

**Metropolitan Homelessness Commission Meeting
May 12, 2017**

Minutes

Present: Liz Allen Fey, chair; Wendell Segroves, Renee Pratt, Erik Cole, Jim Harbison, Paula Foster, Mina Johnson, Norman Number, Dayna Lovelady, Rod DeVore, Charles Strobel, Marvin Cox, Freddie O'Connell, Angie Thompson, Tom Turner, Sgt. Ricky Bearden, Mark Murray (Metro Legal)

Staff: Judith Tackett, Jessica Ivey, Deon Trotter, Lisa Ricketts (MSS Finance Director)

Call to order at: 9:34am

Liz Allen Fey thanked everyone for being here and acknowledged issues with parking, which caused people to walk in a little later than usual.

Roll Call: Ms. Fey established that a quorum was present.

Minutes:

Freddie O'Connell moved to adopt the minutes, Paula Foster seconded, all approved.

Financials:

Lisa Ricketts presented the financials, which were on budget.

Renee Pratt announced that Metro Social Services, which includes the Homelessness Commission budget, will go before the Metro Council for a budget hearing on May 18, 2017.

Ms. Fey said she was happy and pleased to hear Mayor Barry's state of Metro address. Renee Pratt confirmed that all incentives requested by the Commission were approved in the Mayor's budget proposal.

Policies:

Judith Tackett reported that usually the Metropolitan Homelessness Commission falls under Metro Social Services policies and procedures. But once in a while there were issues that needed a policy that was specific to the Metropolitan Homelessness Commission. She said all she wanted to do was announce that she will take a careful look at this and start bringing policy issues that pertain to the Commission before the executive committee. Right now, there were two such policies: one regarding public meeting announcements, the second a policy on how to deal with media that requests campsite visits if they are requesting to go along with the NOTE (Nashville Outreach Team for Encampments).

Public Comment:

Tim Smith spoke about the CoC governance process. He said that the Commission cannot do much until it figures out what it is going to do (its role is) before it can even know what it will do with the CoC. Mr. Smith also gave his feedback on the CoC Governance Charter, which Erik Cole took note of. He said that subcommittees

usually have a clear definition of their roles, but the executive committee in the Governance Charter document does not.

Howard Allen requested that the Commission look into where there is a place to go in the heat for people who are banned from the library system. A place with air conditioning and water. Wendell Segroves agrees. Liz Allen Fey asked whether there was a Metro policy on hot weather. Judith Tackett responded that she asked OEM that question at the last Cold Weather planning session. When it gets really hot over a few days, there are public spaces that open up and are promoted as cooling spaces. In addition, OEM has in the past parked cooling buses in central locations. Ms. Tackett will reach out to OEM.

Samuel Lester said until last year the U.S. Mayors report presented unduplicated numbers from emergency shelters and transitional shelters. He wanted to know whether this information was still being gathered. He also asked when the PIT count was being released. Suzie Tolmie said it was important to develop consensus. Sean Muldoon, who chairs the new CoC/Homelessness Commission data committee (it is a combined committee) said the PIT numbers were complete and MDHA was preparing a press release. Judith Tackett responded from the Commission's perspective that the city at this point was unable to produce unduplicated numbers, which was part of the problems we are dealing with. She said that's why it was so important to build quality By Name Lists, which the Commission would like to do using HMIS. By Name Lists would provide us with some real-time data on how many people we know, by name, who experience literal homelessness. We'll be starting with a focus on the Veterans BNL. Liz Allen Fey said that the Commission was aware that this was one of the areas we need to work on.

Charles Strobel asked Tim Smith whether his internet issue had been resolved. Mr. Smith said he did not have time to look into it. Jim Harbison explained that MDHA used chrome and the issue was that Mr. Smith was using Explorer. Suzie Tolmie reported that MDHA has changed a lot of the word documents to PDF's so that Mr. Smith should now be able to open the documents with Internet Explorer.

