

Metropolitan Homelessness Commission
February 3, 2017

Present voting members: Liz Allen Fey, chair, Freddie O'Connell, Mary Carolyn Roberts, Dayna Lovelady, Wendell Segroves, Paula Forster, non-voting members: Erik Cole, Renee Pratt, Jennifer Williams (for Marving Cox), Ellen Zinkiewicz, Angie Hubbard; Legal rep: Josh Lee, MSS Finance Director: Lisa Ricketts
Staff: Judith Tackett, Jessica Ivey, Deon Trotter, Troy Jenkins, Sally Besuden

Welcome & Roll Call

Meeting called to order 9:31am

Liz Allen Fey took roll call and remarked that we do not have a quorum. To have a quorum more than half of the voting members need to be present (we only had 6 voting members, but needed 8).

Ms. Fey quickly went over the agenda before the commissioners and said that we have a guest, Rosanne Haggerty, and with permission from the public, she'd like to keep the first public input session to 10 minutes.

Minutes

Due to a lack of quorum, no minutes were approved.

Financials

Lisa Ricketts reported that the January budget was not closed out yet. As of December, the Metropolitan Homelessness Commission is on track with this year's budget.

Budget Presentation & Discussion

Liz Allen Fey said she wanted commissioners to look at financials and understand the budget process – how we use the dollars that are given to us. and 2. Discussion about governance

Judith Tackett said she sent out a document with budget changes to commissioners ahead of time. She then went on to explain that due to the current governance conversations and the transition the Commission was in, she decided to focus in the budget request on FY17/18. Ms. Tackett said she looked at what the Commission has. The Nashville Outreach Team for Encampments (N.O.T.E.) is funded by a non-renewable grant. Ms. Tackett said she asks to include that team into the Metro budget moving forward. In addition, she is asking for an office assistance to help with financials and by doing that serve as a liaison between the Commission and housing navigators/partner agencies. Finally, the third piece is to position the Commission to look at data and performance outcomes. We are also shifting Homelink, our internal database for the coordinated entry system to HMIS. To do so, users of Homelink need HMIS licenses to be able to enter data into HMIS. Ms. Tackett requests \$25,000 for additional 100 licenses.

Liz Allen Fey asked commissioners what, in their view, the Commission does. Ellen Zinkiewicz said what the Commission has done well is convening and looking at

where gaps are and who is best to fill them. Often it has been the Commission to fill those gaps with a Metro intervention or because there was not a logical gap filler. “I have always been comfortable with that, I naturally see the value in that but we don’t need to be in places where other people are.” Renee Pratt agreed and asked Erik Cole to talk about the history of the Commission and list the original purpose. Erik Cole did that.

Freddie O’Connell said the Commission just shifted to monthly meetings. He critiqued the lack of a quorum saying it was disappointing. He then said that he struggles with the Commission staffing an outreach team and providing direct services. Further discussion ensued about the need to request the N.O.T.E. in this year’s budget. Erik Cole said that one of the things that Cloudburst Group, the HUD Technical Assistance group, recommended this week that during this transition phase, we should make sure we work from the principle of “do no harm.” He also said how impressed they were that we had a Metro outreach team. Judith Tackett said that during the past months, the outreach staff has served as a link for the Commission on what’s going on on the ground. It improves coordination when we have that link. In addition, the outreach team’s purpose it to coordinate with other departments and other outreach teams and link people to services. Ms. Tackett further stated that she did not know where the team would end up, but for now, she felt it was important to ensure their work continues and that’s why she requested them in the Metro budget. Freddie O’Connell said he could agree with the “do no harm” principle and he was on board with the request to continue the team. Paula Foster said she felt comfortable moving forward with the budget. Ms. Tackett stated that the goal of this budget was to maintain where the Commission currently is. She said she wanted to be clear with commissioners where her thinking was. She said she believes complex social issues need to be solved locally with dedicated local resources and to look at where the current resources are and how we are using them. She said, the Commission should focus on housing, housing, and housing. To do that, the Commission needs the data to get us there, and do that, we need to implement an efficient Coordinated Entry System. The current budget is to get us through this transition process and to position us to take the next steps.

