



INTERAGENCY COMMISSION ON HOMELESSNESS

Meeting Summary Notes

Tuesday, March 13, 2018

Members (Present or Represented)

Ahluwalia, Uma
Bohorquez, Margarita (representing for Dr. Brice)
Chapman, Sheryl
George, Melissa (representing Robert Green)
Harris, Amanda
Horton-Newell, Amy
Kauffman, Louise
Leventhal, Councilmember George
Miller, Eneshal
Rock, Shane
Schuchman, Abe
Seidel, Stan
Sinclair-Smith, Susan
Snuggs, Clarence
Stiegler, Liana (representing Senator Craig Zucker)
Swan, Fred (representing Stacy Spann)
Thames, Jeffrey
Tracey, Brian

Members (Excused)

Crowel, Raymond
Newton, Bridget
Thames, Jeffrey

Members (Absent)

Emerson, Kim
Roynestad, Brian
Wilds, Moses

Guests

Allen, Tiffany
Arroyo, Paloma
Blasco, Anna
Chase, Holly
deLeon, Rachelle
Erd, Stacey
Ezrin, Debbie
Fox, Jullian
Garvey, Charlotte
Hong, Christine
London, Sharan
Leonard, John
Leshner, Agnes
McMillan, Linda
Rinker, Roberta
Stone, Mike
Todd, Chapman
Wellington, Janice

Staff

Ball, Kim
Black, Sara
Dickson, Tia
Huggins, Gloria
Rickford, Eric
Sierra, Sharon
Soni, Nili

Welcome | Introductions | Approval of Minutes

Amy Horton-Newell convened the meeting with introductions. The meeting notes from the December 13, 2017 meeting and the February 6, 2018 "Special Meeting" were approved as written.

Fiscal Scan Discussion—Jillian Fox, CSH

Jillian provided background for the fiscal scan project stating that following last year's gaps analysis, it was discerned that looking at County-administered funding only does not give the full scope of resources in the system. The Commission asked CSH to do a deeper dive to capture private investments and other public funding. The purpose of the fiscal scan is to ensure that resources are aligned to provide the best outcomes for the people we are serving. The CSH conducted the fiscal scan by:

- Conducting a research and funding survey gathering information from homeless provider agencies (17 out of 18 providers shared their data).
- Looking at outcomes and creating system maps (family and individual systems and emergency services).
- Currently, we are looking at strategies to fill gaps and realign services to best serve the clients
- Conducted a workshop on February 15
- Followed up with by two provider conference calls to get more input and discussion
- Presenting information at the meeting today to the entire Commission
- A written report will be prepared to summarize the results of the fiscal scan

Findings in the scan were:

- There have been some exits to permanent supportive housing.
- In the adult system, there has been a lot of entries from institutions.
- There was a reluctance on the part of providers to share information about their private investors. The reasons may be that the ask was not clear and there is a lack of trust and transparency in sharing information about funders that providers have worked hard to build relationships.
- The initial results show that 86% of total funding and resources were from public sources (excluding Medicaid).
- Only received reporting for general operations for two provider agencies.

Recommendations:

- Having a back-bone entity to lead the work which could be ICH
- Building the will and the infrastructure to pursue this type of collective work of looking at resources and funding
- Continuing data-driven planning and decision making
- Implementing strategies that we heard from the workshop and providers to explore to pursue a collective impact model.
- Group purchasing, technology, training, increasing Medicaid billing, define the metrics and look at strategies

Why are we collecting this information?

Amanda Harris expressed that the intent of collecting the fiscal information is to be able to realign resources and bring more resources into the system. We can better advocate as a group or community to funders by prioritizing the interventions that work as best practices so that we can bring more funding into our system.

Dr. Chapman asked for clarity regarding the ask for information and the terms that are being used. What does public investment, private investments and general operations mean? Most view public investments as County contracts, which the government pays for a product with monitoring, which are different from government grants. Dr. Chapman expressed that providers are not paranoid but confused of what is being asked of them. She also stressed the importance of relational conversations preceding the transaction discussions. Building relationships is what is needed to bring the community together to advocate for funding.

