



Interagency Council on Homelessness
Full Council Pre-Meeting



10 December 2024

Updated: 11 December 2024



Convention for Recording ICH Committee & Full Council Meetings:

- ❖ Recording for purposes of complying with the Open Meeting Act requirements
- ❖ Available for anyone who requests a copy at ich.info@dc.gov.

Meeting Agenda



- I. **Welcome, Agenda Review, & Housekeeping (5 mins)**
 - a) Agenda Review
 - b) Introductions & Housekeeping
- II. **System Check-In – Top of Mind (30 mins)**
 - a) ICH Full Council Community Representatives (15 mins)
 - b) General Public (15 mins)
- III. **Discussion – FY26 Budget Engagement Strategies (45 mins)**
 - a) Lessons Learned
 - b) Opportunities for Early Engagement
 - c) Leveraging Existing Oversight Bodies
 - d) Confirming Priorities & Funding Solutions
- IV. **Announcements & Reminders (5 mins)**
- V. **Summary & Adjournment (5 mins)**
 - a) Next Meeting: Tuesday, 03/11 from 3 – 4:30 pm (Pre-Meeting 1 – 2:30 pm)

Introductions



The ICH serves as the Continuum of Care (CoC) governance board. Chaired by the City Administrator, the Council includes representatives of key government agencies, service providers, advocates, constituents, and the private sector.



❖ **On-Site Support for Client Inquiries**

- Pathways to Housing DC
- Dept. of Human Services (DHS)
- DC Housing Authority (DCHA)

❖ **Comments & Participation**

- Due to limited time and to accommodate as many public comments as possible, please limit comments to 2 mins per person.



Introductions

- ❖ **Chair/Designee:** Chris Rodriguez, Assistant City Administrator
 - In Bowser Admin for past 8 years. Prior to this role was Director of HSEMA for 6 years. Proud to serve and thank you for having me!
- ❖ **ICH Lead:** Theresa Silla, Executive Director
- ❖ **Panel Participant:** Ciana Creighton, Chief of Staff, Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services (DMHHS)
 - Come from a community and public health background. Here in a listening position today.



- ❖ **Nikila Smith (Street Sense Vendor):** Who comes up with this agenda? People with lived experience should have more say so on the agenda. We give feedback, but then you run the meeting. Would like one meeting where lived experience do the agenda.
 - **Rachelle Ellison (PFFC):** Under the impression that the CEWG does the pre-meeting agenda.
 - **TS (ICH):** According to our Bylaws, the Executive CMTE is responsible for setting the agenda for pre and Full Council meeting. It is true that I am looking at all topics coming up and then working with the CA to confirm the agenda. We can plan better for the next meeting and ensure CEWG members

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Significant Updates & Landscape Shifts



Ongoing/Outstanding Topic or Concern	ICH Forum(s)
<p>Progress Report (Annual Update) and Work Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FY24 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) now available for review at in Dec/Jan meetings. ICH team to integrate data in draft Progress Report and account for implications in Work Plan during month of February for adoption in March. 	Strategic Planning CMTE & WGs
<p>Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The portal closed within 5 hours of opening on 11/20 for applications expending FY25 funds. 	Housing Solutions CMTE
<p>Families Exiting Family Re-Housing Stabilization Program (FRSP) to HCVP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracking status of exits from FRSP, including timeline to voucher approval with DCHA. 	Family System WG
<p>HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) & CoC Builds NOFO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TCP submitted the NOFO applications on 10/29 and 11/20 respectively. Available here. 	Executive & Strategic Planning CMTEs
<p>Inauguration & Annual Point in Time (PIT) Count</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the timing of the inauguration, the District's PIT Count is scheduled for 01/29. 	Front Door Services WG
<p>Peer Case Management Institute: Cohort II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHS and Institute partners accepted applications through 12/01, with plans for a Feb. 2025 kickoff. 	Strategic Planning CMTE
<p>Single Adult Shelter Transformations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracking status and DHS call for support in advancing shelter redevelopments through FY25 and beyond. 	ERSO CMTE & WGs
<p>Virginia Williams Family Resource Center (VWFRC) Move</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On 12/23, VWFRC will relocate from its Rhode Island Ave NE location to the first floor of 64 New York Avenue NE. 	Family System WG
<p>Winter Plan Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring hypothermia and cold weather emergencies, including operational shifts and challenges. Check out cold.dc.gov and sign up for Alert DC for updates daily and throughout the season. 	ERSO CMTE & WGs

