



INTERAGENCY COMMISSION ON HOMELESSNESS

Meeting Summary Notes

Wednesday, December 13, 2017

Members (Present or Represented)

Brice, Jonathan
Chapman, Sheryl
Emerson, Kim
Green, Jay (representing Clarence Snuggs)
Harris, Amanda
Horton-Newell, Amy
Leventhal, Councilmember George
Mendez, John (representing Susan Kirk)
Miller, Eneshal
Rock, Shane
Roynestad, Brian
Schiller, Jen (representing Suzanne Sinclair Smith)
Schuchman, Abe
Seidel, Stan
Swan, Fred (representing Stacy Spann)
Thames, Jeffrey
Tracey, Brian
Zucker, Senator Craig

Members (Excused)

Ahluwalia, Uma
Kauffman, Louise

Members (Absent)

Crowel, Raymond
Fox-Morrill, Priscilla
Green, Robert
Newton, Bridget
Wilds, Moses

Guests

Afework, Endrias
Arroyo-Lefebvre, Paloma
Bhatia, Richa
Bowman, Betsy
Chery, Kendrick
Ezrin, Debbie
Flowers, Michele
George, Melissa
Ingram, L. J.
Leonard, John E.
London, Sharan
McMillan, Linda
Spencer, Eugene
Todd, Chapman
Wellington, Janice

Staff

Anderson, Denise
Ball, Kim
Black, Sara
Dickson, Tia
Huggins, Gloria
Jones, LaTrecia
Jones, Tanya
Matthews, Stacey
Rickford, Eric
Sierra, Sharon
Soni, Nili

Coordinated Entry System (CES) – Amanda Harris

The HUD Coordinated Entry Policy Notice establishes additional requirements for a coordinated entry process. The CoC will submit our updated procedure by January 23. The document will outline core elements of the system and how it functions now.

At the November Operations Committee meeting, the community did the HUD Coordinated Entry System (CES) self-assessment. There are requirements that must be met to comply with HUD. There are additional requirements to improve the CES and system performance. Montgomery County will phase in our comprehensive CES over the next three years. First, creating policies and procedure intake, assessments and housing placement. Then, phase two will involve providing additional training to the staff, continuing to ensure that the policies and procedures are person-centered, housing-focused and fair and equal to all.

The core elements are access, assessment, prioritization and referral. It is a requirement that people are prioritized for permanent housing but it is optional whether they are prioritized for shelter or transitional housing. On the family side, the CoC is looking at prioritization for shelter as many families can self-resolve or be sustained in the community. To follow the HUD CES there must be a standard referral process so no matter where a person presents as homeless they can be referred to shelter, outreach and housing.

There will be changes in the contracts regarding discrimination language, reasonable accommodations requirements, grievance requirements, and eligibility review and deliverables. The grievance requirement will allow residents a process to protest decisions. Housing Providers must provide their eligibility requirements for all programs. The new CES will require that anyone who have been matched to a housing provider through the CES and meets their eligibility requirements must be accepted.

A draft of the CES Policies and Procedures will be sent by the end of the week. The ICH members will be asked to provide comments and vote on the draft within two weeks.

Youth Homelessness in Montgomery County – Amy Horton-Newell and Nili Soni

Amy Horton-Newell reported that there was a preliminary meeting to focus on developing a strategic plan to address youths experiencing homelessness. The discussions included Darla Bardine, Executive Director of the *National Network of Youth* and Michael Santos an attorney at the *National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty*. The discussions looked at the big picture of best practices, trends and technical assistance on documenting needs and developing appropriate responses. The logical first step is to develop a workgroup to focus on youth homelessness in the County. Young people up to the age of 24 are defined as youths.

Nili Soni reported on the *Youth Reach* effort which is a State youth count. The time frame will be two weeks in March or April. The CoC will be partnering with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Child Welfare Services and other non-profit provider organizations. This will be a project for the Youth Homelessness Workgroup. There will be a memo from the Maryland Department of Education to MCPS outlining what is required for participation.

George Leventhal highlighted that there are two policy areas that must be considered:

1. A disproportionate number of youth homelessness is among the LGBTQ community.
Mr. Leventhal encouraged the ICH to partner and network with an entity that is coming together to provide support to the LGBTQ community.
2. Mr. Leventhal shared that on Monday, the joint committees of Public Safety and Health and Human Services met and had a dialogue with Luis Cardona, Street Outreach Coordinator. Luis indicated that from his observations to reduce youth homelessness there would be a need to reduce the number of young people at risk of gang involvement.

