

Social Service PILOT and Comparative Impact Study Committee
Conference Room 2 7:30 PM Memorial Building Framingham, Ma

Minutes

February 9, 2006

Note: If a word or sentence is blue and underlined click for the link.

Note: A tape recording of these minutes is available upon request

Attendance: Bob Berman, Dawn Harkness, Cynthia Laurora., Laurie Lee, Wes Ritchie, Nick Sanchez, Steve Orr, Jim Palmer absent Yaakov Cohn, John Speranza

Meeting called to order by Chair Berman at 7:30 PM and introduced the guest speaker: Bob Martin President of Local Officials Human Services Council, LOHSC, the human services arm of Mass. Municipal Association (MMA). Mr. Martin is also the Human Service Coordinator for Brockton.

Mr. Martin passed out some information on LOHSC: membership is open to any town, with a fee, and the representative chosen by the town manager or Mayor perhaps a Human Service Director or someone else. Each member community may participate with one vote on issues and policy facing the organization.

Mr. Martin thanked the committee for the opportunity to speak about a local perspective of social policy in human services. It isn't easy. His role as the City of Brockton Human Resource Administrator evolved over time. He was born in N.Y., raised in Brockton. Mr. Martin attended the University of Miami and did graduate work at Yale. He subsequently served in Vietnam and has since then, about 35 years, been working in Brockton.

What he means as evolutionary process of his position, is that his position started as a subsequence of the substance abuse problems in Brockton the 1970's. Mr. Martin took a few moments to review the history of this evolution. He was hired to figure out and put together a substance abuse plan for the City of Brockton dealing specifically with mostly psychedelic related drugs and their impacts. He evolved from a substance abuse coordinator and essentially dealing with crisis intervention and writing grants, to being responsible for a budget that basically was patched together by the City by a period of time.

It began with private organizations asking the City for funds but without any contracts or system in place to oversee such operation and developed into what they have today.

Mr. Martin said that it is not the business of local governments to dole out funds to private non profits. If they do utilize their services, it should be contractually based.

His beginning experience included learning about the politics of non profit social service organizations: the business of such agencies. He also had to develop an equitable system for contracting services. He put together a division of human resources that is still in place today, and part of the Mayors office. This was unheard of before 1975.

Since then, the evolution of the human services capacity at a local level is very varied. There is no science. It is an evolutionary process: part of it is political, part of it is community capacity building and part is luck. To establish relationships, skill in negotiating and communicating. The politics of providing services is a business. Back in

the 1970's he was the first to talk about the business of providing social services. People focused on the good work the agencies do and how nice they are. Bob Martin continued that some may be nice and do good work, and some might not be so effective, but they are still a business.

But there was little or no understanding of building a framework for these services.

It was a rocky road. Brockton is different than other communities. Every community has a different context. There is no standard.

Some towns do not think they even have the need for human services. His response is that every community has a council on aging, veteran services.. these are human services.

How effective is your community in providing these services? Does your community have a framework to deal with the ebb and flow of the need for services?

All things are in motion. Constantly. That needs to be part of the framework

That is part of the human service picture in Brockton.

Bob Martin continued: what does he do in Brockton?

His department is a division of the Mayor's office. He has some conflict with this because he thinks the DHR should be ordinances.

That does not mean that Framingham should follow suit and design a position to be un-ordinanced. To the contrary, he recommends an ordinances position

His office is responsible for prenatal to geriatrics. His department also writes grants to provide services. He also has handled procurements and this complements his other roles.

Ashland and Bedford also has a Human Service Director and has different framework and goals. It depends upon the community.

His parameters are broad. No one person can accomplish the entire position.

What can a City accomplish with a Director of Human Services?

The main thing is information. Gathering information is a vital tool. It is not just gathering, but what do you do with it when you get it?

What is the impact. Why , where... He tries to collect information and statistics and draws conclusions from those statistics. For example, he knows that today there are 58 *facilities* in Brockton that are non-profit , that most if not all, own their properties they provide services for and the impact on the City is \$1.73 million. (according to current property values)

By impact he means a reduction in revenues that the City receives. That is only one kind of impact.

There is another impact that Mr. Martin is extremely concerned about.

That is, the impact of any facility on the quality of life of Brockton residents.

What does he mean by that?

Some community based facilities that are State supported, to be distinguished from non State supported. Mr. Martin emphasized that there is a very important difference between these facilities. They tend to be very large. There is a significant amount of land that they

either own or rent to provide services by the non profits who are funded by State agencies, such as DMH,DMR...

That is very dicey. When one talks about the State funded non profits one has to talk about the relationship between these agencies and the City government, when it comes to simply knowing what is going on.