Live Notes on System Check-In



- ❖ **Captain Matthew Woods (Precinct Captain, Ward 2):** You are working on 26 right? Is there opportunity to adjust FY25 budget?
 - **Kate Coventry (DCFPI):** FY2025 budget is final. What we have is reserve funds to tap in case of emergency for example an event like Jan 6th. Our focus as advocacy is the FY2026 budget which will come out in April.
- ❖ **Jakia Carroll (Advocate):** Today you are discussing the FY26 budget, but in ICH meetings have been working on 2024 and 2025. The damage to our lives is severe. If we are not involved to make a difference, it is severe. We do not get to work with you. We are fighting on all sides. I would like to see a change to see healthy and positive lives, like white communities. Right here in downtown our people are being abused and assaulted. People prey on people in poverty. The decrease of services and food to our people.
 - **TS (ICH):** Thank you for your feedback. Your comments related to the current versus upcoming budget is important. This is why we want to discuss the FY26 budget early.

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Lessons Learned, Early Engagement, & More



- ❖ **Start early!**
 - To influence proposed budget instead of reacting to it
 - Because performance & budget are intertwined
- ❖ **Be impactful and data driven!**
 - Work with Mayor to host an ICH specific engagement event as part of budget formulation or
 - Establish a data-driven rubric for evaluating the proposed budget
- ❖ **Be efficient and minimize ICH-specific meetings during budget oversight!**
 - Work with DC Council to support ICH member participation in appropriate oversight hearings
 - Establish a program inventory for dedicated and critical resources funded by agencies and crosswalk program inventory by the appropriate Council Oversight Body and Hearing
- ❖ **Opportunity to connect the dots... and support the development of Homeward DC 3.0**
 - Engagement with performance and budget needs to advance Homeward DC 3.0
 - Use program inventory to inform/advance Homeward DC 3.0

Key Questions

- ❖ Does this focus seem appropriate?
- ❖ What are your main concerns for FY26 and beyond?

Next Steps

- ❖ Strategic Planning CMTE focus in January & February
- ❖ Including engagement with the District's Budget Director

Live Notes on Budget Engagement



General Public

- ❖ **Wayne Hall:** Solution based. To actually help people cope with the adaption of automation. We need universal income. Its something we should focus on and push. The District should start it. It is really the solution to chronic homelessness. I say this because the \$1200 payments for COVID were impactful. Imagine if minimum wage workers have access to another \$500/month. The payment does not need to be the same for everybody. It is money. Just went to grocery store where you can get 50% off fresh produce with EBT card.
 - **TS (ICH):** Yes, one thing we hear is that we have supports for people experiencing chronic homelessness, but we don't have as much support for those not chronically homeless.
- ❖ **Robert Warren (PFFC):** Over the last three years, our consumer group has been working to form the REI WG under Executive CMTE. That was a lot of work. One of the things that the staff supporting that emphasized that it should not be something to check a box. We have Council ORE and Mayor's ORE. Those offices should be overseeing and implementing review of the budget. I am focus on universal voucher system because I am part of an organization that believes in housing as a human right. Mayor has previously said in favor of universal voucher program. If we implemented that, we would reduce homelessness by half. As far as budget, urge Office(s) of Racial Equity and the ICH REI WG to lead.
 - **TS (ICH):** One thing to think about is the role of the federal government. A universal voucher program might require Is that something that is realistic or something we can or should expect? What should we do if that is not a priority of the new administration.
 - **RW (PFFC):** DC has a \$21 billion budget. I believe we have the tax base to fund it in DC, especially for those over age 55 on fixed income without the federal govt.

