

**Michigan Coalition for Children and Families
Minutes from January 8, 2006 Meeting
Michigan Association of United Ways' Office**

Attendees

Michele Strasz – MCCF Co-chair – MI Council for Maternal & Child Health
Bill Long – MCCF Past Co-chair – Individual Member
Bob Parks – MCCF Secretary – School-Community Health Alliance – MI
Jane Zehnder-Merrell, MI League for Human Services
Penny Gardner, Coalition for Adoption Rights Equality (CARE)
Jon Tomlanovich, MASA / MAISA
Mel Haga, MI County Social Services Association
Nancy Lindman, Michigan Association of United Ways
Jacqueline Jones, United Way for Southeastern Michigan
Susan Miller, Early Learning Michigan Project
Luanne Beaudry, Prevention Network
Todd Lipa, City of Farmington Hills
Adolph Armbruster, Holy Cross Children's Services
Jennifer Mora, Michigan Primary Care Association
Michele Corey, Michigan's Children
Nicole Smithson, Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services
Stacy Hickox, Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services
Julia Lechtenberg, MI Association of School Nurses

Guest speaker: Sharon Parks, MI League for Human Services

Meeting called to order at 1:45pm by Michele Strasz, MCCF co-chair

Welcome and introductions of attendees.

The agenda for the meeting was accepted with one added agenda item: the presentation by Sharon Parks, Vice President for Policy for the Michigan League for Human Services.

The minutes of the November 13 2006 was approved with one correction: the correct name of Mel Haga's organization is the Michigan County Social Services Association.

Treasurer's Report

Michele Strasz, in the absence of Treasurer, Breeann Anderson, gave the treasurer's report and handed out the most recent financial statement. As of January 4, 2007 there is a balance of \$1,714.43 in the checking account and a balance of \$1,680.67 in the savings account for a total of \$3,395.10. The treasurer's report was accepted. A copy of the treasurer's report is available upon request.

Nominating Committee Report

Michele Strasz said there will be a delay in announcing the slate of officers that the nominating committee will recommend. During a nominating committee conference call, Elizabeth Carey, MCCF Co-Chair, announced that she would not be able to continue as co-chair for 2007. Because of Elizabeth's announcement, the nominating committee will reconvene to consider its slate of recommendations. The slate of officers will be sent to the membership during the week of January 22, 2007.

Everyone is invited to submit nominations. Submit his/her name to Michele Strasz at mtstrasz@aol.com.

2007 Membership

Michele Strasz distributed the membership roster which included information about the organizations that have renewed their memberships for 2007. While membership renewals have been submitted on a faster pace than last year, there are many organizations that have not, as yet, renewed for 2007. If you have a question about your 2007 membership status, contact Bob Parks, Secretary at 1-517-908-0847 x 277 or bparks@scha-mi.org.

AD Hoc Committees

MCCF has two Ad Hoc committees: Early Childhood and Adolescent Services. Meetings for both committees will be scheduled in January 2007.

Presentation by Sharon Parks, Vice Pres for Policy, Michigan League for Human Services

Sharon Parks, Vice President for Policy, Michigan League for Human Services, gave a presentation on the FY-07 and FY-08 budgets for the state of Michigan.

Michigan's continuing fiscal crisis continued to worsen since November 2006. It is estimated that Michigan will face – in the current fiscal year – budget shortfall of \$500 million. The budget estimate shortfall for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2007 (FY-08) could be \$1 billion. These estimates assume that the \$1.9 billion revenue from the Single Business Tax, which will end on December 31, 2007, will be fully restored.

There is a growing recognition by policymakers of the need to address Michigan's fiscal structural deficit. More policymakers are aware that the budget deficit will not be resolved when the economy improves. Several studies project Michigan will continue to lose jobs over the next two years.

There is talk about the need to raise revenues. Governor Granholm and Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman, Senator Ron Jelinek have mentioned the need to increase revenues. There is also talk about examining the Michigan's outdated tax structure that was created when manufacturing in Michigan was expanding. House Speaker Andy Dillon is discussing long and short term solutions.

Some of the areas of discussion to raise revenue include:

- The full replacement of the Single Business Tax and the replacement does not shift the responsibility away from business.
- Close tax loop holes
- Raise the state income tax rate back to 4.4% (not politically realistic)
- Move away from flat tax to a graduated tax (requires voter approval)
- Add one income tax bracket for high income tax payers
- Add sale taxes on services
- De-couple from the Federal Estate Tax legislation
- Review tax preferences for seniors

Sharon said that all suggestions to raise revenues by the Governor or Legislature needs to be publicly supported by the nonprofit sector.

Information about tax credits for low-income families is available on the Michigan League for Human Services website: www.milhs.org. Available information includes:

- Why the Public Must Understand the Role of Government
- Money Back in Michigan 2007 – Returning Tax Dollars to Low-Income Households
- Earned Income Tax Credit
- Federal Child Tax Credit
- Federal Child and Dependent Care Credit
- Federal Telephone Tax Refund
- State Child Deduction
- State Homestead Property Tax Credit
- State Home Heating Tax Credit

Children's Agenda

Michele Strasz talked about the work on the Children's Agenda for 2007. A draft of the 2007 Children's Agenda was provided. There is still time to make suggestions and changes before the final version is printed. Any changes need to be approved by January 31st. **All MCCF organizations wishing to have their organizations identified in the Children's Agenda must renew their memberships by January 31st.**

The committee focused on the issue areas of the Children's Agenda. One issue was added: Children's Environmental Health. Michele Strasz will be the narrative portion of the Children's Agenda, with the focus on the economic benefits and importance of meeting the needs of children.

The 2007 Children's Agenda will be released at the MCCF Annual Meeting on March 13, 2007.

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will be held on March 13, 2007. Legislators will be invited. There will be a catered lunch. The executive committee has invited Tom Clay, Citizen's Research Council to be the guest speaker.

Michele Strasz has asked that anyone willing to help with the Annual Meeting should contact her. There are plenty of jobs that need to be filled.

The next MCCF meeting is the Annual Meeting that is scheduled for Tuesday, March 13, 2007. Details about the time and location for the meeting will be sent at a later date.

Michele Strasz adjourned the meeting at 3:00pm

Respectfully submitted, Bob Parks, MCCF Secretary