Abe Schuchman raised the question, as we move forward, should the ICH consider abandoning the sub-group approach or language and begin to address the system? The ICH has had success in addressing veteran homelessness with no gaps and we hope to address chronic homelessness very soon with no gaps. As we move forward should we redefine our energies and goals as we tackle family, youth and non-chronic homelessness? Telling the stories of how residents are being changed from tax takers into tax payers.

Eneshal Miller raised the question regarding using shelters during the day as employment development centers or medical screening centers. The buildings exist so put them to work helping people during the day. Amanda responded that resources are needed to staff and run the programs being suggested which continues the discussion on funding.

Next Steps:

Amanda asked if the group agreed to one of two tracks:

1. To move forward looking to the Resource Development Committee to do a deeper dive and to continue to collect more information from providers; or
2. To work with the Resource Development Committee to try some of the ideas already collected and to go out and present to community foundations and group for funding; or
3. To proceed on a parallel track by implementing both steps.

ACTION: The Resource Development Committee will continue the work of the fiscal scan and explore a funder collaborative. Reconstitute the Resource Development Committee with increased membership.

Performance Review Committee—Anna Blasco, Co-chair

The role of the Performance Review Committee is:

- Review outcomes to assess programs on ending homelessness; and
- Inform the ICH with data analysis to support decision-making.

Setting up a performance improvement process the following is needed:

- Set system-wide goals annually
 - What do we want to accomplish as a CoC?
 - What are the goals of each provider?
- Measure how we are doing and present monthly reviews to the ICH
- Analyze the data and work to improve
- Report out to the ICH, stakeholders, funders, etc.

The vision of Montgomery County is to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring. Centering results for the most vulnerable members of our community (Veterans, the Chronically homeless, Youths and Families) helps to determine what is working and what gaps still need to be addressed. Developing system performance measures will determine how are we doing in the effort to end homelessness for all people.

The HUD System Performance Measures questions are:

1. How many people experience homelessness?
2. How many people are being homeless for the first time?
3. How long do people remain homeless?
4. How well are people experiencing homelessness connected to jobs and income?
5. How many people are successfully placed in housing and how long do they stay housed?
6. How many become homeless again?

The Performance Review Committee recommended to the ICH that Montgomery County focuses on four measures as annual goals:

1. How long do people remain homeless?
2. How many people are successfully placed in housing and how long do they stay housed?
3. How many becomes again?
4. Are there fewer homeless people than there were last year?

Dr. Chapman suggested adding a measure on how many times a young person has been homeless or unstably housed before the age of 18 in Montgomery County? Susan Sinclair-Smith stressed focusing on the capacity to capture and collect the needed data. The Performance Review Committee will discuss these two suggestions.

ACTION: The ICH agreed to the Performance Review Committee’s recommended four measures to be the focus for the upcoming year.

Panhandling in Montgomery County—Amy Horton-Newell

Bill 38-17, Streets and Roads, Roadway Solicitation and Distribution – Prohibition

The proposed legislation prohibits a person from standing in a roadway to solicit, sell, or distribute any materials to the occupant of any motor vehicle stopped on the roadway in obedience of a traffic control signal light. The bill contains an exception if the person remains on the sidewalk and unpaved shoulder of the roadway.

Background: Councilmember Craig Rice introduced the Bill as a public safety concern because there have been incidents at traffic light controlled intersections where pedestrians have been injured or killed while soliciting or distributing in the roadway.

Penalty: The penalty is a Class C violation with a fine of \$50. Unpaid fines are doubled. After a period, continual unpaid fines will trigger a court date.

The ICH and other homeless advocates are concerned that this will be a hardship on residents who are homeless. Residents who are homeless cannot afford the fine which will trigger a court date that a person without an address will not receive the notice to appear. Eventually, the lack of appearance in court will result in the individual receiving a bench warrant for their arrest. The violation of Bill 38-17 will create a record, lead to jail time, and show up on future background and credit checks making it more complicated for a person who is homeless to find housing.

Amy Horton-Newell suggested that a follow up letter be sent to the County Executive and County Council. ICH members were encouraged to submit their thoughts on the legislation.

