

Meeting Notes
Community Services Commission
Core Values Meeting, Saturday, October 6, 2007

Attending: Richard Berling, Joanne Brown, Lauren Cnare, Mary Czyszak-Lyne, Celia Jackson, Stephen Small, Brian Solomon, Alan Sweet, Lina Trivedi, David Wandel

Staff: Laura Noel, Enis Ragland

Meeting Aim: Identify beliefs and values we hold collectively as a Commission about the work we do and how we interact with each other and those we serve.

I. Ground Rules

The facilitator, Kathleen Paris, suggested meeting ground rules to help ensure a productive meeting. The ground rules were discussed and annotated slightly and are shown in Table 1. These may be adopted for regular meetings if the Commission wishes.

Table 1. Meeting Ground Rules
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen to each other• Don't interrupt• Focus on ideas, not personalities• Begin and end on time• Question each other for clarification (E.g. "I heard X. Is that what you meant?")• We are prepared for the meeting• We communicate directly, assertively, and solve problems openly.

II. Motivation for Becoming a Member of the Commission

Members shared with each other their motivation for becoming a Commission member. Discussion partners shared what they had heard. The reasons given for becoming part of the Commission are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Motivations for Becoming Members of the Commission on Families
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Belief that non profit groups are important!• Had used services and noticed that clients need to be more involved with us, to have a voice• As a way to contribute in a new and different way and to be connected with others in the community. Also the new role of making resources available to others• Was asked to serve and also interested in the

Table 2. Motivations for Becoming Members of the Commission on Families

ever-changing climate of politics and making resources available--Also getting to know the community better

- Father's role model of involvement in the community and prior involvement with other non-profit groups—it was a positive experience—wanted to do more
- Background in developmental disabilities and dysfunctional funding system. A conservative with a *laissez faire* view of services is an unusual combination—a place to openly communicate about social services of the city beyond developmental disabilities and a leadership opportunity.
- A family background dedicated to social service—the Commission was the first choice
- Having a blessed life, feeling of responsibility to give back—religious values support giving back to the community-mother's values also support this
- Involvement in the labor movement and belief in capacity building, a living wage, and social justice
- A way to give back

III. Core Values and Beliefs (cards)

A. Creativity and receptivity to new approaches in a changing environment

- Flexibility
- Creativity
- Needs must constantly be evaluated in a changing environment so that the commission explores new ideas, research and programs to encourage open dialogue.*¹
- Ability to synthesize new information
- Ability to use data to help us make choices

How will we know we are “living” this value?

[Facilitator suggestions: Willingness to improve processes, try new approaches, seek out research and data]

B. Expect positive outcomes from agencies and ourselves

¹ * an emerging value or one that has not been consistently played out.

- Accountability—programs must be evidence-based and meet projected goals [Is this or should it be a funding guideline?]
- Outcomes oriented
- Maintain integrity of our process
- Support non-profit agencies which serve the Madison community

How will we know we are “living” this value?

[Facilitator suggestions: transparent processes and requirements to demonstrate outcomes

C. Responsibility to the public to invest resources wisely

- Stewards of the public’s resources
- Must respect givers’ dollars
- Leveraging resources—coordination with similar agencies or efforts [Is this or should be it a funding guideline?]

How will we know we are “living” this value?

[Facilitators’ Suggestions: Funded projects show outcomes. We are able to make the funds go further through coordination and cooperation.]

D. Strive to increase interconnectedness of all people in the community

- Building community (inside this group and outside)
- Agencies working together
- Common understanding of issues

How will we know we are “living this value”?

How we communicate

E. Intentional openness, respect and inclusivity

- Treat individuals with respect
- Respect
- Listening respectfully
- Inherent worth of all people
- Respect and value our differences
- Inclusiveness and openness to different perspectives
- We welcome input
- Inclusive of interest of the city, citizens and of those we serve
- Commission should reflect as many aspects of Madison’s people as possible
- Direct service is a high priority to ensure human development because every human being is important
- Dignity

How will we know we are “living this value”?