Governance Discussion:

Liz Allen Fey said that the Commission had previously determined that the CoC Governance needed to go and do its work around creating a strong CoC Governance Charter. If the decision is for the Commission to become that CoC Governance Board (combine the two boards), then the Commission will have to come prepared. We have to come back and talk about what this means for the Commission. How do we create the best system that really allows us to move people into housing? That requires funding, shared data, etc.

Erik Cole gave a recap of where the community is:

The Continuum of Care (CoC) has existed since HUD created it in the mid-1990s. For a number of years it has traditionally been a collection of agencies that were funded by CoC dollars. The organizations organized around those CoC funds and were managed by a single entity, which served as the collaborative applicant and is MDHA. In 2009, the HEARTH (Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing) Act was passed by Congress. The HEARTH Act encouraged a leadership (governance) body be created for the CoC. Before that it was staff and

agency-driven. Erik was elected chair of the CoC Governance Board. At that time he was serving as the chair of the Homelessness Commission and the goal was to improve coordination between the two entities (CoC and Homelessness Commission). Since then, two big things have happened: 1) HUD has requested that CoC's look beyond their NOFA application for federal grant funding and focus on building a community system to end homelessness; and 2) To be more effective we have to strengthen our governance board structure.

Erik Cole then gave a brief review of the CoC Governance Charter draft. He pointed out that once approved, the charter would become a living document. Also, the CoC membership, he said, is responsible to appoint a collaborative applicant and an HMIS Lead – two management functions of the CoC that are currently held by MDHA. This is an annual determination that the CoC has the authority to make. MDHA was confirmed for the 2017 NOFA application cycle. Leadership and management are the two items that the CoC membership determines on an annual basis.

Paula Foster asked whether there was an opportunity to propose changes to the draft. Erik Cole encouraged her to share her suggestion, which she did and he noted down.

Further discussion ensued with Charles Strobel asking who held the ultimate authority. He specifically asked who the staff responded to. Erik Cole said the collaborative applicant was responsible for staff oversight. Jim Harbison said all CoC's were subject to HUD oversight. He said Mary Wilson in Knoxville was the HUD liaison responsible for the Davidson County CoC.

Further discussion was held around specific examples, to which Erik Cole said that the expectation of the CoC Governance Board was leadership. He said in his opinion boards need to focus on big leadership issues and not always focus on management issues at project levels. He said the board should have confidence in and allow the staff to deal with management issues. Liz Allen Fey added that the goal would be to create true working committees that are made up of key people in the city, so that we can become and function as a system. Ms. Fey said that was the overall intention of combining governance. Erik Cole agreed.

Liz Allen Fey said that the Homelessness Commission may have to take a look at its ordinance if there is a combined board. ON May 18, the CoC votes on adopting a charter. That is all they vote on, Ms. Fey said. The hope is that later this summer they vote on whether there will be a unified governance body between the CoC and the Metropolitan Homelessness Commission. If that were to happen and the Homelessness Commission would agree to that, then there would need to be an alignment of the Metro ordinance with the charter.

The alternative, Ms. Fey said, would be for the bodies to remain separate and run parallel roles. The question then becomes how would that work? Ms. Fey invited commissioners to ask question they have.

The following questions were raised:

The Homelessness Commissioners are all appointed by the mayors with specific slots to fill. Four slots are appointed by the vice mayor. How would that be impacted or look like with a unified board?

What is the authority of the Homelessness Commission if the boards merge?

Why should the CoC want the Homelessness Commission to become the governing board?

Freddie O'Connell responded to the last question that he hoped people would want the opportunity to eliminate redundancy that has divided rather than unified the city in terms of how we address homelessness.

Paula Foster asked whether the CoC membership would get to vote whether Metro rewrites the ordinance. Liz Allen Fey said the CoC membership would have a say whether they would have interest to go that route and then the Commission would explore what an ordinance change would look like.

There was some discussion around the charter versus the ordinance, which would be the dominating document.

Mark Murray from Metro Legal said that this entire approach would be new to Metro. He said whether the charter or the ordinance come first is kind of a chicken and egg scenario. However, they would have to be aligned if the community were to express interest for the CoC Board and the Metropolitan Homelessness Commission to merge.