Amy Horton-Newell shared that in the fall, the national stakeholders' committee with the feds will convene to design a what an effective, child welfare, juvenile justice, educational, continuum of care system looks like when all systems are collaborating to end and prevent youth homelessness. Amy recommended that Montgomery County participate in this effort.

L. J. Ingram, Chair of the United Church of Christ Potomac Association LGBTQ Task Force, shared that in her experience the problem lies with unaccompanied youths. These are youths who do not have family, guardian or foster parents and; in many cases, the young person has been put out because they are gay. Ms. Ingram proposed that the ICH put together a coordinated community plan in six months to address the problem of unaccompanied youth.

Dr. Sheryl Chapman reported that many youths are being housed by teachers. These young people are living in their teachers' basements and are in the community, going to school and surviving. Amy shared that there is a federal program *Host Home for Homeless Youth* which provides emergency shelter, short-term housing and supportive services for youth experiencing

homelessness. This is an area that the Youth Homelessness Workgroup could explore with the assistance of Dr. Chapman and her staff.

ICH Structure and Committees | Workgroups – Amanda Harris

In September, the commission started a conversation around structure and recommendations of making ICH into a collective-impact model. There is a need to explore what is the role and function of the ICH and how to get all members involved in strategic planning, decision making and developing priorities.

Per the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness *Opening Doors Program* the progress on reducing homelessness has occurred in communities that have organized themselves to prevent and end homelessness.

- This means that they have set goals,
 - identified needs and gaps,
 - developed strategies to meet these needs and gaps,
 - created public-private investment in the strategies,
 - monitored progress, and
 - adjusted the course, when needed.
- Successful implementation occurs when there is broad support for the strategies—this is evidenced by the
 - involvement of business and civic leadership,
 - local public officials,
 - faith-based volunteers, and
 - mainstream systems that provide housing, human services, and health care.

The current structure of the ICH is as follows:

Appointed Ex-officio Members

- Director, Department of Health and Human Services
- Chief, Services to End and Prevent Homelessness
- Chief, Behavioral Health and Crisis Services
- Director, Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
- Assistant Chief of Field Services for the Montgomery County Police Department
- Representative of the County Executive Office
- Director of the Family Justice Center
- Five representatives from the Continuum of Care
- Four members of the public – one person must be someone with lived experience of homelessness

Ex-officio Members

- Member of the County Council selected by Council President
- Executive Director, Housing Opportunities Commission
- Director of Student Services, Montgomery County Public Schools
- Mayor of the City of Gaithersburg or representative
- Mayor of the City of Rockville or representative
- Mayor of the City of Takoma Park or representative
- Representative of U.S. or MD Department of Veteran Affairs
- Montgomery County Sheriff or representative
- A member of the County Legislative Delegation selected jointly by the Chairs of the House and Senate Delegations

The USICH recommends a State ICH have a membership represented as follows:

- Housing and Housing Finance
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health
- Veterans Affairs
- Office of Management and Budget
- Social Security/ Disability Determination
- Managed Care Entity
- Child, Youth, and Family Services
- Health and Human/ Homeless Services
- Local Elected Officials
- United Way and Philanthropic Groups
- Business and Corporate Representatives
- People with first-hand experience of homelessness

- TANF (currently or formerly)
- County Corrections, Juvenile Justice, Public Safety
- Education
- Labor/Employment Services
- Welfare
- Medicaid
- Transportation
- Local Continuum of Care Representatives
- Providers of Homeless Services, including Veteran - serving Groups
- Advocacy Group Members
- Faith-Based Representatives

Highlights of the discussion of the Montgomery County ICH structure and increasing membership:

Expanding Membership:

- Brian Tracey stressed that the **business community** a member of the **economic development group** is needed to assist people experiencing homelessness find employment.
- Kim Emerson stated that before we extend and create relationships it is very important to be clear as to the purpose of membership and the goal of participation.
- Dr. Chapman recommended having **youths** be included to address youth homelessness particularly youths from the **LGBTQ community**.
- Stan Seidel shared that **Workforce Development agencies** should be at the table to address employment issues for those experiencing homelessness. Small independent business who understand the homeless population
- Eneshal Miller mentioned Montgomery County **Chamber of Commerce and Project Access Resource Centers**. The Project Access Resource Centers’ goal is to help keep family members employed, children in school and seniors active. Also, asking **Hair and Nail Salon and Mom and Pop shops** to share information on resources with their customers who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Jen Schiller suggested that there is a need to have **more than one member with lived experience** of homelessness.
- John Mendez suggested to have **key players in housing resources** involved—landlords, property management companies, private developing, state legislatives who are involved in housing development.

