



2017 TRIBAL SELF-GOVERNANCE ANNUAL CONSULTATION CONFERENCE

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PROGRESSIVE PARTNERSHIPS: INVESTING IN TRIBAL NATION BUILDING

Recorder Form

Onsite Contact Jackie Eagle 918-520-6334

Recorder: Jennifer McLaughlin

Date: April 25, 2017

Session Title: Measuring Self-Governance Success: Data Management

Panelists:

Linda Austin, Director of Operations, Ysleta del Sur Pueblo

Kitcki Carroll, Executive Director, United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

Dee Sabattus, Director, Tribal Health Program Support, United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

Summary of Issues and Items Discussed:

Opening Remarks:

- Two Conversations: Tribal Level and Regional Data for programmatic funding; Nation-building Data
- Why are we collecting data? To strengthen and build Tribal capacity and support funding requests. However, it is important to strike a balance between data collection and reporting so that it does not become an administrative burden for Tribes. We also recognize there are impediments to data collection given the lack of resources to support this effort.
- The intent of Self-Governance is to empower Tribes to be in the driving seat but Tribes are required to submit data to justify funding streams. There is a tremendous amount of reporting requirements and there are 100s of different data report sets that the federal government requires. There is a balance between rendering services and reporting data. Our intention is to talk about data collection from both the Tribal perspective and regional perspective.
- USET has own 638 contract so familiar with reporting requirements.
- How can we optimize data and reporting and where do we want to go in the future?

Linda Austin – Ysleta del Sur – located within El Paso and Socorro Texas (geographically closer to Albuquerque)

- A little information about the Tribe: Ysleta is one of three federally recognized Tribes in Texas with a land base of 74,000 acres (mostly agricultural land) 3,000 acres of trust land. It is a “checkerboard” urban Tribal reservation. Tribal enrollment is a little more than 4000 members. Relatively young Tribe only recognized in 1987 and didn’t begin to receive Federal funds until the early 90s to provide a snapshot of the evolution of the Government. We are a progressive minded Tribe with a future vision of where we want to be and achieve and excel.
- Tribal Organizational Structure guides how we are organized and defines what we do. There are six strategic functions; 13 Departments; 36 Divisions that execute 139 Programs and Services.
- Linda Austin serves as the Director of Operation that oversees Grants Management and Self-Monitoring – at a given time there are approximately 70 awards that our team manages from inception through closeout and in between that timeframe is when we engage in data management.
- Self-Monitoring Program – we have a policy in place that we observe and exercise internal compliance. One of the functions we perform includes monitoring reports to make sure that they are timely. We also look at scopes of work and what our Departments are outlined to do. We set our own rules. We define our own reporting requirements and report frequently throughout the year. We outline what we require and what we need to ensure accountability to our community members.
- Year-end Reports – We were finding that our Departments would provide data under quarterly statistical reports and at years end there would be different numbers reported. So our self-monitoring team

determined this is something that we need to dive into and address.

- Service Mapping - We did service mapping for our Tribe and it helped us identify who we were. In the past, the grants use to dictate who we were. So we had to take a step back and take away the funding lingo and jargon and break it down into what are we offering the community. So we aligned the data back to our strategic functions.
- We prepared a map pictorial for every Department. Every Department has a flow. Performance measures started to take life under it. We outlined seventeen (17) quarterly statistical reports. We started this effort in 2014 and are still working on it. It takes time. We have now incorporated it Pueblo wide. We wanted to ensure we have one main portal or tool that consolidated a lot of reporting requirements to lessen the Administrative burden. We have tried to make it all-inclusive.
- Quarterly Statistical Sheet for Tribal Court and Records – the input in this Report correlates back to function, department, and division service and performance measures. The Department can input data on a monthly or quarterly basis. We created an all-inclusive sheet that will meet several of our needs.
- Our Directors were hired to provide services and as an administrative arm we bring in people who crunch numbers so Directors can work on program and service delivery.
- Full Circle – publish in a manner that is reasonable – year-end report.
- Where are we today? – We hired a full time data analyst to fine tune our Quarterly Statistical Reports – work database and design database. We also added a definition section because we were finding that there were many different interpretations that people had and we wanted to make sure when we were entering values that it is very clearly defined.
- Partnering with local University – We have partnered with our local University because it is a free resource in the form of students who we use to conduct an analysis of data for us. It will allow us to show our Department Directors that Quarterly Reports should be more than a monthly requirement. Graphing budget and staff members relative to activity and there should be a relationship between the two.
- Where do we want to be? We want to publish an Annual Service Profile that has one main page with all of the service information so that we can use it in a meaningful way; create consolidated data base; design programs that are meeting our true needs.
- Recommendations for other Tribes interesting in establishing a similar data model – Assess data variables on government wide basis; ensure that the data is meaningful (ween out the factors that don't have any meaning or value); establish comprehensive tracking tool (minimize reporting time); customize databases; invest in a Data Analysts (someone who specializes in data); partner with local communities; and, have patience.
- Contact information: Linda Austin email: laustin@ydsp-nsn.gov; phone: 915-859-7913

