



May 4, 2018, 8 am
Randee Rogers Training Center
1419 Rosa L. Parks Blvd, Nashville

Attending:

Marvin Cox, Bob Freeman, Paula Foster, Liz Allen Fey, Quan Poole, John Krenson, Norman Humber, Wendell Segroves, Renee Pratt, Charles Strobel, Mina Johnson, Charlotte Peacock, Adrienne Harris, Freddie O'Connell, Tim Leeth, Tom Turner, Ellen Zinkiewicz, Treva Gilligan

Approval of minutes: Motion – Paula Foster, Second – Wendell Segroves. All approved.

Ordinance discussion and vote:

Liz Allen Fey reported that there needs to be a vote on moving forward the ordinance presented at last meeting. she or the Homelessness Commission staff received no comments or additions to ordinance after last meeting. Liz Allen Fey requested to put forward a motion regarding vote and then have a discussion. The Commission needs to move to approve the ordinance contingent upon approval of the MSS board and Continuum of Care (CoC) membership vote on their charter. Paula Foster moved. Marvin Cox seconded.

Discussion and concerns were had regarding the Ordinance. Commission Leeth stated he could not support the ordinance due to concerns about its fidelity to the HEARTH Act and difficulty to make changes to the ordinance should they be necessary in the future. Additionally, he expressed concerns that the Ordinance does not allow the CoC membership to do its job.

Metro Legal and the Commission Chair provided statements referring to HUD's response through Cloudburst to the ordinance and the intent of the value of the Ordinance to help ensure Metro's commitment to end homelessness. Their comments assured the community that combining the two governing bodies will be stronger and assist the membership in their work. Metro Legal also pointed out that the Ordinance approval is contingent upon the vote of the general membership to approve or not approve the CoC Charter, which complements the Ordinance.

Freddie O'Connell reported he did suggest updates during the last meeting that were not made regarding mentioning stakeholder involvement. Freddie O'Connell said that if the Commission wants to vote today, when the ordinance arrives at Metro Council, the recital would need to be adjusted. As written, implementation isn't affected but the Ordinance currently speaks to the technical work that was done, but it does not speak to the number of stakeholders that were involved. He said it was very important to note those stakeholders and the community efforts and involvements to get to this point. Liz Allen Fey reported she was sorry that that didn't happen. Charles Strobel stated the addition needed to happen.

Freddie O'Connell said he was happy to vote on the Ordinance contingent upon it being updated because it is important to speak on how momentous this work is. Liz Allen Fey said there was a motion on the table and asked for the process for a second. Liz Allen Fey said amendments to a motion can be entertained and the ordinance can be amended for second reading at Council. Liz Allen Fey asked for all in favor? Majority- yes. Tim Leeth- opposed.

The Charter will be reviewed and voted upon at the CoC Governance Board meeting, next Wednesday at 9am and the CoC membership meeting, April 17th at 10am.

Extreme weather Ad Hoc committee report:

Bob Freeman reported that group has had quite a few meetings and have agreed on a five goals that the group would like to implement as a pilot program after getting community input.

The Five Goals:

1. The first goal is to open 3 cold weather shelter locations at a distance from the downtown core- Madison, West and South Nashville. The exact locations are still being discussed.
2. The second goal is to develop a plan to reach out to those who don't go to current system i.e. people with pets, couples, etc.
3. The third goal relates to extreme weather like tornadoes, extreme heat and what shelter options should be available at these times.
4. The fourth goal is to evaluate the communications process and around people experiencing homelessness and other nonprofits.
5. The fifth goal is to further define Metro's responsibility so everyone knows Metro's roll. Renee Pratt and MSS are currently doing a lot of what is outside of their defined role and they're getting help from other metro stakeholders that are doing work outside of their roles. The intent of defining roles is so everyone can stay in their lane and help ensure no duplication of services to make most of resources.

The group would like to run this idea as a pilot program and asked Freddie O'Connell and Mina Johnson about the best way to propose the program to the Metro Council for funding. Freddie O'Connell said it is going to be challenging because the budget is strained. Bob Freeman asked if it makes sense to request funding and start an RFP for nonprofits or grant money. Freddie O'Connell replied if the Commission agrees with the proposal, when MSS and the Commission come to budget hearings, include this proposal in their budget requests.

Additionally, there was agreement by this committee to open at 28 degrees Fahrenheit. That number is based on input from people experiencing homelessness and information on calls etc. When there are sustained periods of below 32 degrees, people can be more willing to come in and this would maximize use of the shelters. Tim Leeth said if we go by when you can die of exposure, the shelter could be at 50 degrees. The temperature set should be when people want to go indoors. The partners and group will discuss the new number of 28 degrees.