Live Notes on Budget Engagement



General Public

- ❖ **Jakia Carroll (Advocate):** Me and Captain represent people in this community. When people sit in these seats they represent organizations, they do not do this work. You do not pay me for participation. When I look at agencies around the table, you have these people telling us they have the skills and experience to do the things that need to be done for our families. When we come and talk about what is being done, nothing is done. If people are in the seats and fighting for life and liberty. No one should sit in these seats without understanding the extent and impact of what is happening. The backlash from these agencies is severe. I do not agree with what you do. You get to go home and be safe. You get to deny legal standing because we are poor. You are not accountable. You are not dying on the streets. The policies and use of economic instability against us, are modernized methods of slavery and domestic terrorism. You tell us that we have a voice and that we are free, but you deny us the opportunity. I got to see how this works through three different jurisdictions. Instead of talking, do right by me and get me a public trial. My innocent's son's life is on the line. I would like to have legal standing and see change in my community. We are being beaten down. Please stop pretending. We matter. Thank you.
 - **TS (ICH):** Thank you, Ms. Jakia. We are working with an ombudsperson to follow up on your case.
 - **JC (Advocate):** I have been hearing this for two years. Do not play with me. There are crimes on my name. How do people have a story on something has never happened. It is severe and has been going on for two years. I am going to die for mines. You are accountable for my life. It is bigger than me.



Full Council Community Reps

- ❖ **Nikila Smith (Street Sense Vendor):** A lot of things I see in this room, there is truth to it. It's heartbreaking. We have this going on and you want to focus on statistics.
 - I want to focus on the benefit cliff. It is for cash assistance. I got my voucher, but if I make over \$31,000 a year, they take my voucher. You sit here and say your credentials, we were not able to do that.
 - I come from Philadelphia and am a product of RRH. I didn't do drugs until I was 21. I am a product of my environment. Had something else been around, I would have done differently. Being a good mom is my priority. I smoked PCP for 21 years. I work 8 different jobs to make ends meet. If I go one dollar over, I lose my voucher. I taught myself everything here. Retaliation is big. When I spoke up about DHS and shelter. Where is the help? Thank you.



General Public

- ❖ **Ms. Naomi (PFFC):** This is all going on deaf ears. We are just telling you to your face. Don't want to talk behind your back. They are right. You probably know they are right. For whatever reasons, you are in the role you are in and you expressed that role you are in.
 - Can you start telling us what the purpose is of every meeting? Need to be reminded of that. So, in 2025, can you open with the mission and purpose of the ICH?
 - Also, I am shaking my head. I normally tell you how I feel. You get an F, ICH and DC Government. The services, the programming, the faulty programming, pathetic services, the barriers, the practices that remain, the experts that create and mastermind. It's in our face. It used to be hidden. I am a native Washingtonian, a single mother. I am not on board.

Live Notes on Budget Engagement



General Public

- ❖ **Frederick Walker (Street Sense Vendor):** Homeless in DC for 8 years. I am so upset, people sleeping outside the library. Its not safe. Question about how DC is getting guns off the street.
- ❖ **Matthew Woods (Precinct Captain Ward 2):** Musical missionary. As a Christian American citizen, I have a duty to tell the truth. I deal with the homeless all day long and go to day centers.
 - People do not get coffee, tea. They cant wash clothes because dryers are broken so they wear clothes for twice as long. Told they have to get a mechanic to fix the dryer.
 - No towels for the showers, have to dry off with paper towels.
 - The Downtown Day Center has a limit to 100 meals per day. Nutrition wise – the number one cause of schizophrenia is white sugar and white flour. Bring in fresh fruits and protein. The meals are protein deficient. It is a toxic mix if only carbs. You are facilitating this problem.
 - Woman in a wheelchair, after 59 visits to the day center, she was able to meet with a counselor.
 - Question about budget and Capital One – are you financing it on the backs of the homeless?
 - I am an educator, when I am outside I help people make appts. I confronted them in DDSC to help them, they say it takes money. Every homeless person has a dream. Nobody is asking them or listening to them. It does not cost a thing. It would decrease recidivism if they got housing and education.



General Public

- ❖ **Michael Coleman:** I live in Ward 3. I have two questions.
 - One of them is situations with landlords and what is being done.
 - The second is this community nuisance law that the police dept is doing.
 - I have a comment for the council. I have been dealing with the council for 10-12 years. The council right now does not represent homeless people. When they broke it down and put it in the format it is now, it leaves out people. It is not working well now. The way you belittle me and don't pay me. How is that not worse? Why would you run a council like that? And have one organization run things. The way you run the council is really bad. Do not appreciate how you treated me.



