METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



###### Human Services & Public Safety Policy Committee

**Draft Meeting Notes**

**CHAIR**: Hon. Walter Tejada

Arlington County Board Member

**VICE CHAIR**: Hon. George Leventhal, Montgomery County Council Member

**STAFF CONTACT**: Sue Wheeler-Wilderotter, Chief, Public Safety Programs, COG

Chevelle Glymph, Chief,Health & Substance Abuse, COG

August 20, 2010

**Item #1 Call to Order, Introductions, Announcements**

Chair Tejada began by asking for introductions. Sue Wheeler-Wilderotter introduced Nancy Rea’s replacement, Chevelle Glymph who started with COG two weeks prior. Chair Tejada felt that, in the interest of the committee it was better to discuss upcoming events at the beginning of the meeting, rather than at the end.

The COG retreat took place July 23-25. Chair Tejada did not attend, due to scheduling conflicts. There will be a full brief to the COG Board in the next month’s meeting, and any topics the HSPSPC wants to focus on can be discussed at the October meeting.

The Institute for Regional Excellence will hold a poster session on September 1st and they will present on a number of regional issues to the COG CAO committee. This program exists to build an academy of regional talents, with a common set of skills and knowledge and understanding built around regional challenges. It is supposed to be a learning forum for new ideas and common ways to creatively address regional issues facing the Washington Region. Interested parties can get more information at the end of the meeting.

The COG Annual Animal Awards Ceremony will be held on October1st, before the HSPSPC October meeting. It will be held in the COG Board Room, and will be hosted by Liz Crenshaw of NBC4. This is an event honoring the great people who serve the wildlife and domestic animals across the region, and who provide care to the many species of animals when they are unable to care for themselves.

Just a reminder that anyone having an announcement they would like to make, or have a flyer to distribute, should provide advanced notice so the word can get out to the region.

The minutes from the June meeting were approved.

**Item #2 Status Report on Corrective Actions for Snow Response**

On April 5th, COG hosted a forum to look at how they dealt with the snow and winter storms in our region. The forum was well attended, and there were substantive issues discussed, related to this very unusual event for our region.

Specific recommendations were made, and the COG Board Chairman, Kwame Brown requested that the HSPSPC Committee take a look at the recommendations prior to the start of the winter months. There will be a briefing for the COG Board, and the HSPSPC Committee will continue to monitor these recommendations on an ongoing basis.

Dave McMillion, Director of the Department of Public Safety & Health reiterated the April 5th forum and its success, and spoke about the recommendations; he added that two days later, the CAOs reviewed and refined the recommendations and established seven lessons learned. The seven lessons learned were submitted to the Board. They were approved in the document dated April 14th , included in the handout, Leadership Forum on Snow Response.

Melissa Rivord, COG Staff, introduced the IRE team, of which she is a member, noting that they specifically looked at uniform parking practices and coordination.

Mernie Fitzgerald, Chair, R-ESF-15 and Public Affairs Director for Fairfax County discussed the messaging and public communication for snow storms. They use a system of systems to get the message out. The message would be the same, but put out on different platforms, to include traditional and social media networks.

In addition to Dave McMillion’s original discussion, he mentioned that Cheryl Orr, Director of Human Resources in Alexandria, would join them later to discuss a recommitment to teleworking. Committee members have the survey that the HR committee conducted, included in the handout packet. This document revealed large jurisdictions that do not have teleworking policies, and others that have achieved 20%. Additional items discussed included:

Regional pool of equipment and staff

Develop Federal Aid agreements in advance

Appeal of the FEMA 48 hour rule

**Item #3 Impact of Economic Downturn on Mental Health Services**

**Patrick Wojahn, City of College Par**k and panelists from several different jurisdictions discussed the unique problems the community faces in providing behavioral health services during our country’s economic crisis. There are twin challenges for behavioral house service providers. Part of the challenge is that with the current economic situation and budget challenges the jurisdiction are facing, the level of funding is often one of the first things to be cut in the Human Services area. The second part is the increasing demand for behavioral health services with the economic concerns.

Each panel discussed the extent the challenges have affected their jurisdictions, with a view towards sharing tips and advice, suggestions, best practices and how to weather the economic crisis. Given the recent news regarding unemployment, they realize that this will not end soon.

Note: The other panelists were Phyllis Mayo, Prince George’s County Mental Health Services, Stephen T. Brown, Department of Mental Health, District of Columbia and Anthony Sturgess, Montgomery County Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

**Item #4 Drunk Driving Legislation Resolution**

Supervisor Penny Gross suggested the following changes to the resolution and they are as follows:

* 2nd whereas change “COG effort” to “COG activities”
* 4th whereas, second to the last line and at the very end of the line, it should read “motorist to stop, not yield for pedestrians” and
* Therefore – delete the bullet where it reads “avocation of” it should read “advocacy for” and put a slash between and/or in the next line.

Supervisor Gross made a motion to approve the resolution and to move it forward to the Board; this was seconded and approved.

**Item #5 Jurisdictional Roundtable**

Chair Tejada asked if any of the committee members had any announcements, invitations, or information to share. He invited committee members to a free fair in Arlington for families. The fair would be through Sunday; admission is free, but the rides are not. Senator Barker announced the 6-month extension on Medicaid Enhance Payment in Virginia.

**Item #6 Adjournment**

**The next meeting will be October 15, 2010 12:00 – 2:00pm**