Serving those who became homeless outside of Montgomery County:

- Residency requirements was discussed in length.

Improving the ICH meetings

- George Leventhal mentioned that many commissions meetings are heavy on PowerPoint presentation and the government presenting what the County is doing but not engaging members in discussion.
- The Commission benefit from freewheeling conversation because people will feel that they are participating.
- Amy shared that because of the existence of workgroups where there are discussions and projects are done, the full meeting is more of a reporting out for the workgroups.
- Abe Schuchman shared that an effective group is when the Strategic Plan is the organizing and informing documents that guides the board. The group should have clear 5-year objective. Reporting of the committees is important to give members more ownership and voice in the conversation.

- Kim Emerson highlighted that funding is important. It would be wise to identify what do you need, the dollar amount, and finding ways to communicate to have an ask for fundraising goals to achieve housing.
- Dr. Chapman suggested to improve the content of the ICH meetings, creating a mission statement and including presentations or shout outs of ways that we have accomplished our mission.

ICH Purpose

- Amanda stated that the purpose of the ICH should be to guide the work of the Continuum of Care in determining the priorities and how to get there. On the Committee level, work that involves the execution and implementation of the strategic plans could be addressed.
- The ICH is the governing body over the Continuum of Care. A special meeting will be convened in February to discuss ICH
- This body has governance responsibility over the Continuum of Care.

Meeting Structure Best Practices

- Mr. Leventhal suggested that prior to the February meeting staff examine the meeting structure of other local homeless entities (Washington DC, Baltimore, Philadelphia). Are their meetings highly focus and presentation centered or do they have open dialogue?
- Brian Tracey also suggested that the expectation of the meeting (or sections of the meeting) be clearly stated in advance—if it is a governance meeting where there will be presentations or will the purpose of the meeting be an open forum with free-flowing ideas being shared.

Next Steps

- The question was raised regarding increasing the ICH meetings from quarterly to bi-monthly (Meeting 6 times a year). The discussion was tabled until the next meeting and consideration of the governance charter.
- There will be a “Special Meeting” scheduled in February.
- The ICH meetings are open to the public but they are not hearings or open forums. The open dialogue from meeting participants at this meeting was informative but whether the full ICH meeting should be open forums will be discussed.
- Amanda reported that in the spring, there will be a Community-wide meeting to look at the Strategic Plan, Gaps Analysis and Fiscal Scan. A decision will be made as to how to incorporate this work into the Strategic Plan to end and prevent homelessness.

Fiscal Scan | Amanda Harris

As part of the Gaps Analysis a request was made for a deeper fiscal scan to discover the various funding sources used by our partners and identify opportunities and gaps. The Built for Zero CSH will be providing free technical assistance to get a better understanding of the full resources. The purpose of the scan will be to provide an analysis, recommendations and priorities.

Homeless Resource Day | Amanda Harris

The November 16 Homeless Resource Day which is co-sponsored by the City of Gaithersburg and Montgomery County was a success with guests expressing their satisfaction with the resources and information they received. The event is growing with statistics showing 100 more guests than last year (549 intakes taken in 2017 over 457 in 2016). One concern is that many self-report not to be homeless (98 not homeless and 84 living with family or friends). Participants are not verified as

homeless to attend. The VISPDAT is administered to guests to determine whether they are in the homeless system (18 new VISPDATS were captured).

Outreach Providers -- Who does a homeless individual or family call in the middle of the night?

All homeless or housing emergencies should be directed to the Crisis Center at 240-777-4000. All non-emergencies should go to Tia Dickson, Homeless Outreach Coordinator, at 240-447-5565.

Announcements

- L.J. invited ICH members to participate in an upcoming Focus Group for Unaccompanied Homeless LGTBT Youth.
- The Pan-handling law has resurfaced in the County Council. The ICH needs to weigh in.
- Dr. Chapman reported that there has been increased community support for homeless families. Our goal should be to go beyond serving singles and veterans and serve families with children who are experiencing homelessness.

Next "Special Meeting"

Tuesday, February 6, 2018, | 3:30-5:30 p.m. Location Rockville Memorial Library, 21 Maryland Avenue, 1st Floor Conference Room.