Dee Sabattus – USET – Regional Perspective

- Organizational profile – USET represents 26 Federally Recognized Tribes on the east coast in an area that stretches from Maine to Texas. Our Region predominately contracts and compacts programs and services. We serve 9 Self-Governance compact Tribes; 13 638 contracting Tribes; and, 4 Direct Service Tribes. USET has a 638 contract with the Indian Health Service.
- USET has a robust Health Department that houses a Tribal Epidemiology Center. We see benefits of how the Epi-Center can improve clinical care and budget formulation (by pulling in additional funding because have the data to prove need)
- GPRA – We received funding to train Tribes on the importance of GPRA Reporting. We go out to our Tribal sites to do a workflow analysis to improve data quality and our staff will train on site. An example of a site visit – We visited a facility with 26 measures that they had to meet for the GPRA Requirements but they were found to only be meeting 4 of the 26 measures. During our visit we could see the Tribe was actually doing the work but their data keys were not being entered properly. We provided assistance in the form of Training and help evaluating how the system works.
- We partner with area Indian Health Service staff – our offices share office space.
- How do we utilize data? – We monitor clinical care and have access to records to see if trends are developing or there are issues such as infectious diseases that we need to address. We develop a number of reports and compare data to state, regional and national data. It is beneficial because we can tell Tribes what their citizens are dying from so they can create programs to address these needs. We collect health and Census data from sites so they can run comparative data runs.
- Community Health Assessments – These assessments are developed to build sustainable programs that meet the needs of the communities. We are training Tribes how to do community health assessments.

We use data to justify funding increases especially when it comes to area budget formulation meetings. Data collection isn't always easy. On the Department of Interior side, there is no centralized data repository. DOI is collecting from multiple Tribal programs whereas Health is collecting from one site. We have also found that not all data measures reflect the Tribal needs.

Kitcki Carroll - Executive Director USET
Long Term Vision for Change

- Sometimes it is important to question why we are doing what we are doing. The relationship between Tribes and the US stems from exchanging resources in return for treaty rights and trust obligations. Tribes are not a non-profit organization but the process asks us to act like non-profit. We have to provide data and justify the investment in Indian country. How many believe it is right that US makes us prove our right for funding? Each year we have to justify why they should make an investment in Tribal programs and services and we have to justify it.
- On IHS side, they deal with 25 line items focused only on health. In DOI, we deal with 126 line items and it spans the full gamut of programs – law enforcement, social services, natural resources, etc.
- There are daunting reporting requirements and there is no centralized reporting system. TIBC has had this conversation over and over again about the burdensome reporting requirements and limited resources to gather this data.
- Strong data doesn't always translate to funding. A good example is Tribal roads. We have the data to support the need for funding for roads but we haven't seen a substantial increase to address our needs.
- The relationship between the US and the Tribes – Trust 1. Incompetent as Indian people to handle our own Affairs; and 2. Tribes will go away eventually. We know that it is not true but it is the basis for the relationship.
- Who does data really benefit? Who are we collecting it for? The US government or our communities? As elected Tribal officials we are responsible to our citizenship so we should take it on ourselves. It is another matter of concern when the federal government tells us we have to take it on. In the short term, we have to satisfy these interests.
- The IHS and BIA are both severely underfunded. Often, Tribes are not in the position to focus on the data piece. Who is the data really for? If it is the measures the US wants to have to fulfill the trust that is one thing but there are also other measures that are important to Tribes: employment, GDP, incarceration or recidivism rates, etc. So, we also need to know what is important to Tribal communities.
- What happens if we can't justify the need? Congress has discretionary authority to decide whether to fund Indian country. However, "sovereignty" means the right to make good and bad decisions. If the measure is that we only get funds if we are successful it is not a fair standard because the states, the feds and local counties fail in many areas but they receive funding. It is a flawed mindset to fund Tribes only if they are successful. Over time, we hope to change this approach. Ysleta is taking steps to define what is important to them. Need to measure things that are more indicative of the strength of a Nation.
- Involved with Strategic Planning Exercise – There are elements that measure the agency's own performance and other elements that measure our performance and there are some measures that include data at another level and the elements are granular.
- DOI sets what we measure and how well we perform. For example, road maintenance is approximately \$400 million plus but it is severely underfunded. The road maintenance level is set at 17% so if the BIA Roads Program maintains 17% they report that they have attained their objective. Instead of setting bar at 100% it is set at far less level so they can say they met their goal.
- We are not a for profit organization. Language means everything. We moved away from "membership" to citizenship. The fulfillment of the fiduciary responsibility should not be through grants. We need to move from discretionary funding to mandatory funding.
- We absolutely believe in data. Data is for the benefit of us making decisions for the benefit of our region and Tribes not to justify back to somebody else. We know it will not happen overnight.
- It has only been in the last four (4) decades that we have been living in the era of Self-Determination and Self-Governance. Every other policy prior to Self-Determination was to assimilate or terminate Tribes. We have the expertise and responsibility to take it to the next step.
- How do we get to next step? Prior to 2-3 years ago common understanding federal government investment into Indian country was approximately \$9 billion dollars. A few years ago, OMB shared a report (Crosscut Budget) that there was \$21.5 billion in funding for Indian country. So they were using this Report to tell Congress that Tribes receive \$21.5 Billion. We asked for the data behind it to show eligibility v. what Tribes are actually accessing. A good portion of money is going to the states and