John Krenson asked will MSS be responsible for the shelters. Bob Freeman answered that they would not be. Renee Pratt reported this coming winter, MSS will be responsible for shelters due to lack of time to implement the new plan. By 2019 the goal is to have new plan in place. Commission will be responsible to ensure an RFP happens.

Charles Strobel said that there are 2 issues regarding the shelters. The first issue is capacity. The capacity for these shelters is set at 50. What will happen if 51, 52 people come? That will lead to tension and opposition. How will this be solved? Renee Pratt answered that hopefully this will not be an issue because MSS doesn't turn anyone away from shelter and the shelter capacity normally exceeds the mark. Bob Freeman said he appreciates Mr. Strobel's statement, but he's not sure he has a good answer for that yet. Extended capacity will be encouraged. The transportation situation has also been discussed. It is very important to everyone to keep numbers low from the host site to encourage use. Charles Strobel said nothing has ever been perfect and when everyone is not satisfied, it puts people on the defensive who are providing shelters. Renee Pratt said more education can be done about the Rescue Mission and Room in the Inn to fill those beds first. Freddie O'Connell said it is important that this is presented as a pilot and to try to make progress. Bob Freeman said the locations selected are based on need, and are not limited to 3, but 3 seemed like a manageable pilot program.

Liz Allen Fey said she wanted to charge the group with the question, how will this help connect people with housing? Bob Freeman said the group did talk about that issue and about services at locations and that being a part of the RFP. Bob Freeman said he pushed back against that being included because these are emergency shelters. Freddie O'Connell said Judy Tackett brought up idea that creating a shelter bed suggests need for 6 housing units. Bob's focus on shelter is appreciated because the recommendation has to be tasked with a solution to problem. Liz Allen Fey said she didn't want the charge to be an obstacle but to ensure every interaction is about people moving ahead.

Discussion was had regarding who would be responsible for each goal, how data is captured to allow us to reach people better, and what the focus was currently on extreme heat. Many of these pieces still need to be worked through.

Bob Freeman proposed approval of the pilot program that will go before Metro Council with 5 goals discussed. Paula Foster said before she can approve the pilot program, she would like to see it in writing with the details laid out. Liz Allen Fey asked could the presentation in front of Metro Council be approved because it has to be presented by May 17th? Bob Freeman said there is an estimated cost and partners that have tentatively agreed. Liz Allen Fey said we approve creation of pilot program to be presented to Metro Council. Motion amended to a presentation of pilot program. Second – Paula Foster. All in favor – yes.

Announcements:

Liz Allen Fey referenced a fact sheet on the proposed downtown service center that will be discussed more at the June meeting. Ann Harvard requested a conversation regarding proposal next month and that over the summer the proposal will be finalized.

Moment of silence held.

Public Comments:

Dr. Julie West said as the only physician in room, she needed to speak to the arbitrary nature of conversation regarding temperature. The elements can affect people outside at much higher temperatures than 32 degrees. She appreciated that people seek shelter at different times for different reasons. The complexities of barriers of people that don't seek shelters are extreme. That capacity will never be maximized based on current shelter barriers.

Samuel Lester said he would like to follow up on the previous comment. He thinks the new plan is great, but wondered if office of emergency management can't be asked to fund some of it agreeing with Dr. West about temperature and 37 degrees is kind of the ideal. One of the biggest problems is getting in and getting back to shelters and he appreciated that acknowledgement. An expansion of the bus program would be very helpful. We can get people to the shelter, but getting people back is very difficult and distribution would help. We are very thankful to Room and the Inn and the Mission and the issue comes up particularly with the Mission due to previous bad experiences and people will stick to it no matter what.

Bob Freeman answered he does appreciate that fact. Part of the communication and intent is to gather all stakeholders and help others advocate for people who don't want to go. There needs to be more encouragement from an outreach standpoint regarding resources.

Samuel Lester said in almost every case they offer to take people to mission, particularly if there is no shelter open and the answer is almost always no. Yes, it is costly to have emergency shelters, but for people dying on the streets, that also add up the indigent burial costs. Those costs alone could pay for the shelter program.

Freddie O'Connell said he would follow up with Samuel Lester more about transportation piece.

Stephanie Johnson said Renee Pratt mentioned lack of resources and Bob Freeman mentioned funding being a hurdle. Shelters not having enough room and the dispersing of shelters was also mentioned. Do you have a suggestion to fund outreach workers to help people that come into shelters that work with people to come into shelters? Liz Allen Fey said the idea is to hopefully use navigators. John Krenson said that coordinated entry personnel could also be utilized.