

# State-County Results Accountability and Services Redesign Council

## Meeting notes

July 14, 2010

**Council Members Present:** Senator Linda Berglin, Senator Julie Rosen, Representative Jim Abeler, Representative Dianne Loeffler, Commissioner Jan Callison, Commissioner Kevin Vickerman, Jay Kieft, Kandiyohi County, Mary Sheehan, Chisago County, Don Allen, DHS, Erin Sullivan-Sutton, DHS, Lynne Singelmann, DHS

**AMC/MACSSA Staff Present:** Patricia Coldwell, Kate Lerner, Eric Ratzmann, Scott Simmons

**I. Call to order, introductions, minutes:**

Erin Sullivan Sutton, Assistant Commissioner, DHS, introduced herself as the new co-chair of the group. Members and staff introduced themselves. Patricia noted changes in membership since the last meeting: Mark MacAffee, AFSCME, unfortunately has died in the past few months; a replacement on the Council has not been appointed yet. Kelly Harder, formerly with Steele County, is now the Community Services Director for Dakota County, but will still be on the Council. Finally, Jay Kieft replaces Mary Fisher, who has left her position as Nobles-Pipestone Human Services Director for other employment.

**II. Update on Redesign Legislative Changes:**

Eric Ratzmann said that AMC/MACSSA sought legislative changes to make the provisions around service delivery authorities (SDA) passed in 2009 more workable. The language passed in Senate but not in the House, due to impasse with AFSCME Council 65 union about positions, layoffs, contracting, etc. Patricia added that, without these changes, the Department's position is that SDAs cannot form until the performance measures are completed in 2012. Given that, the Council should revisit what its role should be.

Scott Simmons noted two legislative redesign committees formed in addition to the RAC— The Commission on Service Innovation, consisting of the state information officer, 18-19 members, including foundations, hi-tech association, and local governments, intended to focus on shared services; and a the Council on local Results and Innovation, charged to focus on obstacles and opportunities for innovation. AMC has members on these groups and will be monitoring and providing input. Senator Berglin noted that she has been assured by the authors that these have a different purpose than the Council so there should not be overlap.

**III. Future Role for Redesign Council:**

Erin Sullivan Sutton posed the question: what is the role for this Council given that we do not have authority to form SDAs until performance measures are in place (2012)? Does this group have a role?

Discussion points included:

- A) what is the Council uniquely positioned to do and B) if we do have a role, we need to demonstrate our commitment by meeting more frequently ;
- Counties are looking for guidance, direction; the Council has a role as a sounding board, also can create structure and parameters for multicounty redesign efforts;
- Council can showcase models, ask questions, look at data re: elements of success (like public health)
- joint powers can be complicated, template may help, can be a stepping stone to performance accountability; not 1 size fits all but not as many as 87, where do large counties fit?
- More agreement that the Council must meet more than 2x/year to be effective;
- Some county functions should be performed at the state; we need to get over who pays as a barrier, discuss outside legislative session , be proactive not reactive;
- Counties should work aggressively to get more flexibility; we may not need to work through the legislative process for everything; some counties may just stop doing stuff if they reach the breaking point;
- 15 counties won't work;
- Help counties determine what is "right" size? Agreed, we have an unsustainable system, but need parameters for how to redesign;
- There are new human services directors in many areas; it's hard to get your arms around new structures in these situations;
- Partnerships shouldn't be cookie-cutter, this is council a "cool concept" , don't give up on it;
- Need to look at performance; 3-legged stool approach;
- Should focus on what state can do, not just counties--what can state relax?
- **What**, not how, should be the focus;
- State doesn't know how to deliver services locally in a state as diverse as ours,
- NOT interested in discussion of how many counties;
- Willingness to look at what state can relax, but not all problems are the state's fault; (eg. why do we spend more on child support than other states; find ways to do things to get to better outcomes, not just about more money)
- Purpose of Council is to review proposals; question what value there is if we are not able to certify;
- Need a venue to vet ideas;
- We are not talking about 15 any more; what discussions have been happening in counties to date? Counties wanted the authority to design their own systems; are you doing it?

- Need to distinguish efficiency (e.g. consolidation) from effectiveness (e.g. waiver relief) performance = permanent relief from unnecessary/burdensome requirements should be the focus

To conclude the conversation, Erin directed (AMC) staff to look at preceding discussion and synthesize into a few suggestions to bring back as a proposed focus of the Council.