Nick Sanchez asked Mr. Martin how he knows the properties that are leased.

Mr. Martin said that the eyes and ears of a community are the neighborhoods. He learns more from people who about the properties than anywhere else. There is no protocol for the State to notify local governments in terms of siting. They don't for the most part want to: there is no uniform notification policy. That is a concern to him. There should be at the very least a benign notification policy because of the impacts on the community.

If someone is moving into a neighborhood, as a family, there is no issue. 'It is different when a non profit agency, funded by the State chooses to build or to buy a piece of property. It is not the individuals they are serving's decision to site there. It is the non profit agency deciding. It is a tough distinction for people to understand .

Mr. Martin said that his position is schizophrenic: he is caught between being an advocate, which he is, and also representing the interests of the community.

There is a fine line between saying "come on in" and saying " what is the density?" "What kind of neighborhood are you siting in", "is it an area based facility or regional?", "what types of expansion plans does the agency have" Sometimes you can get the answers, sometimes not.

This is a very difficult issue that he does not pretend to know all the answers. He has cultivated relationships over time to deal with these issues. With area directors and State agencies.

For example, an out of area agency bought a piece of property in Brockton, even the area director did not know about it.

It is a question of information and what is the financial and social impact on a neighborhood.

Bob Martin said that as Human Services Director he is involved in Shelter development, transitional housing development, supportive housing.

But that is always in conjunction with the City. There is never something outside the preview of what he does.

It is not something that he takes lightly, or that can be easily resolved without developing a protocol.

A lot of the agencies hide behind the right to do this because of State decision, such as Dover. They may site the zoning exemption but are they exempt from answering questions about security traffic etc etc.

Mr. Martin said that he also has an issue regarding density. Agencies sometimes do not know or consider where others are sited. A DYH facility might be next to a DSS or DMR and a community has the right to raise issue with this.

Jim asked about the impact. Has he measured what the financial impact would be on the City if these SSA's did not exist and the City had to provide services.

Mr. Martin was not sure of what he was asking. What would it cost Brockton to pick up the tab for the services the non profits were providing in the City?

He said that would never happen. They wouldn't.

Nick added that suppose in any town you have people with problems with alcohol abuse, if there were no SSA dealing with that issue, how much would it cost the town to deal with this issue for people in that town.

Mr. Martin said that would be a public safety issue. Substance abuse cuts across different boundaries. There is impact on health, crime, sexuality..

Many chronic homeless are alcoholics. One case in Brockton was a man who had 911 called 118 times in the last 18 months.

Jim asked what would it cost if no services were provided.

Bob Martin said millions.

Jim followed up and asked if it would cost the City millions of dollars.

Bob said no. The City has a role to play in social services but they are not responsible for de-institutionalization. The City is not responsible for the network of agencies. They have an obligation to assist their own citizens in whatever capacity they can, and that capacity varies from City to City.

If someone has a substance abuse problem in a more affluent community, they go where the services are, correct?

So if the services are located in Framingham, they would go from Wellesley to here.

So a community that provides social services through a public contract is not restricted to that particular community.

Jim followed up that either through public safety or healthcare the City has to provide some types of service. Just to keep the piece.

Bob Martin said that prior to 1967 Cities and Town did provide welfare services.

After 1967 the State picked up that responsibility. Before this it was a local obligation. But not after.

Dawn took issue with what Mr. Martin said about affluent people coming from affluent communities to use services. She thought that those people would have insurance and not use State services.

Mr. Martin said it was just one possibility that someone from an affluent community would utilize services.

Laurie mentioned that she spoke to Bob Camarata in Taunton. He said that his role as Human Service Director is to make sure the residents of Taunton have the services that they need and that this role is contrary to the non profits service providers who are not providing for the residents.

Bob Martin said that is because the non profits are grants driven as opposed to community driven.

Laurie followed up that in response to the question of cost to a community if the agencies weren't there, the people brought in by the grants would also not be there and thus the services would not be a cost factor to the community.

Bob Martin said that it is an existential question. The State has statutory obligations for a range of services. They are fulfilling that through grants.

Our job, at the local level, is to some extent be a watchdog and look at those agencies and determine how a town is being impacted. He emphasized again that the most important impact to watch is the quality of life impact.

People who are dysfunctional in any way have a ripple affect on their family, neighborhood and community.

We need to be aware of what is going on and respond collaboratively. He works with the DA's office, police, school.. to work with these issues.

Laurie followed up that the Taunton Director said he tries to ensure the service are for his residents.

