

Metropolitan Homelessness Commission/Continuum of Care Governance Workgroup
July 11, 2017
Meeting Minutes

Members:

Metropolitan Homelessness Commission representatives: Liz Allen Fey, Renee Pratt, Mina Johnson (Metro Council), Paula Foster, Wendell Segroves

CoC: Erik Cole, Rachel Hester, Cara Robinson, Daryl Murray, Trish Davis, Catherine Knowles

Present: Daryl Murray, Erik Cole, Liz Allen Fey, Renee Pratt, Wendell Segroves, Mina Johnson, Rachel Hester, Cara Robinson

Staff: Judith Tackett, Josh Lee

Introductions:

During the introductions, each member gave the reason why they were willing to serve on this MHC/CoC Governance Workgroup.

Wendell Segroves: The CoC is something that needs to happen and needs to work properly. He said he believed the Commission was the body to do it. Mr. Segroves said he would have questions if the merger would result in the dissolution of the Commission.

Paula Foster said she believes this conversation is long overdue. Things have been happening too slowly. She said, "Trying to make sure we move forward with the correct structure is paramount to all we do." This includes figuring out whether to move together or if not, how to work together.

Mina Johnson said she represents the Metro Council and was still new to the Commission and still learning. She said the reason she was here was because we all want homeless people to have housing and wraparound solutions. She said there was a need to have an entity to provide high-level vision and direction for the community. She hoped for the two entities to be merge together and have a combined vision to end homelessness.

Rachel Hester said her focus was on leadership. There was a lot of time spend on holding meetings. Leadership would help provide focus.

Cara Robinson said she echoes comments made so far. She said due to her background she has a particular interest in homeless governance. She would like to see an entity that brings together best practices, best systems.

Daryl Murray said he was here to learn what it would look like for those two entities to merge together. He said there were probably benefits and also some unintended consequences. We need the city to weigh in, but he was also concerned about political changes and the impact that could have. "I think we're all on the same page on where we want to assist people." But he would like to make sure there was room at the table for a large variety of philosophies.

Erik Cole, who chairs the CoC governance board, said he was tempted to echo what Paula Foster and Rachel Hester said. He added he was not so much worried about duplication of services but more about duplication of bureaucracy and funding. "There are just some inherent inefficiencies in the system that I hope we can work on."

Liz Allen Fey said she took on the role to chair the Metro Homelessness Commission a little over a year ago. All she hears about is how ineffective the Commission is. Then she hears how inadequate the CoC is. Her goal, she was to put this together to have resources flow to the services to create the approaches that disrupt homelessness. She said she has seen bodies come together. She said she doesn't want to think about a "merger" though but a coming together (union). She said this was the time to do it. The time may come around again, but she said she believes this was the time what we need to take advantage of this opportunity.

Renee Pratt said she was new to the CoC concept. The Commission is housed under Metro Social Services. She said although the Commission has done a variety of different things, it is really a planning and coordination entity. There is a lot of coordination that needs to happen. Ms. Pratt said she hoped the two entities can merge and create a collaborative community effort that is most effective in serving people.

Questions to be answered:

The group listed the following questions that need to be answered:

What's really needed?

What about staffing?

How to keep balance of leadership level at the table?

What's the role & authority of the new entity?

Who 's the ultimate authority at new entity Or of 2 entities?

Who would be the "spokesperson"?

Value of the "Commission"?

And who should the Commission report to?

Where does it live?

How do we build on work already done? (Focus Strategies, Cloudburst, etc.?)

What is not working currently?

How will we get buy-in/support?

How do we make this process visible?

Who has the leadership for data?

Why?

What is the role of the Coalition in this?

What is the history?

What is the big CoC?

In a next step, the workgroup listed what positives and challenges of the current system(s).

What's working what's not working:

Working	Not working
NOFA \$	Lost \$
Better communication	Driven by HUD
Service providers – people are working hard, doing good work	Unclear CoC's mission
More providers are at the table	Executive directors have left the table; frontline staff are making the decisions – decision makers are not present
Really dynamic leaders in the community both in the public policy and service provider worlds	Fragmented
We do have the government at the table	We have gov now, but what when administration changes – uncertain future
Community support (example Contributor) get to know people to build trust	We do not have agreeable data on how many people are on the streets.
Youth Plan structure	Because we haven't agreed on numbers, our messaging is not working. We're in conflict there. It's confusing all the people who would support us. They think people are changing the numbers, holding the number
Really strong staff (MHC)	CoC – understaffed (great people, just understaffed)

During this discussion, the following points were made:

- If we see this as creating a group of influencers, we will create a level of stability moving forward.
- If we don't have fundamental data, then we cannot go for big funding asks.
- AT the micro level, we have compassion among neighbors, but if try to talk about housing, then people would like to see people housed, just not in my neighborhood (NIMBY).
- How do we get there? A lot of it has to do with HUD priorities. They're driving us there.
- Why do people collaborate? Because they have to.
- To make this work, it goes back to staff – level and quality.
- Partnerships go back to trust and we have a lot of trust-building to do. Some of that is linked to find out what it is that causes people not to trust us and each other. A lot of it has to do with hurt feelings and defensiveness.
- Need to start outlining clear expectations of each other.

As a last step, the workgroup outlined non-negotiables, things that must be met in order for the CoC to be strong.

Non-negotiables:

- **Have to play by the HUD's rule**
- **Do no harm**
- **Lasting structure**

Next steps:

- 1. History**
- 2. Models (other) (Houston,**
- 3. Build 3 possible models**
- 4. Choose one**

The group agreed to meet three times, every two weeks for 2 hours. And add more meetings if necessary. The next meeting was scheduled for July 25, 9:30 – 11:30a.m., at Metro Social Services. Judith Tackett will serve as the point staff person to the workgroup and will coordinate with the CoC staff.

Task:

Judy will look at history the history of the CoC and the Coalition. She will also ask Cloudburst for peer city governance models, especially examples that show local government leadership in the CoC.

Then next time – the group will discuss the third point: building 3 possible models.