Freddie O'Connell said he suspects there was a path here to do this. And one option was also for the CoC not to want to go this route, then the Commission would have another conversation around its future role.

Charles Strobel asked whether a future merger could create a relationship between Metro and this new entity like the ones Metro has with the Airport Authority or MDHA?

Liz Allen Fey said one question is why would the Commission want to stay separate from the CoC (from the Commission's perspective)? Paula Foster said she did not see the Commission being the same. She said she could see the Commission focusing on ending homelessness from setting city policy perspective.

Ms. Fey posed another question, saying that this body needs to understand what the best organizing structure is to move ahead.

Public Comment:

Howard Allen said all he saw was for this to get some money that doesn't trickle down to us. He said it was going to take some money to do this. He said the city was all about development and didn't care about homelessness. Mr. Allen further stated that he didn't know if we needed to have an outside entity other than MDHA. He asked for the Mayor to come to meetings and he invited some commissioners to go with him to New York to see how they bring people into shelters. He said Charles Strobel was the only one who had done anything. He called it pathetic.

Tim Smith asked whether this body dealt with local dollars only. The response was yes. He further asked whether the CoC dealt with other dollars. The response was yet, with federal dollars.

Steve Reiter spoke about the recent police shooting and the DA's response to it. He thanked Charles Strobel. And Mr. Reiter asked Jim Harbison where he planned to get \$2.5 million he had said he would bring in to finance the CoC collaborative applicant if MDHA would get it. Jim Harbison responded that MDHA identified it would take \$2.5 million to move the CoC forward. He said they did not have the money now, but MDHA was always trying to bring in more money. That's why they have a full-time grant writer.

Liz Allen Fey clarified that next Thursday the only thing that would be voted on was the governance charter document. She also said the CoC could not vote on Metro funds. Jim Harbison said that MDHA understood that with the CoC there would never be one source of funds. Rather the funding would have to be stacked.

Liz Allen Fey said that Cloudburst would be present in the afternoon of May 18 for a community meeting.

Liz Allen Fey also responded to a question from the last meeting whether it was possible to hold Commission meetings on Thursdays aligning them with the Nashville Homeless Coalition and CoC meetings. However, she found out that Metro meetings must be held on Metro property. In addition, the Sonny West Conference Center was not available Thursday afternoons.

Director Search:

Renee Pratt gave an update on the director search. The position closed last week. Metro HR determined that there were 24 qualified candidates based on the paperwork submitted. The interviews have not been scheduled yet. The interview panel will include Renee Pratt, a member from the MSS Board, Wendell Segroves, Liz Allen Fey and a member from the Homelessness Commission.

Commissioners who wanted to submit questions for the candidates were encouraged to submit them to Renee Pratt ASAP.

Moment of Silence was held to remember our neighbors who experienced homelessness that passed away since the last meeting.

Announcements:

Ms. Fey said that the executive committee determined that there was a need for a meeting prior to the next full Commission meeting. They scheduled the executive committee meeting for May 30, 2017, at 8:30 a.m. at Metro Social Services.

Public Comments:

Barry Hobbes said that this body used to be called the Mayor's Commission on Homelessness (*COMMENT: This is incorrect. It always was called the Metropolitan Homelessness Commission*). He said now it was called the Metro Homelessness Commission. He said it could be called the Mayor's Commission again if she were to be here. Mr. Hobbes said he knew the Mayor was doing other things, but she was attending all these other meetings since she's been in office. He said she did that well, but here she gets an F. He said the Mayor needed to be here. "So please tell her for me." He said he was getting sick and tired of falling asleep in these meetings. "I

apologize. I get sick and tired of Howard and Steve getting mad at you. We still have folks dying on the street.” He said they didn’t have homes, and added that maybe the commissioners needed to walk in their shoes just to see what it was like to be on the wrong side of the tracks. He said Howard Allen could guide commissioners.

Liz Allen Fey said she hoped to see many of the commissioners at the Nashville Rescue Mission for the CoC meetings, especially the afternoon session.

The meeting was adjourned at 11 am.