Bob Martin said that it is still difficult to get around servicing outsiders. He said he finds 23-26% of the agencies services are serving outsiders in Brockton.

He said that if you did a sample of non profit agencies in a community about 25% of the services would be for outsiders.

Bob said that Framingham is not urban like Brockton and, although a large town, does not have the State funded services for outsiders.

The committee said that we do.

He was surprised and said that he was mistaken and thus Framingham is in the same situation as Brockton then. Serving an area. When those agencies have state funding they are not restricted to Framingham. They serve an area. The question is if they are located in Framingham are they serving mostly Framingham residents. He assumes they must be.

Dawn said that he doesn't know that so he should stick with what he knows.

Bob said that he thought.

Dawn wanted him not to make generalizations on what he might not know. This is important to us. We have heard a lot of theory.

Bob Martin apologized.

Dawn said that he made a statement earlier that he felt there was a need for the community to know when a facility is bought or leased but you also acknowledged that the SJC states that a non profit agency has a right to site wherever they want to because they are ..

Bob Martin commented that they have to be a licensed educational facility

Dawn continued: Why does he believe that a community should have benign notification when if they were an affluent person who was alcoholic or had substance abuse problem there is no requirement that they notify their neighbors of these problems. Why should poor people have to notify neighbors when affluent people don't have to?

Bob Martin argued respectfully that it is not necessarily poor people who take advantage of non profit services. In Brockton.

Bob Martin said that we have a need to know because it is not a family making the siting decision. He said before that if it is a family, there is no issue of notification. A family has a right to be where they want to be. But if an agency is making those siting decisions, it is a business decision by a non profit agency to site their program in a particular community for whatever reason. We have a need to know. There is no need to know the pathology or details, just the general information.

Dawn asked if it is a DMH, DMR facility do the neighbors have a right to know that someone mentally retarded or with mental health issues is living there? She doesn't know that the affluent has this obligation to notify everybody in their community that there might be a mentally ill person? It is housing.

Bob Martin said that he disagrees.

Jim posed a hypothetical situation. Suppose Jim is a Brockton area social service agency. Bob Martin , as the coordinator of social services, what is his role when Jim comes in and opens a site?

Bob Martin said that right now in Brocton.

Brockton has had a policy for the past 8 years that there will be no new shelters opened.

Jim asked if it is enforceable.

Bob Martin said yes.

There is a real sensitivity on the part of the non-profits to respect the role of local government. Possibly because of the chaos and violence they had, there has become a collective respect on the behalf of the agencies and talking to him directly or the Mayor.

Recently, there was a noticeable number of foreclosures. New property owners, particularly triple-deckers, have had foreclosures. There is now a new class of homeless in Brockton: those homeowners. He noticed it.

One of the shelter providers noticed it. He came to Bob Martin and asked what Bob Martin thought of opening a shelter for these residents. Bob Martin agreed. The need was justified and they are proceeding and he will support it. He also considered the neighborhood for the shelter and the potential impact.

Did they have to do that?

No. They did it because they recognized that local government has a role to play in policy, communication and development.

Jim said: there is a two way respect.

Bob Martin agreed. His argument is that you get more with sugar than vinegar. That is why he said even though the non profits might have the law, it behooves them to work with the local government.

Bob Martin said that he doesn't have anything against group homes. One needs to put them into perspective. They do have an impact on quality of life, finances, public safety, and so on.

Nick wanted to pursue the issue of the shelter. When we had town counsel to visit we explicitly asked if shelters were protected by anti discrimination laws.

Laurie asked Nick if he was referring to the wet shelter, which is a different case.

Nick agreed, he meant a wet shelter.

Nick asked what Bob Martin meant by shelter:

Bob Martin said there are:

Emergency shelter, wet shelter and non wet shelter.

Brockton has a non wet shelter system. There is a non intoxicated point of entry. Then, Brockton has transitional housing, SRO models, in particular are working well. Finally, there is the role of the local housing authority for permanent supported housing. This is the continuum of care.

Lloyd Kaye from the audience thought it seemed arbitrary to distinguish between a family and non family living condition. Why would anyone care if someone lives in a home or a non home?

Bob Martin said that there is no law regarding this. He sees a distinction between a family and a home run by a non profit siting a group home for business reasons. Is it a family making the decision? He does not think it is an arbitrary distinction and they need to agree to disagree.

Bob Martin emphasized that he is coming from a local government perspective that fortunately or unfortunately there is a need to consult and a need to respect the rights of individuals who are living there.

From his experience, there should be some benign form of notification.

Bob Martin gave an example: suppose you have a petition from 137 residents who are concerned that a sex offender moved into their neighborhood. Do you think the City has an obligation to review and diffuse this situation?