Highlights of the follow-up letter will be sharing:

- The Commission’s mission statement and offering to provide guidance and input to County leaders and attorneys when they are contemplating these types of legislation.
- The economic impact on the community. It cost money to enforce and jail violators of the legislation
- Information on housing and outreach; and
- Reminding County leaders that criminalizing homelessness will likely result in having 2 points deducted from the County’s application for HUD funding.

The reasons people panhandle is for cash. In Albuquerque and Tulsa, there are programs that give residents who are homeless jobs and pay them a living wage. This has resulted in a decrease in panhandling in those jurisdictions. Amy suggested that Montgomery County consider similar programs to stop panhandling.

Dr. George Leventhal commented that employment programs and legislation will not stop panhandling. Montgomery County organized a “Hand up not a hand out” campaign which encouraged residents not give money to panhandlers and Prince George’s County has made panhandling a citable offense. Both efforts have not ended the problem. George also stressed that the Bill 38-17 will not be enacted in Montgomery County without a changed to State Law. The enactment of this law is not imminent. George agreed that a follow up letter from the ICH would be appropriate and helpful.

ACTION: It was agreed by the ICH that a follow-up letter be sent to the County Executive and County Council. The letter will focus on opposition of the Bill and safety issues not offering any alternative solutions.

Updates: Youth Homelessness in Montgomery County—Amanda Harris

- The Youth REACH will be conducted April 2-14 in Montgomery County. The Youth REACH (Reach out, Engage, Assist, & Count to end Homelessness) is an effort to better understand the number, characteristics, and needs of youth and young adults who are on their own and struggling with housing to improve the ways we can help. The data from the count will assist to implement a plan.
- Currently, the County is unable to competitively apply for the HUD Youth Demonstration Grant. We are missing several elements the main element being that we do not have a Youth Action or Advisory Board. We need to engage youth experiencing homelessness to direct the work.
- There is a need to create a position for a point person to look at youth homelessness, to map out the resources that already exist and to gather youth providers who have knowledge on working with youths. Then, we will be able to create a plan to move forward.
- There is a need to have an ICH Youth Sub-committee. The best practices when engaging youth to work in an advisory capacity is to pay them for their time.
- There was a hearing in the General Assembly on the legislation Ending Youth Homelessness Act of 2018 (HB1224 / SB1218) was introduced to ensure that thousands of youth in Maryland who are on their own without stable housing or family support can meet their basic needs for shelter and safety.
- In the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation, there is a unit of 18-21-year-old. Many of the youth leave the correction facility and become couch surfers. It was encouraged that these youths be included in the efforts to address youth homelessness.

Next steps on ICH Restructures—Fred Swan

The Strategic Planning Committee has been discussing a possible restructuring of the ICH. This restructuring will include, committee structures, meeting format, and membership. Sharan London is researching other jurisdictions' ICH structures. The Strategic Planning Committee will present their recommendations at the upcoming ICH Retreat Closed Meeting (scheduled, Thursday, May 23 at 9:00a). This will be a two-part day with the ICH Retreat in the morning and a CoC Community-wide meeting in the afternoon. The results of ICH Retreat will be presented at the Community-wide meeting.

ACTION: Commission members were encouraged to share any restructuring ideas or suggestions with Nili Soni by April 14 to be added to the restructuring presentation on May 23.

Inside (Not Outside) Updates—Chapman Todd and Nili Soni

- At the February ICH meeting, the issue that was raised regarding assigning undocumented homeless clients has been resolved. Everyone who is identified and determined to be chronic according to the HUD definition has been assigned as part of the HIP expansion program.
- As of last week, there have been 320 chronically homeless housed. There are 55 people who meet the HUD definition are yet to be housed.
- Lease up events are scheduled in April.
- On April 24, there will be a Landlord Appreciation Event.
- On May 10, there will also be a Housing Provider Appreciation Event.

Announcements | Comments:

Stan Siedel suggested holding ICH meetings at different housing provider locations so members can tour and see their facility.

Next Meeting | Closed Session Retreat – ICH Members only

Wednesday, May 23, 2018 | 8:30a-12:30p | Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rockville, 100 Welsh Park Drive, The Founders Hall, Rockville 20850