Community Reps

- ❖ **Rachelle Ellison (PFFC):** Getting a job is not the problem. Keeping it is the problem. I can't lose the voucher. Without the Medicaid I will die. I have to resign from every job I am passionate about for my health.
 - I will continue advocating for resources. We do not have the resources for unhoused. I am emotional because I am from that population and I have to tell them they didn't score for services. I got two people matched to the Aston. That's two out of the hundreds out there hungry, angry, tired. I made it out, but I don't have the resources to help them the same way. People are out there contemplating suicide. Hypothermia, people out there freezing to death.
 - The budget – we go hard for advocacy in the Wilson building. The mayor did not prioritize the unhoused in the budget. We are getting ready to come hard.

Live Notes on Budget Engagement



General Public

- ❖ **TK Hancock:** Like everyone who has spoken. It is not safe. I have been homeless 12 years. I have been locked up 4 years out of that 12 years, in a psych ward for 3 years 2 months out of that 12 years and 12 months and in health facilities for my issues. If you do the math, I have only been on the street 18 months. I have a son. I am a college student at Georgetown on Presidential scholarship.
 - At the time, I was not legal so did not qualify for housing. I went through so many agencies. They said, you go to Georgetown, you're an immigrant. I came here with the last of my mother's money she tucked away for me to come.
 - Something as small as a bra is not offered or panties lead to infection.
 - I have to worry about opening a CFSA case because there were not enough beds or something disqualified me. Have done what I need to do to get a room and put a roof over for my son. If I had a roof over my head, after years and years. What I do know is, I stick with things. I just became a Street Sense vendor. It has taken me 2 years to finish 4 classes because have to wake up for a shower, for a ticket. Services are not tangible or present. I am proud I accomplished what I set out to do. Street Sense is my family – they were there when I couldn't speak English, when I was suicidal, when I could barely walk because of my stroke. I stepped in front of a bus to be seen. Why would I come here? It is supposed to be better than where I have been.
 - The civil case I have is against organization doing illegal things. Case is still open 2 years later. I talked and spoke up for myself. I was invited here. I am in a room where I am still so exposed, but it is nothing new. I need you all to change your policies. You know its not working. This is my first meeting. I support what sister Jakia says. We should be up there too, especially if we are invested. I will be invested from this day forward. I am normally in the shadows. I am a worker, a grunt. I am an example of the change.



General Public

- ❖ **Sydney DeSantis:** Previously was a case manager at the Downtown Day Services Center at 1313. Everything there is true. They are underfunded and overworked. All we want to do is help people. There needs to be housing for people 55 and over. There is no reason someone with a walker has to get to DDSC make it down the stairs and be told there is no more food. It makes us heartless because we are so burnt out. Nobody else cares for these people. Vouchers expire and they have to start all over. Instead of funding programs that don't work, should have housing. RRH in general, the amount that are waiting will have to start all over again. It's really unfair and really hard.

Live Notes on Budget Engagement



General Public

- ❖ **Joe:** From Denver, CO. I have been homeless for 3 years. Through my experience as homeless, finding out it is behavioral. As an American, taught to take care of family and be free, but nothing here comes free. Programs are beautiful. This town spends a lot on this problem. It is severe because there are low class living in medium and higher-class system. Putting people scattered all over the town is a disaster. Should use a building for people, give them work, give them help. I live in a transitional housing program – I still have to feed myself, my laundry, etc. in order to even find work. In order to do that, have to wake up, meet with case manger who just wants to focus on behavior and say hi, they don't help find work. The suppression is a disaster. I see people outside. I hate to call it a disease.
 - **Ms. Umi:** Segregation is illegal sir.
 - **Joe:** There is one thing about segregation is that people work hard. I have been arrested and tased 3 times. You need to channel into a working program. Need a community work program for the community of homeless people.

