

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Interagency Council on Homelessness

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

Date and Time: October 17, 2013 2:00pm – 3:30pm

Location: 801 East Shelter – 2700 MLK Ave, SE Washington, DC 20032

Approximate Attendance: 150

**Welcome and Introductions**

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

**Public Comment Period**

- One youth from Sasha Bruce commented that emergency shelter is a must for young people.
- Another homeless youth stated that he is saddened by the fact that homeless youth are considered non-essential when it comes to finding shelter for them. He credited Sasha Bruce's Youth Build program as the reason for his success as a young adult (he was able to gain an internship at DC Water). He made a plea for the City to address youth homelessness at a greater capacity. – Mr. Lew offered to assist the youth with a career opportunity at DC Water.
- Another youth proposed that the status quo of turning away youth cannot happen; a one-size-fits-all approach to helping homeless youth is not working and needs to change; DC needs a network of evidence-based resources that would better assist youth and invest in a youth-friendly outreach and intake system.
- Another youth informed the group about ongoing discussions about the future of the CCNV shelter - there is a taskforce that is running through April 8<sup>th</sup> to work on what will be done about this property. He also mentioned information about plans about the 801 East shelter being destroyed in the future – he would like to see these issues being discussed at future ICH meetings. Director David Berns stated that nothing has been stated in terms of how soon the changes will be made to 801 East, but he is sure that DHS will be given ample time to take care of those living in the shelter.
- Council Member Jim Graham's office announced that the Winter Plan roundtable has been scheduled for Tuesday, October 29<sup>th</sup> at 11am in Room 123 of the Wilson Building.

**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 meets on the first Tuesday of every month. – next meeting is 11/5 at 1:30pm at DHS-64 New York Ave, NE.
- The CCNV taskforce has been established and the committee has selected Cheryl Barnes as the ICH representative on the taskforce.

### **Operations and Logistics Committee – Chapman Todd, Catholic Charities**

- The committee continues to meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month – Next meeting 10/23 at 1pm at DHS – will focus on issues concerning family homelessness.
- A training for outreach staff and workers was conducted on 10/17 at the 801 East shelter, led by TCP; if anyone is interested in receiving this training, contact Darrell Cason (darrell.cason3@dc.gov).
- DC is part of a rapid results campaign to end veteran homelessness; the goal is to get 225 vets housed – we are currently mid-way through the campaign and so far, 41 chronically homeless veterans have been housed, and 123 total homeless veterans have been housed. DCHA has been very instrumental in helping DC move toward its ultimate goal.

### **Shelter Capacity Subcommittee**

- The committee met on 10/17/13 and discussed the current state of the shelters.
- Through the end of September 2013, single adult shelters were operating within their capacity.
- Next meeting is scheduled 11/21 at SOME (71 O St, NW) at 9am

### **Strategic Planning Subcommittee**

- The committee meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month
- Responsible for the ICH annual work plan and winter plan
- Will be focusing on the performance benchmarks and where we are going
- Next meeting is Tuesday, October 22 at 2:30pm at DHS (64 New York Ave, NE)

### **Youth Subcommittee – Sue Marshall**

- The committee has put the Request For Proposal (RFP) for host homes on hold. In the interim, the committee has expanded the short-term emergency capacity for youth under 18 years of age. The RFP will be issued out over the next few weeks from Child and Family Service Agency (CFSA) – there will be a bidder's conference for all interested organizations once the RFP has been released.
- The committee will continue to work on data collection and analysis; and have been evaluating the turn-away data that has been collected – 50% of the youth reported to the Committee are also linked with other agencies and are receiving services. The Committee will look at collaborating with those agencies to create a more centralized approach to serving the youth.
- The committee meets on the first Wednesday of the month – Next meeting is November 6<sup>th</sup> at 2pm at TCP – will present an update on the data that was collected at the last committee meeting
- The youth program at 801 East is fully staffed and is at its capacity of 23 youth

### **PSH Update – Polly Donaldson & Michael Kelly**

- The committee meets every other month on the first Thursday – Next meeting December 5<sup>th</sup> from 2:00pm -3:30pm at DHCD
- Will work on FY15 commitments for PSH according to the PSH production plan
- Contact Polly Donaldson (pdonaldson@thcdc.org) to be added to the contact list

### **Summary of Pre-meeting Forum**

- The topic dealt with the ID crisis for the homeless population: Three barriers have emerged making it difficult for the homeless to obtain identification cards – 1) The DMV has changed its policy and will no longer accept the homeless voucher for returning ID applicants. There is a now \$20 fee for returning ID applicants. 2) The food stamp ID program was shut down due to fraudulent activity 3) stricter guidelines now exist in order to obtain a Social Security Card. The reason this is an issue is because any vital service required to assist the homeless requires them to have a valid photo ID. The presenter urged the ICH to get the homeless voucher reinstated so that the homeless can obtain IDs – Mr. Lew stated that a meeting will be set up with his staff to address this issue.

### **Winter Plan Addendum and Vote**

**In regard to the Winter Plan, there were three things for consideration:**

- Updated "Shelter for Families" section. A document showing the revised language was presented. This piece was updated to reflect changes in the planned hours for Virginia Williams Family Resource Center.
- Revised "Children and Young Adults" Section. A document showing the revised section was presented. This has been updated to respond to questions raised at the August ICH meeting.
- The Winter Plan document was also modified to reflect that the Mount Vernon United Methodist Church has replaced Community of Christ Church as a location for Men's Alert Night only capacity. Note that the numbers of beds available remains the same -- just the location has changed.

\* One ICH member commented that the Winter Plan does not offer a clear-cut explanation on how to assist the youth. Director Berns stated that there is a protocol in place where homeless services staff should work with the runaway homeless youth and CFSA to screen youth who enter the homeless services system to determine the appropriate next steps.

\* The ICH majority did not pass the FY14 Winter Plan youth addendum.

\*Mr. Lew directed the Youth committee and the Operations and Logistics committee to tweak the language of the Plan to have it ready for vote for the next meeting which will be scheduled for November.

### **FY14 Annual Plan Presentations – DC Government Agency Directors**

- **DHS (Department of Human Services)** – Some goals include reducing length homelessness: 300 new families housed; 80 families housed thru ERAP; 50 new individuals, etc. The 2-page proposed goals report can be made available by contacting Darrell Cason (darrell.cason3@dc.gov)
- **DBH (Department of Behavioral Health)** - FY14 goal: create 80-150 new housing units for homeless individuals

- **DCHA (DC Housing Authority)** – house a minimum 330 homeless families and individuals in 2014; 600 more units for affordable housing
- **CFSA (Child and Family Services Agency)** – will ensure that youth who age out are equipped to be self-sufficient – there will be a rapid rehousing program available for those youth who do not have housing upon emancipation
- **DHCD (Department of Housing and Community Development)** – 200 new units; consolidated RFP
- **DOES (Department of Employment Services)** – providing workforce development training for youth aging out of foster care; rapid reemployment housing program; have served over 1,000 homeless individuals in the past year; scheduling and on-site employment event at Virginia Williams to provide assistance to homeless customers; will increase 5% more homeless individuals in 2014.
- **HSEMA (Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency)** – will continue to send out weather alerts and are willing to assist agencies as needed.
- **MPD (Metropolitan Police Department)** – will continue to support the DC agencies and nonprofits and will do referrals services, respond to calls from shelters and other support as needed.

The Annual Plan was accepted by the majority of the ICH body.

#### **Announcement**

The new Executive Director of the ICH position is available, which will come under the City Administrator's office. It will go under classification at DCHR and will be posted momentarily.

**Meeting Adjourned.**