed that officers would serve a two-year period as required by the MCSSA Constitution and Bylaws.

V. Future Meeting Agendas

Angie stated that it is important for board members to participate and recommend and/or support decisions regarding meeting dates and agendas. Roger explained the difficulty and reasons for light attendance. He stated that substance is important to make for a worthwhile meeting that members can identify with. Sometimes issues are more related to FIA staff concerns, therefore, board members are quiet. Budget cuts are now a very hot issue and need board involvement to help support county directors.

Cynthia noted that future agendas should be shaped for both board members and staff. Renee' confirmed that the topic was next on today's agenda and she wanted to establish set agendas, along with reports from the various MCSSA committees to help keep District VI connected to the association. Doug and Lloyd will provide Advisory Committee updates. Roger stated if the agenda was focused on a few specific items, then more board members may choose to participate in meetings. Such items like pending legislation, critical issues, funding problems are of interest to both boards and staff. Sally felt that when information comes top down from the association it was clearer. Cynthia stated that the association is a reflection of the agency, with new faces, new direction.

Sally questioned the mission of the association. Doug answered that 1) education of the membership on human services issues relating to our customers, and 2) advocacy regarding laws and policy in support of our customers; and also that we have the ability to put forward policy.

Sally stated that agendas should include controversial issues like the school resource centers. Doug noted that it would be an agenda item under "Hot Topics" and the district would invite those leading the project to defend its advocacy and expansion. Renee' stated the district could develop a position on this or any project/issue. Doug noted then it would go through the association channels to the state director and/or the legislature.

Roger commented that correspondingly, the Board of Directors and/or staff need a systematic way of bringing issues down to the district level for linkage and continuity. Doug indicated it is a fact that the association has been dutifully asking for input (via e-mail) from its members. Roger stated that if issues are on the agenda, boards will participate and voice concerns. Also, if the association knows of issues, but does not know the local district's concerns or view, then there is a problem. Doug mentioned that it is critical to develop mechanisms for input.

Cynthia pointed out that District VI is the largest district in regard to the number of customers we serve. Sally stated that information is one thing, but discussing issues is very important. Roger felt that boards would be more active if issues were clearly identified as "critical", discussed, and addressed. Doug agreed that the district will work to develop appropriate agendas, identify issues, receive reports from committees, and do a better job of summarizing critical issues.

The School Based Family Resource Centers (CAN project) will be on the January agenda. Also, hopefully, the new budget and allocations will be out by then to add to the agenda.

VI. Member Counties

The following counties are members of District VI:

Genesee	Monroe
Ingham	Oakland
Jackson	St. Clair
Lenawee	Washtenaw
Livingston	Wayne
Macomb	

It was noted that Zone Managers are included in district membership, and each zone manager could decide in which district (if they are responsible for counties in more than one district) they will serve.

VII. Adjournment

Before the meeting adjourned, Renee' stated that she looks forward to revitalizing District VI, and hopes to see everyone at the January meeting, along with today's absent members.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.