

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD**

**1255 Imperial Avenue, San Diego, CA 92101**

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**SSAB Meeting Minutes**

**March 8, 2012**

<p><b><u>Members Present</u></b> Bob Brandenburg Philip Thalheimer Nancy Rorbaugh Sandy Pugliese Bruce Abrams Jennifer Tinsley Linda Blair Forth John Hughes Don Stump</p>	<p><b><u>Staff Present</u></b> Kim Forrester, HHSA Dale Fleming, Director SPOS Pat Lopez, HHSA Adrienne Yancey, HHSA Anabel Poole, HASA Craig Sturak, AA III</p>
<p><b><u>Members Absent</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Guests</u></b> Maria Aceves, Ilene Davis, Marjorie Larson, Joni Halpern, Amanda Schultz, Don Davis, Jennifer Tracy, Trinh Le, Janette Dyer, Mary Alcock, Derek Staats, Jill Esbenshade, Danny Melgoza</p>

1. Chairman Phil Thalheimer called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m.
2. Bob Brandenburg motioned to approve the February 09, 2012 minutes. Donald Stump seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously with a correction by Bob Brandenburg regarding the letter to the Board Of Supervisors noting that the motion for the letter to the Board Of Supervisors last month was carried unanimously.
3. **Public Comments on Items not listed on the Agenda:**
  - Don Davis, spoke on behalf of Caring Council/SPIN, asking for an assessment of the impact of the BPR. He expressed the frustration of Caring Council and SPIN with San Diego County's delivery of CalFresh services. Mr. Davis pointed out that eligible participants still face the same barriers to aid that they have faced since 2007. He cited several reports assessing the program over the last several years, including the InTelegy study which he characterized as "damning". Mr. Davis feels the County's monthly reports give the impression the program is doing well at providing services, and yet, he points out that although the number of families participating has grown, the number of those who are eligible has increased at a higher rate. He concluded by calling for the Board of Supervisors to form a workgroup under the auspices of the Social Services Advisory Board that includes SPIN, the Caring Council, and SEIU 221 to evaluate the impact of the BPR on the delivery of public benefits that will include benchmarks and indicators to measure the progress of HHSA's performance.
  - Dr. Jill Esbenshade, representing San Diego State Sociology Department who last June presented a study surveying FRC workers to the board, voiced her support of the Caring Council's proposal to form a workgroup to study ACCESS performance. She pointed out the problems are not unique to ACCESS, but exist at the FRCs as well. She feels that the task-based approach to managing cases leads to workers not having a sense of individual responsibility for a successful outcome which leads to a breakdown in worker morale. She suggests a hybrid of task-based and case-based case management. She called for increases in staffing at both ACCESS and the FRCs. With regard to problems related to the use of new technology, she suggested that HHSA workers have first-hand insight and should be consulted when addressing these problems. She concluded by asking the board to vote on the proposal to form a workgroup which she said should include client advocates and workers.
  - Ilene Davis, speaking on behalf of SPIN, addressed the issue of women applicants for benefits under the Violence Against Women Act. She pointed out CalWIN and the computer software supporting CalWIN require the input of a social security number. She said federal law requires documentation from the Department of Homeland Security showing the applicant to be a qualified

alien and does not require a social security number. This has resulted in victims of domestic violence to be turned away for benefits. She called for HHSA to have the CalWIN software vendor fix this problem in the program as the desk aid in the program guide has not proved effective.

- Maria Aceves, representing SPIN, spoke about a problem that has been reported concerning the use of EBT cards for transportation benefits. She pointed out it frequently costs the client \$3.00 to use the card and ATMs that do not charge the client a use fee are too far away to be practical. Kim Forrester responded she will research specific cases by request.
- Marjorie Larson, representing League of Women Voters S.D.C., expressed disappointment with what she said is the chronic failure with HHSA to resolve problems in the CalWIN program. She pointed out that other urban areas in California have achieved up to 90% participation in Food Stamps, while San Diego County cannot achieve over 40%. She urged the County to take measures to reach all eligible participants as the failures of the current system have led to children suffering.
- Joni Halpern, speaking on behalf of SPIN, clarified that client advocates recognize that HHSA staff are hardworking and intelligent. She said the efforts to institute change stem from the need to acknowledge this is about people who have nothing to live on and families with no food.

**PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

4. **Information Item:** Social Services Advisory CalFresh Work Group Recommendations – Annual Progress Report: Dale Fleming, Director, Strategic Planning & Operational Support, Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA): Ms. Fleming presented a detailed handout entitled, "Social Services Advisory Board CalFresh Workgroup Recommendations Annual Progress Report" and gave a power point presentation. She said tangible progress has been made in the implementation of the recommendations and HHSA is committed to working with community partners to reach the goal of sustainable and lasting improvements to meet the needs of the community now and into the future. She said improvements to CalFresh will be tied to *Live Well, San Diego!*, the County's vision for healthy, safe, and thriving communities, which drives HHSA's direction. She noted achieving SSAB's goals as reflected in the recommendations requires broad, systemic change. Ms. Fleming showed how the 69 Workgroup Recommendations align with the strategic vision and intent of *Live Well, San Diego!* by pointing out 46 recommendations focus on building a better service delivery system, 3 focus on supporting positive healthy choices, 10 focus on pursuing policy and environmental changes, and 11 focus on approving the culture within County government. Three key projects that support progress are the InTelegy assessment and recommendations that provide a detailed strategy and plan for improving service delivery and self-sufficiency, the SNAP Participation Grant, a \$900,000 federal grant to support the shift from manual to electronic document tracking and processing, and the SNAP Education Grant Project to implement nutritional education for CalFresh recipients. She reported the Agency expects to pilot parts of the SNAP Participation Grant as early as this summer and will complete work on the SNAP Education Grant by September. With regard to the 46 recommendations aimed at building a better service delivery system, the department launched the 2-1-1 San Diego partnership directing more than 128,000 general information calls to 2-1-1 which increased ACCESS capacity. ACCESS self service has been enhanced to make more services available without requiring an agent. The mail imaging center now serves as a single point of entry for US mail to Family Resource Centers (FRCs). Implementation of the \$900,000 SNAP Participation Grant will support workflow automation and the web portal. The next steps to build a better system include implementing recommendations from InTelegy that will increase staff and call capacity at ACCESS, begin to employ a task management tool, and to further explore tools for self-scanning stations in FRC lobbies. The Agency has targeted recruitment of bilingual staff with Spanish, Somali, and Arabic language skills. Efforts are being made to train supervisors and managers to use data in order to be proactive in managing operations. The workgroup recommendations concerned with supporting positive healthy choices are enhanced by four partnerships that are helping to improve access to CalFresh benefits. These include 2-1-1 San Diego and ACCESS, Legal Aid Society of San Diego and the County of San Diego, The Community Resource Center and the North Coastal FRC, and the Chula Vista Community Collaborative and South Region FRC. The Nutrition Security Taskforce, as adopted by the Board of Supervisors in April 2009, continues to coordinate with the CalWIN Program to focus on improved

nutrition and community outreach. Our next steps to support positive healthy choices include utilizing the SNAP Education Grant to make media buys for nutrition education and information regarding where CalFresh benefits can be accessed. The InTelegy report's recommendation to promote the use of online and email tools will increase access to CalFresh. The SSAB workgroup's 10 recommendations regarding policy and environmental changes reflect the need for the program to implement federal and state policies at the local level. We continue to work with the Legal Aid Society in reviewing policies and procedures. We have eliminated the requirement to fingerprint applicants and have initiated accepting status reports and recertifications online. Efforts have been made to make FRCs a more welcoming environment. Next steps include developing a strategic plan for facilities to better plan services and operations, pursue self-service tools in FRC lobbies, and prepare the El Cajon FRC to be the pilot site for new lobby features. The SSAB workgroup recommendations aimed at improving the culture within County government have resulted in the Agency establishing a uniform complaint process, including consistent signage and forms, and the implementation of trainings to build service skills of staff including customer service, conflict resolutions, and trauma informed. Additionally, HHSA has implemented a comprehensive training program for ACCESS staff. As we continue to work to improve the culture from within, we will engage staff at all levels to build a better understanding of how their work supports *Live Well, San Diego!* to realize the County's vision for healthy, safe, and thriving communities. We will continue working with the Nutrition Security Task Force to develop a poverty training. The Agency will continue to provide opportunities for line staff to directly participate in business process improvement projects. After concluding her annual report, Ms. Fleming introduced Anabel Poole, Agency Executive Office, Special Projects Coordinator, who gave a synopsis of her assignment and stated she will give her first presentation to SSAB at the April meeting. Board members indicated their appreciation for the presentation of the annual progress report by Dale Fleming. Bob Brandenburg called for logical, orderly and scientific measurement of data flow and work flow, and expressed confidence in Ms. Poole and the OR group. John Hughes pointed out the need to have consistent listening process and said it is critical to understand the problems from the workers' and the clients' points of view. Phil Thalheimer said when he sees senior management addressing the board, he knows the right people are at the table.

5. **Information Item:** Future Meeting Locations: Kim Forrester, Assistant Deputy Director, Strategic Planning and Operational Support, Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA): Due to the need for a larger room to accommodate this meeting, Ms. Forrester suggested that the April Social Services Advisory Board Meeting will be held at Mills Building on the 10th Floor. Other options include the County Administrative Center. The April meeting will be held at the Mills Building on the 10th Floor.
6. **Information Item:** Agency Updates: Kim Forrester, Assistant Deputy Director, Strategic Planning & Operational Support, Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA): Ms. Forrester announced Barbara Jimenez is now Regional General Manager for Central and South Regions, and there is a current recruitment for the Regional General Manager vacancy in North County. Ms. Forrester also announced the retirement of Yolanda Valdez, Assistant Deputy Director for South Region and the recruitment for her position at South Region.

**ADJOURNMENT/SET NEXT MEETING:**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

The next regular meeting will be held on **April 12, 2012, Mills Building, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Conference Room, 1255 Imperial Avenue, San Diego, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

***The SSAB Minutes were written and submitted by Sandee Stewart.***