Bob Martin thinks it does.

And it can't happen without information.

Dawn said that it is a difference because sex offenders are required to register and notify people. There is a huge difference between those who are not required to register, such as those suffering mental illness.

Bob Martin said that he is being asked for his perspective. This is it. He keeps a record of all residences. He tries to gather information about who is using the facilities, Brockton residents or not. Information is vital.

Dawn asked if that is public information? If anyone in the community wants it can they access it?

He said that anything he does that is on Mayor stationary is public information under the freedom of information act. But the City has some leeway in determining what is for public consumption.

Are his own personal notes public under the freedom of information act?

Bob Martin returned to the issue of information. He said that this is information we get from the State. There is no real secrets here. The state has listings of agencies under contract. The moment of notification is the issue. Not the privacy of information. Once they are sited it is common knowledge.

The argument of the right of individuals is not the issue. The individuals are not making the decisions. The non profits agencies are making those decisions.

Laurie returned to the issues of facilities. When Bob Martin said he had 58 facilities, what does he mean?

He said some are licensed lodging houses, that accept folks who have disabilities, about 70% are non profit agencies that are State funded, and the others are non profit but not funded by the State.(teen challenge for example)

Laurie asked how many day services and programs do they have?

He said they have COPE on Pleasant Street.

The City is looking to enhance the State programs during the day.

Laurie asked how many total sites does Brockton have.

He said they have 143 SSA's including child care in Brockton. They also have nursing homes.

The group is not including child care per se.unless it is operated by one of the known agencies.

The group is also not counting nursing homes, although homes for the aged run by the non profits are being counted.

Bob Martin asked are you looking at just State supported residential programs?

Laurie said yes and day programs.

Bob Martin said that many day programs are not licensed. This is a contentious issue. Should local government exercise licensing over any facility? We feel benign about lodging houses and simply employ the state code. He often appears to discuss the impact on neighborhoods. Lodging houses are not always run by non profits, which is why he is a little confused about the group's definition. Many lodging houses do operate as a social service agency even if they are not run by an agency. 4 or more people requires a lodging house license. To make it more complicated, the State has set up congregate apartments with 3 or less that are an unknown number.

Bob Berman asked what the population of Brockton is:

Bob Martin said 94,304 according to the 2000 census.

Bob Berman asked if any of the agencies pay a PILOT? And does LOHSC track that or offer guidance to the member communities regarding that?

Mr. Martin said that it was a wonderful question. He will respond in several ways.

First, he said that it is hard to do one without the other because many churches provide services as well. It is a delicate issue and he doesn't believe it is a good idea to be exclusionary.

He for one believes that everyone should contribute something to the community. What it is above and beyond the services provided can be debated, but it is worth discussing.

Brockton is working on TIFS. What Brockton has not done as much as he would like to see is to consider the role of TIFS and human services. A new employer comes in and asks for a TIF, local government holds the strings. There is a lot of power. How you use it is up to the local government.

Dawn thought TIF's were for private business not non profits.

Bob Martin agreed and provided context: a TIF can include space for a daycare center, community service hours.. he is raising questions.

He shifted away from non profit for a second to show the many roles a local government can play. How flexible is your authority.

Brockton does not have a standard PILOT. An occasional contribution to the City is all we have. He doesn't think you can be exclusionary. But some want to give back.

Dawn asked for an example of what he was talking about. What voluntary contributions has Brockton had?

Bob Martin said he could but would rather not other than it has been from non profits. Sporatically.

Nick asked if a for profit business can provide what a SSA provides, such as a wet shelter?

Bob said yes.

Nick asked if he knew such an example.

Bob Martin said no, but Habit Management runs a for profit methadone clinic in a fixed site and in a van in front of the police station. They have been there since 1989 . They started serving 72 people and now serve 306.

Dawn asked how they make a profit.

Bob Martin said they receive a co-pay and a billing through mass health and other insurers.

Nick asked if legally for profit businesses can go into social services.

Bob Martin thought so, if they can make a profit. But non profits can accept donations and offer tax donations.

Jim said that Mr. Martin's particular job is something we are looking at very seriously. In Framingham, we have no social/human service coordinator. It was cut out of the budget.

Mr. Martin said for the record, that was a big mistake. A good Human Service Administrator is worth his weight in gold.

Jim continued that in many cases he is on the street as a private citizen gaining information for his job.

Bob Martin said that is not true. He is a public official.

Jim continued, then, anything Bob does is public record. If you go into a neighborhood and get responses from the neighbors about a potential site, how does this work?

Bob Martin said, he is just doing his job.