Commissioners then discussed how to move forward with the budget approval when there is a lack of a quorum. Josh Lee said since the Homelessness Commission really is a sub-commission under the Metro Social Services board of commissioners, there is no legal vote needed.

Thus, the Commission requested Renee Pratt, as the executive director of Metro Social Service, to submit the budget as presented for approval to the MSS board of commissioners.

Governance: Update on the Cloudburst engagement

Freddie O’Connell gave a quick recap. Last year at this time, the Commission was presented with the Focus Strategies report, which pointed out that our community needs to address governance and effectively streamline it.

The Commission created a Governance Task Force. At the same time, MDHA received HUD TA through Cloudburst, and MDHA recommended to co-align the two efforts, which has been done. There were listening sessions for the community. Cloudburst this week came back with 3 governance options. One was to create a new nonprofit, the second option was to follow the Focus Strategies recommendation and align leadership with the Homelessness Commission, and the third option was a strength based model with MDHA providing data management and the Commission to be reworked for the leadership board/governance board. In the third model the management would remain at MDHA. The discussions so far indicate that option 1 is not really viable for Nashville at this time. Thus, it seemed options 2 and 3 are the ones to examine.

The next steps in the process include that by March 16, the CoC has a solid governance charter that outlines membership and sets the community up for a vote, and for Metro and MDHA each to provide a community presentation about what they bring to the table. In order for either option to take effect, the Commission would have to be in compliance with the HEARTH Act (Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act). Cloudburst will help with this process. Josh Lee will help with the legal ramifications.

Liz Allen Fey said there was robust conversation going on. The focus was on getting people into homes. Freddie O'Connell will be reconvening the task force because it was important to discuss what the Commission needs to do moving forward with a focus of what the community needs and which option best supports that people can quickly access housing.

Public Input Session

A request was made to use the public Webpage to announce the meeting, which Judith Tackett said was done with all agendas posted 7 days ahead of time and minutes within 3-5 business days after approval.

Steve Reiter requested a public comment period at the beginning of the meeting so that that public can offer agenda items. He also said he was concerned about giving out additional 100 licenses for HMIS. There were big privacy considerations and security issues with that.

John Zirker thanked Judith Tackett for her statement that the focus of the Commission needed to be on housing. He said most of what he was hearing was about resources, but most of the players were always the same. With Nashville being a booming city (cashville), he said we needed to talk about resources from that table.

Randall Venson said he was a case manager for 15 years and the last 7 years he has been working with the homeless. He said the issue was land appropriation. He said the community needed to organize around land appropriation so the housing can be built.

Samuel Lester said the current administration (federal) made threats around immigrants. He pointed out that several people here in Nashville were living on the streets who are legal immigrants and refugees, but they have lost their documentation. He asked Metro to help facilitate a way for people to regain their documentation. He suggested that a modest amount of money could help with that. Commissioners responded and felt this was a good point that probably needed to be pursued with the Center for Immigrants and Refugees?

Howard Allen criticized the lack of quorum. He also pointed to the investment in a new soccer stadium and that the math for him just doesn't add up because he could not understand how we do not make human lives the top priority.

Cold Weather

Judith Tackett reported that based on public input, shelter and outreach providers convened on Jan. 18 and it was decided that Metro will open an overflow emergency shelter at 25 degrees ambient temperature. She then reported that tonight was predicted to be below 25 degrees and Metro Social Services was opening 75 beds at East Park Community Center from 9pm to 8am tomorrow.

How's Nashville

Judith Tackett reported the final numbers, which just came in, from the 2016 by 2016 campaign. The 2016 by 2016 campaign was launched on January 1, 2015 with the goal to assist 2016 people access permanent housing. That number broke down to try to help 1,421 people experiencing chronic homelessness or who were extremely vulnerable. However, as a community, we did only count the people we assisted who were chronically homeless. In addition, the goal included housing 595 Veterans who were homeless.