some Tribes never see any of the funding. We told OMB to give us the detail of how much we access but to date we have not been provided with this information.

- We scramble back at home to ask people to crunch numbers. We are advocating for a dual track. We understand the system exists as it does right now and we need to play with what exists now to fulfill the expectation to the best of our ability. At the same time, we have no interest in doing these fifty (50) years from now. We want to spend dollars where we need it and where it is most important. We have progressed but some of core problems have never been resolved. Sovereignty means ability to succeed and fail. So we need to do both. We are doing all that we can to collect data to justify the case for funding.
- Former Secretary of Interior, Sally Jewell, said we owe the highest moral obligation to the Tribes. We shouldn't have to fight for funding year after year.
- Every single Tribal nation should determine for themselves what is important to them. We share measurements that prove the strength of our Nations.

Questions from the Audience:

Q. Alaska – In 2003-2007 DOI said there was an established data management committee but we had a real good BIA administrative people at headquarters involved but there was a transition and an adjustment was made. Those that were supportive were replaced with people who were not supportive so we were stymied and it became a frustrating process. Tribes had called for a data system within BIA for decades before that. Here we are in FY2017 and we are still talking about the same issues with data management. Tribes taking ownership is the bigger picture. We also refer to our Tribal citizens not members and hope it catches on. In establishing the data within your Tribe how labor intensive was it and how did you approach it – one assigned person or a team of people?

A. At our Tribe (Ysleta) it is a team effort. The Department Director, Data Analyst, Program Monitor and Director of Operations (team of 4) are involved. It has taken time to assess the current reports and we have started to refine them. We went Department by Department. There were some challenges because we were going through reorganization and new people came on board and we consolidated some departments. Now, we have a better grasp on all of this.

Q. What was the detail in the time that it took? The team must have established their own forms?

A. We established our own spreadsheets. The Internal Program Monitor framed the data tool and we spread it across Departments.

Q. On IHS side, you underscored the challenges. Were there any HIPPA issues you had to address?

A. We don't have to worry about HIPPA all data is collected through the epi center who is authorized to collect it. Any data we review doesn't leave the domain.

Q. Concerned about the fact we have limited resources and try to spread it out government wide. In healthcare when we allocate money and all of the money goes into the RPMS. Money is less than 50% but they get credit for 100% we put in but still not priority one. How do you segregate data?

A. Every year there is a federal budget process and it is inconsistent and chaotic. In the past, there was an effort to identify the unmet need. We prefer to use the term unfulfilled federal obligation. If you put it in needs then you put it in social service grant driven mentality. We said there are standards the Bureau could use. (i.e. for state find out how many social service workers per case load) part of the budget process was trying to capture that figure because 50% or less figure we use now is unreliable. We are trying to end up at a place we can say the obligation is \$6 billion but we are only funded at 2.9 billion. We are trying to capture the unfulfilled obligation. There is no system in place that tracks it. DMC is being evolved to create a better system a more complete picture about performance.

Q. Our concern is with RPMS. You enter data that includes the Tribal allocation so we are not collecting the true unfulfilled obligation.

A. From our perspective, if it costs 200,000 but the Tribe contributes 150,000 it is not our obligation to show it. Members of congress believe if the Tribe is successful it replaces the trust obligations. Our position is that success should not diminish the trust responsibility. You can weight it in terms of value of investment related to end the goal.

A. We have been able to identify unmet need nationally against Tribal need. How you determine need at the local level is through data. Anything beyond priority one you should be tracking and provide information to the epi center or area office to show what funding was provided and didn't cover. Deferred and denied report

from each of the Tribes or area offices – some Tribes report it and others don't like to report it.

Q. Have you been able to address it through data collection? It is an individual decision we are very transparent. We report fully what we subsidize.

A. Federal Investment in Foreign Spending is miniscule compared to investment into Indian country.

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