Jim continued that if the neighbors want to meet with the agency they come to the Mayor. Isn't Bob Martin playing two roles at the same time?

Mr. Martin said he does that every day. It is a tough balancing act. This is very important. His job is this: What is in the best interest of the community? What is in the best interest of the community? Sometimes he puts his job on the line because of what he believes in.

He was suspended back in 1992 because he supported a health center. People did not want it in Brockton because of concerns of who would be using it.

Dawn commented that we are having the same problem today.

He said, these people are already here. He thought the argument was specious. Was he concerned about providing services to out of town people? Absolutely.

He is a City official and he knows what his responsibilities are, his bread is buttered.

But when people raise that kind of argument he has to respond.

Jim asked if he makes those decisions knowing that 25% of the people being serviced are not from Brockton.

Bob Martin said that figure varies. However, the majority of the service has to be for the community. Can he guarantee that every single person that walks through the door of an agency is from Brockton? NO. But as a City official he has to take the perspective of the City's needs and not just the fact that they are an urban community. There are sidebar issues that have to be addressed. That is what he does.

He chairs the Plymouth County Housing Alliance, not the Brockton Housing Alliance. The method behind that is that this county has to work together. Affordable housing is not the responsibility of the City of Brockton alone. It is all of our responsibilities.

Laurie went back to the issue of the Health Center that was previously discussed as being similar to the Brockton experience. She said that the health center in Framingham is specifically a regional center serving 25 communities, and wondered how he would feel about it in Brockton if it were also a regional health center ?

Mr. Martin said he would ask a lot of questions. This becomes a case by case situation. While he can say that a majority of the citizens using the Brockton clinic are from Brockton, he would have problem siting a regional facility in Brockton.

Dawn commented that a majority of the people using it would be from Framingham.

Wes referred back to the percentage of people being from outside the community: 25%. We have been struggling with the issue of when is a person a resident.

Mr. Martin said that is an issue: when does a person become a resident.

He said there is no one easy answer. He uses the 30 day rule himself. There is no one rule. In terms of eligibility for certain kinds of services it is 30 days plus one.

Bob Berman asked: once they hit that point they are eligible for any resources from the City.

Cynthia said that we are struggling with this issue because many people think that if we did not have the delivery of services that we have here in Framingham, many of the people receiving the services would not be here but in another community. But we have it .

Mr. Martin said that if we are not already, we are becoming an urban community. With that comes the focus of services in the community. Brockton is urbanized and you are evolving into that.

Cynthia asked if he could distinguish between non profits who receive state and federal grants and non profits who get only contributions, like a church. Is there a distinction?

For example a food pantry.

(Wes and Dawn said churches do get government monies)

Bob Martin said that for a food pantry, they have to be licensed by the Board of Health and have a registered food handler on site. Each situation is different. A child care facility means they have to comply with State rules. He does not make a distinction between a church providing the services or a non sectarian agency. They are both non profit. In fact, most Churches providing the services are doing so in a non sectarian manner.

Cynthia asked how one compares the use of municipal services?

Is there a distinction between the use of town services?

Bob Martin said they still have to comply with licenses and he doesn't distinguish between them.

He said there is a measure of how many times the police respond to a site. There is a risk of having many people at a site receiving services needing a response from public safety. He doesn't see it more than 6 times a year.

Willy Labarge from the audience said some social service agencies come here based on need but others also bring in other people from other communities.

Jim wanted to offer Bob Martin the chance to leave if he needed to.

Bob Martin said that he s used to long days and find it refreshing. He also thinks this is an important issue and our committee is asking some very important questions. Some of them do not have easy answers.

Jim commented that it seems that a few cities and towns are bearing the social services for the State. Do you see any way for our State reps to get together and force legislation to bring money back to those towns in relation to the amount of services provided?

Bob Martin said that this is a topic of the LOHSC meeting tomorrow.

He reviewed the issue.

The State has an obligation to provide services. But he thinks it should be limited State supported services.

The local housing authority does bring money back to the town for the LHA facilities. There is a formula that determines how much money comes back to the town.

If you as a community has a certain amount of State supported facilities there should be an obligation by the Commonwealth to add on to that formula. It is a no brainer.

One of the reasons to have information on what is in a community is to be able to count what one has and try to ask for money back on the cherry sheet. So, yes they should get money back. Tomorrow the MMA representatives will address this issue.

He suggests that whatever the committee decides working together with LOHSC and other legislators will support the endeavor.

Steve asked if his office assembles information that is not normally assembled.

Bob Martin said that a lot of the data is outdated and also what they collect. They have a data coordinator at the police department.