Attendance, inviting input from people like the listening sessions to be held by the Early Childhood group,

F. To advance equality and social and economic justice

- To address social and economic injustice
- Justice
- Equality (on Commission and in community)
- Affect positive change in the community
- Services ought to be easily accessible to those who most need them [should accessibility be a funding guideline?]

How will we know we are “living” this value?

[Facilitator suggestion: We will see impacts in people served by the projects we fund.]

G. Promote self-sufficiency and individual potential to the greatest extent possible for those we serve

- Promote self-sufficiency
- Programs should seek to develop self-sufficiency over the short and long-term
- Promote individual potential
- Promote life-long learning

How will we know we are “living” this value?

We will see impacts in people.

H. An environment of trust, honesty and open communication

- Create a sense of trust & honesty and engagement
- Create a sense of community among ourselves
- Strengthening our relationships with each other on the Commission

How will we know we are “living” this value?

[Facilitator suggestions: We follow our ground rules, spend the great majority of our meeting time focused on our mission, periodically evaluate how we are doing at living our values, there's give and take on positions, people want to be on the Commission because of the high levels of trust, honesty and engagement]

IV. Proposed Public Version 1

This variation of values and beliefs was created after the meeting by the facilitator. It has some slight wording changes to make the statements consistent, although a sincere effort has been made to retain the meaning and spirit of the original headings.

The order of the statements has been changed so that the statements begin at the level of the individual who might be served by programs funded by the Commission and proceed to the statements about how the Commission itself functions. The statements are lettered as they originally were (raw data) but would be renumbered if this variation is accepted by the Commission.

As a Commission, we share some common beliefs and values which are expressed as follows:

- G. We promote self-sufficiency and attainment of individual potential to the greatest possible extent;
- F. We advance equality and social and economic justice through the programs we fund;
- D. We strive to increase interconnectedness of all people in the community;
- E. We approach our work with intentional openness, respect and inclusivity;
- B. We expect positive outcomes from agencies and ourselves;
- C. We take seriously our responsibility to the public to invest resources wisely;
- A. We use creativity and receptivity to new approaches to fulfill our mission in a changing environment;
- H. We create an environment of trust, honesty and open communication among our members.

V. Proposed Public Version 2

This version is identical to Version 1 except that it includes key words for each value/belief statement.

As a Commission, we share some common beliefs and values which are expressed as follows:

G. Self-Sufficiency

We promote self-sufficiency and attainment of individual potential to the greatest possible extent;

F. Social Justice

We advance equality and social and economic justice through the programs we fund;

D. Interconnectedness

We strive to increase interconnectedness of all people in the community;

E. Openness, respect and inclusion

We approach our work with intentional openness, respect and inclusivity;

B. Positive Outcomes

C. We expect positive outcomes from agencies and ourselves;

D. Public Responsibility

We take seriously our responsibility to the public to invest resources wisely;

A. Creativity and Flexibility

We use creativity and receptivity to new approaches to fulfill our mission in a changing environment;

H. Trust, Honesty and Open Communication

We create an environment of trust, honesty and open communication among our members.

VI. Ideas that May Carry Over Into Funding Process

Following are expressions of values and beliefs from the core values meeting that could be funding criteria if they are not already:

- Services ought to be easily accessible to those who most need them
- Accountability—programs must be evidence-based and meet projected goals
- Leveraging resources—coordination with similar agencies or efforts.

VIII. Chair's Role in Helping Group "Stick To" Its Values and Beliefs

Kathleen Paris suggested that each person should monitor his or own actions in light of the values and beliefs. In addition, the chair should remind members of the group's values and beliefs if they are not being adhered to. She also suggested a workshop for the group together on conflict resolution.

Paris said that the values and beliefs should be visible at every meeting. This can be through a poster on the wall, handout on the table, mugs, mouse pads, etc.

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