



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Interagency Council on Homelessness

Notes from Meeting of the Interagency Council on Homeless (ICH)

Date and Time: December 11, 2012 2:00pm – 3:30pm

Location: Central Union Mission 1350 R Street, NW Washington, DC

Approximate Attendance: 115

Welcome and Introductions

Allen Y. Lew, City Administrator, called the meeting to order.

Swearing In Ceremony

Mayor Vincent C. Gray officially installed the new ICH members that were appointed or re-appointed.

Public Comment Period

- One attendee commended the ICH for talking about employment and other challenges that affect self-sufficiency instead of just housing.
- Another attendee called for a true definition of the term “affordable housing” in the District, and asked the Mayor to consider raising the minimum wage to reflect the cost of living. The Mayor clarified that affordable housing is based on the median income of the entire metropolitan area, which is more than double that of the District of Columbia income (approx. \$50,000).
- Another attendee discussed a need for more drug and mental health programs for homeless individuals in order to help them overcome homelessness.
- Another attendee brought up her concern about the length of time people are on the public housing waiting list. She also mentioned the scarcity of caseworkers who should be assisting those waiting to be housed, and that more investigations need to be conducted to detect fraud so that people can get off the waiting list.
- Another attendee asked the Mayor to consider PSH for long-term and lifelong District residents.

The ICH meeting paused for a brief moment of silence in honor of Patricia “Pat” Handy of the Department of Human Services, Homeless Services Division.

Summary of Pre Meeting Discussion

- Fred Swan provided the summary of the pre-meeting, which discussed the new Virginia Williams Family Resource Center (VWFRC), which is now located at 33 N Street, NE. The pre-meeting also covered changes under the Homeless Services Integration (HSI) initiative and TANF Redesign to improve services provided to current and future clients. Employment and

employment readiness programs are specifically being targeted for improvement in order to help customers who have exceeded or are approaching their 60-month limit. Currently 17,000 TANF families are being reassessed to determine employee readiness and to develop an Individual Responsibility Plan (IRP) to address challenges and propel them toward self-sufficiency. The integration process serves to avoid duplication of services and resources being provided and to promote higher efficiency of the TANF and Homeless Services programs. Integration goes beyond services to include staffing in which staff from ESA, DHS and VWFRC work together to provide comprehensive services to DC residents at this central location. Michelle Salters-Williams of The Community Partnership (TCP) also provided more information on day-to-day operations at VWFRC. If anyone is interested in touring the new VWFRC, please contact Darrell Cason at Darrell.Cason3@dc.gov.

ICH Committee Reports

Executive Committee – Scott McNeilly, Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless (WLCH) & David A. Berns, DC Department of Human Services (DHS)

- The committee has been primarily focused on its political process, which will be further discussed later.

Strategic Planning Committee – Kelly Sweeney McShane

- Has been focused mainly on the 2013-2014 workplan for ICH
- Meets on the 4th Tuesday at of each month, if anyone is interested in being added to the email list, contact Kelly Sweeney at KMcShane@cohdc.org.
- The 2013 meeting schedule will be sent to the email distribution list in the next couple of weeks.

Operations and Logistics Committee – Chapman Todd, Catholic Charities

- Meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month – December’s meeting will be 12/19 at 1pm
- If you would like to be added to the email list, contact Chapman Todd jchapmantodd@gmail.com.
- Primary topics will include follow up on the winter session and planning for what will happen during the inauguration period in January.

Shelter Capacity Subcommittee – Michael Ferrell, Coalition for the Homeless

- Meets continually to discuss the monitoring of the low-barrier shelters and family shelters.
- November 1st marked start of Hypothermia season and the committee will begin to review the data from those first few weeks of the season at its next meeting.
- The meeting will be held on December 20th at 1:00pm at SOME (71 O St NW).

Youth Subcommittee – Steve Baron & Maggie Riden

- The committee has been meeting regularly and has added members from CFSA and DYRS.
- The group has been looking at people transitioning out of systems and the risk of homelessness that occurs. There has been a heavier focus on youth and youth homelessness.
- The committee has also looked at youth capacity issues in some of the shelter facilities due to some changes in program funding.
- Effective January 1, resources used to house homeless youth will be reduced, resulting in the loss of about 6 to 11 beds (approximately 10% of overall capacity).
- DHS is exploring the possibility of helping to recover those beds by finding a way to house youth; however there is no guarantee that it can be done. A plan to address this issue is forthcoming.
- The group meets on the 1st Wed of month at The Community Partnership (TCP).

PSH Committee – Kimberly Black & Michael Kelly

- The group has met 3 times since the last ICH meeting
- Next meeting will be on Wednesday 12/19 at DHCD
- The focus of the agenda will be to finalize the MOU and have it ready to present at the next ICH meeting.
- Another focus will be the needs assessment – currently being finalized.

Continuum of Care NOFA Process - TCP

- TCP coordinates the application process for HUD programs on an annual basis, and will continue to do so for the 68 programs in the District that currently receive HUD funds.
- This year is different because for the first time, HUD has announced that it will no longer provide as much funding as before, so they have asked TCP to divide the existing programs into 2 tiers. The first tier will be for priority programs and the other for low-performing programs.
- Essentially, 3 ½ percent of the funding budget (roughly \$740,000 in programming) will be placed into this second tier. The programs will be categorized based on set criteria that measures effectiveness and rate of stability.
- The criteria are being developed currently.

Continuum of Care NOFA Resolution – Chapman Todd

- Vote: The committee voted in favor of the resolution

FY13 Annual ICH Work Plan Presentation – Sakina Thompson

- It was recommended that the 2012 Workplan be continued as the framework of the 2013 workplan
- The committee wants to get public input in January via public hearing on what things the District should focus on in FY13 and what the priorities of the public are.
- Once public input is received, the committee will share the public input and then seek final input from the ICH in February.
- One highlight: In 2012, we planned to house 500 families; we more than doubled that amount by the end of FY12.
- Opportunities exist to increase capacity through FY14 so the committee will explore those opportunities.

- The majority voted in favor of the 2013 work plan.

Public Comments

- Three people voted against the ICH workplan due to lack of commitment to youth homelessness, specifically with regard to recovering the 10 lost shelter beds for young people.
- One attendee expressed concern about the lack of emergency shelter space in the day program, and he offered to assist the ICH with securing additional space.
- Another attendee acknowledged the presence of DOES director at the meeting, and is looking forward to further participation from DOES at future ICH meetings.
- Another attendee complimented MPD for making her neighborhood safer following an incident that occurred recently.
- Another attendee called on the District to lead the country in ending homelessness and to get the numbers down to at least 2,000.