The problem is that the data has to be uniform and consistent.

Mr. Martin asked if we have an IT capacity in Framingham.

Brockton is revising it. There are issues of dealing with waivers. Raw data should not be a problem to assimilate and collect. How it is extrapolated is another story.

Brockton was recently awarded top 100 cities for youth. They collect data on kids after dark. They measure the successes they are having. This is quantifiable data. He gets raw statistics on every contract he has. The more definitive you get the more time it takes. They measure the level of effectiveness of their programs, such as the evening program for teens.

The data is very important. He wants to plug having someone to be in the capacity of retrieving data. That is part of what he does.

Steve asked if he has passed any additional regulations or bylaws to support his job?

Bob Martin works closely with the City Counsel and the Mayor and supplies services to them.

Nick asked about the impact on the educational system of the SSA's. could he explore how they affect this?

Bob Martin said that there is an impact on transportation. Homeless individuals still have a right to go to their home school and it might require transportation. The City has to pick up the tab.

Mr. Martin continued that there are a number of young children in their school system that are in need of additional support, emotionally and therapeutic support, because of their displacement: in a shelter or transitional home. That is somewhat taxing on the school system and on the social service system. Young persons who are in some sort of transitional based care are exponentially more prone to needing mental health services than their counterpart peers.

So to answer your question of dollar values on the amount of care for these young people who need ongoing care, there is a huge cost.

They are applying for grants to help support this effort, such as HPSA, but it is hard to get it. This would mean free staff, social workers to work in the City as federal employees.

Because of the numbers they are seeing because of shelter based care or out of shelter based care... There is an impact, it is measurable

There are huge grants, safe schools, healthy students, that Brockton has a team of people writing. You need a level of professionalism to go after these things.

Nick noted that Bob mentioned measured effectiveness. His understanding about alcohol is that the recidivism rate is high. Nick asked, is that true and how can the SSA deal with

that issue and what impact does that issue have on the measurement of effectiveness of their programs?

Bob Martin said that recidivism is in fact high.

He said that in HUD lingo, they call the Best Practices of what to provide in a community or area a "Continuum of Care". He uses this a lot. It isn't just a SSA idea. It is a continuum of care from the entry point to independent living. In between a lot of stuff goes on, or doesn't. How we measure effectiveness is, how straight a line is that continuum of care. In this example ,of detox. This is the entry point. They still have to go to step 2, post detox. For the most part there is no **a-to-g** They do a little **a**, skip to **f** maybe go to **g** and then go back to **a**. This is because there isn't a continuum of care for people who are extraordinarily addicted to alcohol. People who constantly go through the system over and over. No one has any answers except that people have human rights to go through the cycle. This isn't to suggest there are not success stories, because there are. But for many people there is not an effective continuum of care and there is a dollar value of that.

Nick asked if it impacts motor vehicle accidents.

Bob Martin said of course. Sometimes they are the victims.

Laurie asked if there is a particular point in the **a-to-g** continuum that breaks down.

Bob Martin said that one dilemma is getting the person or family out of their environment. But that is difficult. In addition, the boyfriend or girlfriend of whoever comes to them. Then the cycle starts. Change in socialization is the biggest problem in effectiveness

Dawn asked if that suggests that if you are in a community like Brockton you need to take advantage of other services and get out of that community and go somewhere else.

Bob Martin said this is a whole discussion of what is the best practice in the continuum of care.

In Brocton he can measure how many safe places he has for kids and adults. That is part of the mix of looking at a constantly changing community.

It would be remiss to not discuss the cultural diversity of Brockton. There are many Portuguese speaking people. We need to respond more effectively to multi-culturalism.

Lloyd Kaye from the audience discussed the issue of residency illustrating the difficulty with the 30 day definition with a real life situation.

Jim Palmer said that there is differing criteria for residency depending on who you speak with.

The Superintendent says if you lay your head on a pillow you area a resident.

Jim asked if there is a gap in most treatment.

Bob Martin said yes. There is a lack of providing a true continuum of care and promoting sustainable living. They typically go back to the same self destructive environment and habits.

Jim wondered if the State leaves out some part in the continuum when providing programs.

Bob Martin said there is certainly a chasm between B and G and people are more apt to fail.

Jim asked if some of the proposals should be looked at more closely.

Bob Martin agreed and said that what happens is each point is really considered separately and not in the continuum.

His job has been to put all the pieces to the puzzle together so there is a measurable outcome and success. It is absurd to think that a categorical grant program is the answer to a particular categorical problem.

One of the things we did in Brockton is create lines of communication between boards seeking grants so that everyone can go to one advisory board and not 6.

