



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Interagency Council on Homelessness

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

Date and Time: February 19, 2013 2:00pm – 3:30pm

Location: New York Avenue Presbyterian Church 1313 New York Avenue, NE

Welcome and Introductions

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

Public Comments

- There is so much for DC to do with regard to repairing the education system in order to prevent homelessness among our youth
- Another attendee wants the ICH to address the issue of young people who are graduating from high school and can't read
- DHS has done a good job with Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) for the most vulnerable populations; it's now time to help people who need help finding a job (non vulnerable populations)
- The District needs additional support for elderly citizens that are chronically homeless living in the shelters
- Another attendee would like to receive Housing Taskforce recommendations on how homeless services should be funded next year; need feedback from that taskforce on how we should spend the money (the taskforce has met often and the Mayor is currently reviewing their recommendations)
- One attendee acknowledged the Mayor for allocating \$100M towards PSH
- A Miriam's Kitchen rep posed the question as to where the extra money the Mayor is promising is going to be distributed

Summary of Pre-Meeting

Maggie Riden provided the summary of the pre-meeting, which focused on the services that are provided to youth that are homeless. A few highlights of the discussion included:

- Need to have an increased capacity in the youth shelters; emergency and transitional
- Family conflict resolution is needed
- Youth find trouble navigating the adult system in order to identify the resources they need
- Not enough respect given to youth when service providers interact with youth; it is discouraging to the youth and they opt not to return for services
- Youth under 18 receive a lot of support but once they hit 18, they are automatically expected to support themselves



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- Truancy, being frustrated due to the stressors associated with meeting basic needs while trying to attend/excel at school – the government needs to look at strategies to address early indicators that contribute to homelessness

ICH Committee Reports

Executive Committee

- Focused on coordinating work of other ICH committees
- Changes to current internal ICH procedures forthcoming
- Meetings are open to anyone who is interested in participating
- Will meet monthly on the 1st Tuesday of every month at DHS (64 NY Avenue, NE, 6th floor); Next meeting: Tues, March 5th at 64 NY Ave 1:30pm

Strategic Planning

- Meeting last Tuesday of every month; next meeting February 26th from 2:30 to 4:30 at DHS at 64 New York Avenue, NE.

Operations and Logistics

- Program Monitoring report will be coming out soon
- Have been looking at successful communication strategies for getting information out about available resources for the homeless
- Next meeting will be held Wednesday, February 27th 2pm at DHS

Shelter Capacity

- Continues to monitor the utilization of single adult facilities
- Currently operating with its capacity on the individual side
- Only 66 families in hotels this year – major improvement from last year
- Next meeting: Thursday, February 21, 9AM at SOME (71 O Street)

Youth Subcommittee

- One of the goals of this committee is to bring the issue of youth homelessness to the ICH table

PSH Committee

- MOU for PSH, which sets out roles of the agencies that will be administering the PSH program, is near completion and is being sent around for final signatures
- There is a consolidated RFP which will be part of the FY13 NOFA



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- Will have a special meeting on February 28th to complete needs assessment; will be the foundation of the April NOFA

Summary of FY14 Strategic Annual Plan Public Comment Session – The summary for this session was distributed at the meeting

- The ICH will ask for draft work plans from agency directors in April and will reconvene in June to draft a plan
- The plan will be approved before the next Fiscal Year begins
- Goals: reduce number of people who are homeless; reduce return to homeless, reduce the length of homelessness, increase income, etc.
- Some recommendations call for more resources, others called for continued or better use of resources
- Based on public feedback:
 - Creating permanent affordable housing by looking at Housing First and other resources; investing in rapid rehousing, looking at affordable housing in general
 - Looking at ERAP and how to tweak that and improve its processes
 - Central intake unit to assist homeless individual
 - Preserving safety net
 - Victims of domestic violence support
 - More focus on youth
 - Looking at Medicaid to fund supportive services
 - Looking at procurement issues

APRA DMH Merger

- Will take place around October 1; a new department in DOH will form that will comprise of both APRA and DMH in order to increase greater access to services
- Goal is to have information about the merger on DMH's website in the next 10 days
- The main vision for this merger is that regardless of which door a customer walks into, they will be screened for substance abuse and mental illness

Youth Homelessness Presentation

- A handout was distributed; the information will be made available electronically on the ICH website (www.ich.dc.gov)
- The discussion dealt primarily with unaccompanied youth (not heads of household youth)



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What's Working Well

- Good programs are readily available to youth
- For youth 18-24, there is an array of services that are available
- Increase in beds for young families has also been very helpful

Current Scope of Need

- There are between 1,600 and 4,000 youth who have experienced homelessness in the City
- 497 of those were heads of household
- 5% of the DCPS population have been considered homeless at some point in the year
- Higher levels of truancy is associated with homelessness

Recommendations

- Effective strategies for prevention
- Look at factors that lead to homeless (eg. Truancy)
- Youth friendly referral and intake process
- Stable and strategic capacity investments through the continuum of care
- Streamline youth access to housing and other support services
- Need combination of channels to help youth link to services
- Increased capacity for emergency beds and traditional housing for both youth between 18 and 14, and for youth under 18
- All future capacity should be grounded in data to get a better handle on the types of services that are needed in the future

Overview of NY Ave Presbyterian Church

- Formed in 1859
- One of the most important decisions the church made was to remain in the City and build its current facility in 1951 in order to better service District residents
- Provides bus passes to people needing assistance to get to job assistance programs and job interviews