Outcomes: 1,741 people housed between Jan. 1, 2015 and Dec. 31, 2016. Of those 1,281 experience chronic homelessness and 461 were veterans. Looking at the time prior to the collaborative effort called How's Nashville, our community increased its monthly housing placement rate for the chronically homeless population by 184% from 19 people/month to 54 people per month.

Two support services programs consistently report a housing retention rate of 80-82% after 12 month in housing. Ms. Tackett said, national studies have shown that without support services, the housing retention rate for people who had experienced chronic homelessness is about 30-35%.

Ms. Tackett stressed the partnership and highlighted the many partner organizations that worked together to achieve these community outcomes. She said, "How's Nashville is all of us."

Ms. Tackett then introduced Rosanne Haggerty, the president and CEO of Community Solutions, the national organization that is the brainchild behind local campaigns like How's Nashville and 2016 by 2016.

Rosanne Haggerty commended Nashville for the work we are doing. “We often point to Nashville for the work around the community’s resourcefulness and landlord engagement.”

Ms. Haggerty highlighted the importance of coordinating resources to achieve powerful new results. She said her organization found that it was important to focus on a hard goal, which is how to count down to zero. Build for Zero is the new effort by Community Solutions, which is challenging because it means for communities to get to a sustainable end to chronic and veteran homelessness. “You have to be on top of how you are reducing homelessness on a day to day basis.”

Ms. Haggerty stressed the importance of creating a real time By Name List, which offers data in real time. She said as a community we needed to know who the people are who experience homelessness, which will help us to focus on individualized solutions and hone in on the real issues.

Ms. Haggerty also stressed the need to create a housing system that helps everyone. She talked about Housing First as a philosophy and an approach that works. And third, she spoke about coordinated entry into and coordinated exit out of programs.

Erik Cole asked Ms. Haggerty about her thought of our governance discussion. Ms. Haggerty suggested there needed to be a clear oversight mechanism, but also a day-to-day command center. She spoke about these two layers of governance as one layer representing the community and the other monitoring the day to day work. Community that make progress have both – inclusion at the top layer and crisp execution at the bottom layer. Both these leadership efforts need to be aligned.

Moment of Silence

The Commission observed a moment of silence for Michael Waters, Chris Burney (formerly homeless), Mary Asafari, Tim Parker, Gary Evans (passed away in December, was not included in our last meeting), Michael Moore , Scott Gilliland (passed away a year ago, but his remains were found in January), Royce McCrary, and Kelonda Holt.

Announcements

Freddie O’Connell mentioned a new initiative by the Metro Human Relations Commission called Respect Nashville.

Paula Foster asked whether the Website could be updated. Judith Tackett said she was aware of the outdated Website and would take a look, but she added she wanted to wait on revamping the Website until the Commission has determined its purpose.

Public Comment

Barry Hobbes suggested the Commission adopt an attendance policy that would kick off people who do not regularly attend (missing 3 meetings triggers a warning, after missing 5 meetings, commissioners should resign). Ms. Hobbes acknowledged some progress was done, but more can be done. He talked about the need for a \$100 million investment over a 5-year period to solve the homelessness situation. He also

asked on behalf of someone else how much it cost to bring Rosanne Haggerty to Nashville. She responded that she was visiting and paid for her trip herself. She just happened to be here in Nashville on the day we had a Commission meeting. Mr. Hobbes asked to expand the public speaking time from 3 to 5 minutes.

Liz Allen Fey said she would reach out to commissioner about the importance to attend meetings. She also pointed out that we just recently moved to a monthly meeting and some commissioners may already have had standing commitments for today.

Madge Johnson asked whether the set up of the table could go back to where the public can see the faces of the commissioners. The way the room was set up today made it hard to hear everyone and follow the conversation.

Meeting was adjourned.