Cynthia said there seems to be a policy of clustering services or focusing in one community.

Bob Martin mentioned that density and environment are issues and not beneficicla. Can he address this?

Mr. Martin said that his experience is that having a domestic violence shelter across the street from an alcoholic facility or detox facility or that across from a DMR facility is not good. There needs to be a way of dispersing these. Brockton had similar circumstances. Many times non profits and the state don't talk to each other.

In Brockton, McLean hospital sited a youth psychiatric inpatient facility at the VA hospital. They were licensed by DPH and the mental health director of DMH didn't know they were there. Bob had to tell him. SO the lines of communication between state agencies is not good. The two state agencies did not notify each other. That is scary.

The issue of notification is important.

Jim said that when he speaks about siting he speaks against clustering but then also wants to take into account neighborhood response. SO how do we diversify? IS it a pandoras box?

Bob Martinsaid yes. There is no easy answer to siting. There is a better way. Consultation is information. Information is power. Power can be used positively to enhance the community. There are some common sense rules about these issues.

Bob Berman said that he understands Bob has created great communication but in the end if an agency wants to put a facility that has an educational component to it, they could buy the land and put it anywhere they want , right?

Mr. Martin responded : probably. He asked:

Are they complying with every building code?

Are they complying water regulations? Was the water turned off or on prior to that?

Are there fencing rules they have to comply with?

Are there ADA issues that they are aware of...

Why is he listing these? Because every single one of these issues and more, are variables. One way or another a community has some control over it.

Are the laws enforced?

There is a slippery slope of trying to support their efforts, thwart their efforts or find common ground. There is a variable issue, from the local perspective, that he continues to struggle with. But there is merit to raising issues with consultation. But there is a potential backlash.

Neighbors are astute. Once a building is sold they know who it is sold to.

Why should we, as City officials, be doing damage control?

Shouldn't the City officials have prior knowledge so use mediation skills to re-locate or work out compromise.

It is not a good guys bad guys, it is a legitimate community issue.

Every community has an obligation to share and site the programs. How you do it is another issue.

The issue of a PILOT might help dissuade some of the issues, not all, but some of siting.

Mr Martin said that as for property values, it depends. He has had some places treat the property better than the former owner but some not.

He mentioned sober houses which are not licensed. There is no such thing. They are self labeled. There is no quality assurance, none. We should talk to Mike Botticelli from BSAS. He challenged him to create a substance abuse review committee so some non profit cannot come in and call themselves a sober house and take in high risk individuals , because they label themselves that way and have no quality assurance. That is a serious issue. There is no standard of care. Hospitals should not be referring high risk folks to sober houses. They need 24/7 care.

Dawn said that the sober houses she is familiar with have contracts with the clients and they must submit to random urine analysis testing. If you fail, you will be removed.

Bob Martin said , however, there is still no standard of care.

Laurie commented that the implications from that are who gets hired to monitor or run the sober house. They might not have the necessary requirements.

Bob Martin said: it is self labeling. They are judged by themselves. They only answer to themselves.

Bob Martin continued that he cannot understand why lodging houses need licenses and sober houses do not. Especially considering the types of people they can potentially serve.

Nick said what if we suppose that there is a high risk individual that happens to live , not in an official siting of the SSA, but in the continuum of care. Meaning that that person might be renting and then receiving outpatient care. Suppose that individual commits a series of crime in the town. The difficulty is that if that person belongs to that continuum of care, how would someone like Bob be able to find out that that person can be tied to the programs? Perhaps the community should have a role in preventing such a person to come in.

Bob Martin said that on occasion there have been high risk individual case management review. He signs a disclaimer and makes recommendation on the care: either through the criminal justice system , voluntary care of a plane ticket to Florida.

There are at times case conferences of individuals that require collective consultation. There have been about 5 or 6 over the last 8 years.

Nick asked if he as a City official is willing to get involved in situations like that.

Bob Martin said, yes in extreme situations, where all other measures have failed. There are human rights questions too. People have a right to not get care. A lot of homeless people do not want help. How intrusive do we get? How is it affecting the community?

Steve asked if he could recommend how the committee should potentially spend money to do this research and answer the questions if they had it.

Bob Martin said that a consultant would be in order. Someone who could provide a grid and database. We have a daunting task and it is an evolving one. Some kind of support staff is necessary. You need a spreadsheet with in depth data from which you extrapolate...

You should count the number of facilities, the number of individuals in them, the dollar amount for each.. to answer all of your questions at one time is difficult.

But there is certainly a financial and social an impact on the community. The question is what the community's response is. It is an ongoing evolving response.