Live Notes on Budget Engagement



General Public

- ❖ **Andrew Anderson (PFFC, Street Sense Vendor, MK):** I want to give kudos to the Mayor for opening the Aston and giving the chance to get in. One target audience is not integrated and will be left out. People who live unhoused and on the street. When the Aston was first promoted in Ward 2, there was a lot of negative feedback from that neighborhood, but it went through. The original capacity level is more than it is now. Wonder why that is because could have accommodated more than now. Outreach is seeing this in real time. Encampments that exist but unseen. We are witnesses. My concern is that that target audience is not being looked at. PFFC and the HMIS/CAHP system doing good job getting people matched, but overall the criteria level the Aston is promoting is not reaching everyone. Given the opportunity, that should be revisited. As a prototype I think the Aston will work and hope for more down the line. It is needed. Ward 8 needs it, an avenue to be successful out of homelessness.
- **TS (ICH):** I want to reflect and connect to comments Captain made. One of the tradeoffs with the Aston in terms of the capacity from low barrier shelter is how many people do you support in a dorm/unit. It has to do with quality, but also with budget. Can put more people in a space, but may sacrifice quality. At what price point, do you get a different kind or quality of meal. At that price point, can you serve everyone who is hungry. Or serve best quality you can.

Live Notes on Budget Engagement



General Public

- ❖ **Jerome McCrae (SWBID):** I wasn't sure I wanted to share today, but after listening here, I want to. I was once homeless. I always loved to help. Even when I was staying in a rooming house. I was engaged, but still helping people. I am looking at these developments, you know you can take that money to build some kind of building for the homeless.
 - I am working three jobs and I still support the homeless. I have a pantry that my coworkers donate to so I can donate to the street. I know Captain, he is a good guy. People need help.
 - There is a lady 1200 block of DE behind the bus stop. That is a dangerous spot in SW. Every day I check on her, have Comm. Conn. Check on her. I wake up at 4am to check on her before work at 7am. They just want to talk. Cant judge until you sit down to listen to them. Even if they don't want to talk, say okay and come back the next time. Have to keep checking.
 - At the end of the day, God knows your heart. We need help. I wasn't going to say anything, but we need help. Thank you.

Live Notes on Budget Engagement



General Public

- ❖ **Edward Wycliff (District Bridges):** I help co lead a small outreach team in Ward 1. For the next budget, need more focus on support for the people doing outreach. I only have informal partnerships, and have not been able to secure any formal partnerships. I reverse at least 75 overdoses a year. I do not have a single formal partner. There are too many obstacles outreach have to go through to formalize a working relationships. It costs average \$45,000 to pay a worker but \$75,000 to live in DC. People working are one paycheck away from homelessness themselves. Needs to be flexible. The inflexibility of the system can be demoralizing for the people I serve and people on my team.
 - One person I worked with was housed but had services and staff so deficient that she is back on the streets. She was rematched to the provider she was removed from and had complaints about. They didn't know how to do their job and applied for a unit for her but it was \$40 over rent reasonableness. A flexible system should be able to accommodate that.
 - If anyone needs support in Ward 1 or build partnerships, my team and I are at your service.

Live Notes on Budget Engagement



- ❖ **Ms. Umi:** To Joe. What you said. Many of us are native Washingtonians. When you say low class it feels like targeted language. Be careful. The history of the world and your people. The effects of slavery plays a role in homelessness.
 - I also read an article about renovations to Mayor Bowser's house, but we are cutting the budget elsewhere. Where are her receipts from her Dubai trip, etc.?
 - The process for a voucher and apartments is so slow.
 - Housing First does not make people address their issues. Makes it harder for landlords. Build more SROs or group homes to get people meals, showers, etc. Right now people don't want treatment.
- ❖ **Ms. Banks:** I need significant time for my comments. I must agree with persons who have spoken. Are you really listening? It will help in the overhaul of homeless services.
 - **TS (ICH):** We are at the end of meeting time. I can connect with you to itemize your concerns and escalate to the highest level.
 - **Ms. Banks:** I will take you at your word, but it must happen within 3 days or will lose all my belongings. Paid rent for 5 months but never moved in.

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We need support in finding a meeting space for the March meeting!

Do you have or know of a space that can accommodate us?

Email ich.info@dc.gov or connect directly with ICH staff!