#### **IV. County development of shared services/redesign in human services**

Hennepin County shared work they had done to identify areas to achieve waivers from mandates/streamline. Dan Engstrom, Assistant County Administrator for Human Services and Public Health, gave a history of what led up to this work: the 2003 legislative work on mandate relief by counties and the OLA report on human services administration. This resulted in a list of suggestions to redesign service delivery in Hennepin County. The format used was as follows:

- What are some alternative ideas?
- What benefit will result?
- How would it be done differently?
- What are the barriers?

As a result, county staff identified some common themes, with 70 specific suggestions.

- Example: Renewal pilot
- Questions: what items is it appropriate to bring before this body?
- How possible it it to bring these to scale?

Senator Rosen asked if there is a way to share this work with other counties? Dan identified three forums:

- MACSSA's Policy Committee
- The Metro human services directors;
- The county administrator in Hennepin will be sharing with his county administrators' group.

In reference to a specific proposal to change a component of health care eligibility, Senator Berglin offered a bolder suggestion—what if counties didn't have to do health care eligibility if Medicaid expansion occurs? Would Hennepin be willing to have this function assumed by the state? Dan's response was that, in his personal opinion, this may be a good idea. The staff observe that the problem is not only eligibility but access. If Hennepin didn't have to do eligibility determine, perhaps they could focus resources on helping people access care as well as get enrolled in public programs.

Senator Rosen stressed that these changes need be decided NOW, so that changes can be put in place before the legislative session starts. If counties have not made changes, it is likely that the legislature will take action.

Other county comments about redesign discussions from county members on the Council:

- Commissioner Vickerman--Murray County is part of joint powers for social services, and is considering including public health and also additional nearby counties in the near future. They have been thus far been unable to resolve union issues with Pipestone, so there now is a shared Human Services administrator in Nobles/Pipestone, with one governing board. He believes that an SDA would be a better option than JPA to organize (cheaper, quicker) but other options could work as well. He said they have realized \$180,000 in savings through their consolidations so far.
- Jay Kieft—Kandiyohi is the ‘big county’ in the region, but there are natural alliances with neighboring counties. They have been discussing client-focused approaches, borrowing ideas from SE Minnesota Transformation initiative. They are currently focusing on low-hanging fruit and trying to achieve economies of scale (e.g. one child care licensing entity for the region). He said the Council could provide a venue to vet these ideas.

**V. Draft template for SDA proposals**

Lynne and Kate shared the draft template for bringing proposals to the Council. Feedback from members was as follows:

- This assumes that the Council should continue, but we have not agreed to that yet;
- Too much detail for 1<sup>st</sup> conversation with interested counties;
- Should be big picture focused on the *spirit* of change, not specifics, perhaps the criteria should be weighted, purpose is to facilitate the work (more on Why? Not How? Perhaps bolder ideas)
- Suggestion that we are looking at a phased approach? (no response from group)
- The group was divided on whether the proposals had to be more or less specific, and at what point. Kate and Lynne noted that the intent was not to have specific application but rather give idea what will be required as proposals are developed. Lynne noted that the law calls for more specifics than this. Don Allen felt that specificity would help, noting that the CD pilot took a long time to get at the specifics and there was some ‘wheel-spinning’.

VI. **Draft charter**—(noted this was sent in advance and is included packets). Discussion was deferred to next meeting due to time constraints.

**VII. Public Input—Open Meeting Law (OML)**

Scott Simmons said he had been in conversation with a DHS attorney re: OML. Both agreed we need to focus on a spirit of transparency, how meetings are publicized, and how the public can track. He said there is a need to continue the conversation without making the process to cumbersome to achieve the desired results. Rigid compliance with OML would make it difficult for the group members to communicate in between meetings and would thus impede their work. AMC has committed to posting on their web site meetings and materials in order to make the public aware of the Council’s activities.

VIII. **Performance steering committee**—Discussion of this was deferred to the next meeting due to time constraints.

IX. **Other/next meeting**

Members expressed desire to meet again in a month, and suggested setting a regular date/time each month. Patricia committed to work through AMC support staff to find a time. Wednesday a.m. was suggested as possibly viable, as most were able to make that date this time.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15.