You need to think: where do you want to be in 2010 regarding this issue?

Part of what Human Service Administrators do is see the big picture as opposed to a counsel or agency. And it is about the community.

Laurie commented that this type of approach seems to go hand in hand with a towns master plan. How can one have a master plan and not have oversight over social services.

Bob Martin said, absolutely. He constantly fills in the blanks in all the master plans in Brockton.

He visualizes our task at hand as the big spreadsheet with Framingham on it. List things and have the towns fathers and mothers see the impact on the community, And furthermore, what does it mean to the community? You should come out with some generic recommendations and he thinks (biasedly) that Framingham needs someone to be the ongoing watchdog. A person who has the pulse of the community, can provide the data on a regular basis and can speak on behalf of the community and not have all these state agencies and non profits planning for you. They are all planning right now. They are all planning for services in our community. Someone needs to say that needs to shift over here or it is only 75% correct...

Dawn said that she has been thinking about this for a while and doesn't know that Framingham can come up with the resources to hire someone like Bob and we have other committees that handle all kinds of issues such as conservation. Do you think a volunteer commission like our human relations commission is the kind of thing that could handle that task?

Mr. Martin said volunteer support is great. But no. You need to have someone in the position. An ongoing understanding of the complexities and evolving nature of the

human services. That doesn't mean you have to have an LOHSC person. You need someone to address on a regular basis these complexities.

Dawn said that we use volunteer boards to handle all kinds of complexities.

Steve said that all boards and commissions have a paid administrator.

Dawn said good point.

Cynthia asked if he could name other communities with such a position.

Bob Martin said Ashland, Bedford, Taunton which is a great model, each position may be different. Weymouth is seeking one, Newton has one, Falmouth, Barnstable County, Worcester has just hired one. They used to have functions for this under the community development department but they have hired a special position.

Nick said it would be a help if he could tell us the qualifications such a person should have. Someone who would perform the same type of job as Bob.

Bob Martin said you want someone who can handle public policy, communication and legislation issues and primarily data gathering ability, not necessarily social work. They need to lobby on behalf of the community. Brandeis Heller school might be a useful tool.

Bob Berman said that he sees the advantage to have someone in this position is the ability to build those relationships.

Dawn said and to write grants.

Bob Martin said that one person cannot do it all. Grant writing takes a lot of time. You need to work as a team. Then there is managing the grant.

Sometimes grants can be worked with other town departments.

Jim asked how important the form of government is?

Bob thinks there is a smorgasboard of options for any town or person.

First do you want a free standing human service person who isn't accountable to management? They are free standing, whether ordained or just reporting to the town manager.

Bob Martin recommends this position be approved and ordained, as part of something. Whether it be free standing or part of a reorganized dept of human services the town can consider.

Where does the function fit?

Bob Martin said that for what we are doing today he would recommend someone, a consultant or student intern working with us so they can provide ongoing data. It is unfortunate that you don't have that type of staff support. You deserve it.

We did a chronic homelessness study in Brockton and we hired a resource person who worked as a consultant to the committee. A piece of the money we got went to that purpose.

The entire group thanked Bob and told him how incredibly grateful they are.

Bob Martin said that when we come to our conclusions he would provide some editorial comment and support our efforts with the selectman and town meeting, as president of LOHSC. This issue needs public light. There are many opinions but one thing to be sure.

Social Services are big business in Framingham It is compassionate business, but many millions of dollars of business. You should at least know what is going on and have a handle on it.

Bob Berman said that one thing he hopes is that Mr. Martin's organization can use some of the data we have collected in our work and use Framingham as an example.

Cynthia reported that she arranged a meeting with EOHHS on Wednesday 2/15 2 PM in Boston: Andrea Dodge, CAO, Fred Habib undersecretary and Kris Apgar, Counsel .

Bob, Laurie, Jim, Wes and Cynthia will go

The group will hold a meeting Wed. night.

Laurie mentioned that the assessor will be in on 2/28

Wes read through the changes to the school questionnaire.

Motion to accept the questions

Vote 8 in favor 0 opposed 0 abstain

Bob wanted to raise one more issue. He said that since the first forum he has received a number of requests (4) that we hold another forum to give people an opportunity to speak.

Several people spoke against this.

Nick asked if we could have a summary of the last forum. Perhaps have a listing of who was there and who spoke.

Jim wanted to get a hold of the information handed out.

Jim moved that the committee has decided not to hold another public forum

Vote 6 in favor 0o opposed 2 abstain

Motion to adjourn

Vote: 8 in favor 0 opposed 0 abstain

Laurie Lee

Clerk