

**HUMAN SERVICES BOARD**  
Minutes of Meeting, November 5, 2009

**CALL TO ORDER:** 6:35 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Diane Durian, Angela Manahan Ilori, Elma (Pat) Maye, Bill Lenehan, Marc Meulman, Sandra Sheppard, Logan Wessendorf (Youth Advisory Committee Liaison)

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Amy Tuley, Mike Thompspon, Joanne Willson

**STAFF PRESENT:** Vicki Georgeau, Deputy Director of Neighborhood Services

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Minutes of the October 1, 2009 meeting were approved 6-0 as submitted.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Red Ribbon Week (October 17-25, 2009) Activities - Overview: On behalf of Portage Northern High School, Wessendorf attended the October 20<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting with Tuley to read and accept the Red Ribbon Week proclamation. Red Ribbon Week banners were also hung in the City Hall, Police/Court, and District Library lobbies.

Human Services in Kalamazoo County – Board Discussion regarding United Way and Portage Community Center October 1, 2009 presentation: Staff indicated Chairperson Tuley recommended this agenda item under Old Business so the Board could reflect on the presentations and brainstorm ways in which the Board can fulfill the recently developed Board mission statement to educate and advise the City Council, Portage human service agencies, and the community at large with regard to human services available in the community. Lenehan inquired if the Board had any additional questions or comments. After brief discussion, no further action on this item was taken.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Overview of Kalamazoo County Public Transportation Issues: Bill Schomisch of Metro Transit presented an update on transit issues. Due to the county-wide transit millage failure in November 2008, the merger of Metro Transit and the Kalamazoo County Transit Authority into one entity cannot occur unless state enabling legislation is amended. Subsequently, the transit system has been in the process of implementing a three part plan to stabilize system finances and services: 1) passage of the May 2009 county millage for demand-response services and fixed route bus services outside of the City of Kalamazoo; 2) recent passage of the November 2009 millage for fixed route services in the City of Kalamazoo; and 3) a fare increase. While the system provided over three million trips in 2008, ridership is down 3% but demand-response ridership increased. In addition, the Metro Van and County Care-A-Van services will merge into one Metro County Connect service. With regard to Portage routes, ridership is not strong in comparison to the larger system, especially with regard to the Shaver Road route #28. Mr. Schomisch also discussed recent Intelligent Transportation System investments made possible with federal stimulus funds that will increase system efficiencies and enhancements for riders. Ilori inquired as to how the fare increase proposal was communicated to the community. Schomisch indicated all buses had posted information, and a series of public hearings were held. Sheppard inquired why large buses are needed. Schomisch indicated the system ranks third in the state for number of trips per hour, and that while buses may not always be at full capacity, there are several daily peak periods when buses are at full capacity. In addition, some routes have lower ridership than others, and smaller buses are not flexible to shift to meet demand. Finally, fixed costs for personnel do not vary whether a large or smaller bus is utilized. Lenehan inquired how long the system can continue without service cuts. Schomisch indicated cuts are not anticipated, but modifications in routes may be necessary. Meulman noted that it may be easier for residents to ride the bus to the Meijer on Westnedge as opposed to Shaver Road. Durian complemented Schomisch on the transportation center in downtown Kalamazoo.

Metro Transit ADA Advisory Board update: Lenehan noted that demand-response ridership continues to increase, and the transition to a new service provider has experienced some pitfalls, but glitches should be worked out soon. Sheppard noted concern at the Transit Center in downtown Kalamazoo and loitering of kids and intimidating environment. Lenehan noted that issue has been an ongoing concern and challenge for Metro Transit.

Proposed 2010-11 Goals and 2009-10 Update – Board Discussion: Lenehan reviewed the draft memo and FY 2010-11 goals. Durian recommended the memo include presentations received by the Board during the fiscal year. The Board voted 6-0 to transmit the draft memo and recommended FY 2010-11 goals with the revision recommended by Durian.

**STATEMENT OF CITIZENS:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The Board meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicki Georgeau, Deputy Director of Neighborhood Services