

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Interagency Council on Homelessness

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

Date and Time: June 18, 2013 2:00pm – 3:30pm

Location: N Street Village 1333 N Street, NW Washington, DC

Approximate Attendance: 125

Welcome and Introductions

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

Public Comment Period

- A meeting attendee announced on June 27th, that there will be a hearing at 11am at the Wilson Building room 500 concerning two shelters in DC.
- Another attendee called for the participants to protest the amendments to the HSRA since the decision has been delayed for 8 days. He also expressed his disappointment that many of the ICH members attended the recent hearing in support of the HSRA amendments.
- An America Works representative extended an invitation for attendees to send referrals to their organization at www.americaworks.com. They assist with job placement and work readiness services.
- Another attendee expressed frustration that the public was not consulted prior to the release of the proposed changes to the HSRA amendments.

ICH Committee Reports

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

- Meets on the first Tuesday of every month.
- Next meeting is July 2nd at 64 New York Ave, NE
- Kimberly Black has stepped down as co-chair of the executive committee; Polly Donaldson is now the new co-chair of the committee

Operations and Logistics Committee – Chapman Todd, Catholic Charities

- Continues to meet on the 4th Wednesday of each month
- Next meeting is on Wednesday, June 26th at 1pm at 64 NY Ave – will review first draft of the FY14 Winter Plan
- The Winter Plan will be presented at the next ICH meeting – has to be approved by September

Shelter Capacity Subcommittee – Michael Ferrell, Coalition for the Homeless

- Meets this Thursday, June 20th at 9am at SOME

- In the process of working on the capacity numbers for the FY14 Winter Plan for the individual and family shelters

Presentation of the Draft Annual Plan

- **Youth – Steve Baron & Sue Marshall**
 - The sub-committee convened for six hours to talk specifically about the needs of youth ages 12-17 and to make a series of recommendations to the Deputy Mayor; a follow-up meeting occurred as well
 - 40 representatives of about 30 citywide agencies participated in the meeting
 - They realized that they don't know the magnitude of the problem:
 - Recommendation #1 - need to develop a data-driven needs assessment that would capture data from our network of those serving homeless youth
 - Recommendation #2: Develop a directory of existing resources for youth ages 12-17
 - Will look at conducting a youth count since the PIT Count isn't effective in gathering youth data
 - Recommendation #3: Use existing continuum by expanding opportunities based on certain principles/criteria: built on the existing homeless youth network; must be family-centric since these are still youth; include complete assessments for each unaccompanied child that enters the system; provide crisis intervention and a safe place for every child; there needs to be clarity that the service provider would not be responsible for providing all of the services the youth needs; provide host homes as needed, etc.
 - TCP will utilize youth homeless experts
 - CFSA will provide training and consultations
 - Host homes: TCP will procure 1-2 licensed host homes; will include a per diem rate that will be paid only while children stay in the home; this will be a short-stay placement; will focus on family reunification whenever possible
 - 18-24 population: TCP has created a partnership in order to provide 24 beds to these youth at 801 East for those already housed in the system (currently, there are 20 18-24 years olds)
- **Families – David A. Berns**
 - Chairman Graham called a meeting to discuss the large numbers of homeless in shelters and called for a new strategy to combat this growth
 - Handout was distributed: *From Shelter to Housing: Restructuring The District of Columbia's Approach to Serving Families*
 - In the handout, several goals were detailed: shorten length of stay in shelters by making the time in shelter count by implementing effective social services; expanding the use of permanent supportive housing; better use of/expanding existing resources; reduce return to shelter, reduce number of family emergency shelter units, etc.
 - CFSA: partnering with DHS at the VWFRC to assist families even during Hypothermia and non-Hypothermia days, those who have exceeded the 5-year time limit and lost TANF benefits, etc; provided funding of \$1 million to assist families. Came up with a protocol for determining eligibility: Priority 1 families who can't be accommodated by the shelter system will be referred to the co-located CFSA staff members at VWFRC starting in July. They will do

a triage service and will determine if the family needs to be referred to the CFSA hotline or another service that can better serve the family.

- **Individuals – Kurt Runge & Michael Kelly**

- Coordinated Entry System (CES)
 - Making it easy for people to access the services they needed quickly and efficiently through a central pathway to services
 - Set goals for the CES: assessing the needs of clients; building in case management services to provide follow-up services; referral gateway
 - The group is currently gathering input on what a CES would look like. The ICH pre-meeting discussed the CES and many provided some feedback: Make sure it doesn't create barriers to shelter, jobs or housing; make sure the assessment tool is something that everyone can trust and deems valuable; Make sure that the shelter staff or whoever is working on the assessment is really well-trained.
 - Next step: design a pilot program that would build in assessment and referral gateway and working with the agency housing providers to complete this task
- Rapid Rehousing/ERAP Pilot
 - DC has almost passed a budget for the City and there is funding for single adult rapid rehousing pilot program for about 50-100 individuals
 - Rapid Rehousing is a program that provides time-limited subsidy and supportive services to move people out of shelter and into their own housing
 - Feedback was given at the pre-meeting: Make sure the program is designed so that it is successful and so that the people in the program don't become homeless at the end of its funding period; Make sure screening is done so that the right people are in this pilot program to ensure its success
- PSH Production
 - 200 individuals will be served
 - Met on June 4th to discuss what is PSH; important to know the definition to help with advocacy efforts
 - Discussed impact of the Mayor's new budget on PSH: One benefit is that more money is now available for the production of affordable housing
 - Over 2,679 units will be in production by 2020
 - Have been tasked to determine the cost of PSH: will communicate the cost at the next meeting
 - Will begin to focus on FY15 production goals in October 2013
 - Recommendation #1: Target the services to people who really need
 - Recommendation #2: Advertise it to the shelters so that people will know about it
 - Next Meeting is TBA, but will occur somewhere between late July-early August

Performance Measurement, Next Steps - Sakina Thompson

- Reduce rate of homelessness among individuals, families, veterans
- Establish tools to measure success of work plan
- Will begin to assess what the annual work plan will look like for the year

Annual Plan Charge to Agency Directors - Allen Y. Lew, City Administrator

- Will ask his staff to draft something to each director to ask them to identify what their agency will accomplish in FY2014 that will address the issues of the ICH; Darrell Cason will work with each director to complete this task.
- Will ask that all agency directors attend future ICH meetings; will begin to take attendance going forward.

Public Comments

- One attendee stated his concerns that the elderly and disabled homeless population may be getting overlooked
- Another person inquired how much it costs per year to house someone at DC General vs. a hotel: \$50,000/yr per family at DC General. It nearly costs about the same at the hotels. One person at a shelter = \$20/night
- Another attendee recalled a DOES online training that was offered in the past - wasn't widely publicized and a lot of people didn't know about it; she was wondering if DOES plans to do another training in order to keep homeless job applicants relevant to potential employers
- Someone asked to have WMATA CEO present at the meetings
- The Strategic Planning Committee asked that any ideas or suggestions that did not make it into the Strategic Plan be submitted to them
- DCHA reported that 65 vouchers were received to assist homeless veterans. Call 202-636-7660 if you know a homeless veteran who needs a voucher
- Another person noted that there are 50+ cranes up throughout the city, but it isn't clear how many of them are building affordable housing to help the homeless.
- One young adult claimed that the plan to put 18-24 yr olds who have already been in a shelter will not work.

Meeting Adjourned.