



# INTERAGENCY COMMISSION ON HOMELESSNESS

Housing for all = A Stronger Montgomery

[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/homelessness](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/homelessness)

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## Bi-Monthly Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 11, 2019 | 3-6p

Rockville Memorial Library, 1st Fl Conference Rm, 21 Maryland Avenue, Rockville 20850

### Members (Present or Represented)

Bohorquez, M. (Rep. MCPS)  
 Carranza, Valeria (Rep. Evan Glass)  
 Crowel, Raymond  
 Goldman, Jeff  
 Habte, Asmara G.  
 Harris, Amanda  
 Hong, Christine (Rep. Shane Rock)  
**Johnson, Ebony (Vice Chair)**  
 Kauffman, Louise  
 Jochum, Kendra (Rep. Angela Talley)  
 London, Sharan  
 Miller, Eneshal  
**Pinero, Roberto (Chair)**  
 Roynestad, Brian  
 Seidel, Stan  
 Sinclair-Smith, Susan

### Members (Absent)

Chesney, Amanda  
 Goetzinger, Timothy  
 Spann, Stacy  
 Zucker, Craig

### Guests

Allen, Tiffany  
 Aparicio, Carlos  
 Baiorunos, Renee  
 Barker, Kacy  
 Blackwell, Jennifer  
 Bowman, Betsy  
 Dagne, Lelena  
 Essex, Paula  
 Fasanelli, Antonia  
 Frazier, Eugene  
 Gabriel, Donna  
 Ganza, Peter  
 Goldfine, Leah  
 Hashmi, Anwar

Johnson, Carolyn  
 Johnson, John (JJ)  
 Kinkenbengh, Mary B.  
 Leonard, John  
 Lissik, Priscilla  
 Lyman, Patti  
 Mayo, Cliff  
 McMillan, Linda  
 Moore, Jamar  
 Okhominia, Omore  
 Oligie, Kathleen  
 Phillips, Mary  
 Polvanova, Nargiza  
 Pomerantz, Nicole  
 Riffe, Joe  
 Schiller, Jen  
 Scofield, Vicki  
 Shuman, Beth  
 Simmons, Larry  
 Sontag, Meghan  
 Todd, Chapman

### Staff

Adhanom, Rozina  
 Ball, Kim  
 Branda, Ilana  
 Huggins, Gloria  
 Matthews, Stacey  
 Soni, Nili

### Welcome | Introductions | Approval of the Minutes: Roberto Pinero and Ebony Johnson

Roberto thanked the homeless providers and the Department of Health and Human Services for coordinating the Community Homeless Memorial on behalf of the ICH. The memorial was held in the morning was well attended including members of the County Council and the County Executive. The stories that were told about each person who had passed made the sadness of the occasion very meaningful and moving.

The Minutes from the Wednesday, April 23 meeting were approved unanimously.

### Public Comments: Roberto Pinero

There were four submissions to make public comments (only two persons presented). A copy of the statements will be posted to the website under the Agenda and Meeting Summaries section.

- Donna Gabriel, Interfaith Works, Vocational Services Program
- Larry Simmons, Co-Vice Chair, Alcohol and Other Drug Advisory Council (AODAAC)

Susie Sinclair-Smith, Executive Director of the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless (MCCH) gave an update on the Men’s Emergency Shelter evacuation from the Gude Drive Campus. The Campus is adjacent to a landfill. The process of burning off methane produced by the landfill causes vibrations which causes some to feel sick because the walls and windows shake.

- In February, the MCCH administrative offices were evacuated from the Gude Drive office building

- In May, the vibrations became stronger and some of the shelter residents were sickened. The residents were evacuated to the overflow facility which is used during the winter months.
- A study has been conducted by the NIOSH (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health) by taking noise measures and conducting interviews with staff. A report from NIOSH is expected shortly which will assist in making the future decisions.

Susie expressed that MCCH is in a “holding pattern” because of the approaching winter season increasing the need for the overflow shelter and whether or not to move back to the Gude Drive Campus.

Amanda reported that the Montgomery County Department of General Services is currently looking for space to move the shelter and they are not waiting for the report from NIOSH to plan the next steps.

### **Update on the Decriminalizing of Homelessness: Antonia Fasanelli and Sharon London**

Two residents of the MCCH shelter John (JJ) Johnson and Eugene Frazier shared their feelings about how they are treated as people experiencing homelessness.

JJ expressed that the lack of communication about where they would be placed due to the evacuation of the Men’s Shelter is a current concern. With the coming of the winter season and the need from the overflow space, will they go back to the Gude Drive Campus or not? Lack of answers and communication leads to uncertainty, anxiousness and feelings that no one cares. Eugene expressed that the close quarters of the overflow shelter is stressful, but they are adjusting. JJ added that he wished more people from the shelter were here at the ICH meeting to see that people are working on the shelter issue and they do care.

JJ shared that the residents of the shelter have formed a group called “Coalition 180” to help them express their expectations on how people experiencing homelessness should be treated by shelter staff, law enforcement and others. One suggestion is that a committee be formed comprised of members of law enforcement, the court system and business owners to address these issues.

JJ also suggested trainings be developed on how to treat people experiencing homelessness. He stated, “People should be treated like people.” The homeless are being judged for being homeless and looked at as least than. For example, when a homeless person goes into a store, the staff will call the police before addressing the person. The person is looking around the store and then they are talking with police without knowing why. A personal experience of JJ’s, is as a student of Montgomery College, he stayed late on the campus to study. The police were called by security and he was arrested.

Sharan London shared that on Friday, April 26 a forum was held on the Alternatives to the Criminalization of Homelessness where almost 90 people attended. The forum was sponsored by the Bar Association of Montgomery County, MD Bar Association, the ABA Commission on Homelessness and Poverty, the Homeless Representative Project and the ICH. The forum started a dialogue with members of the criminal justice system. Sharan proposed that the ICH forms an Adhoc Committee on Decriminalization of Homelessness to continue that dialogue.

Antonia added that forming this kind of committee is something that is being done in other jurisdictions in Maryland. This dialogue has led to diversionary program which has helped to quickly dissolve tickets and warrants and pre-arrest programs to divert persons from the criminal justice system entirely. The April forum comprised a cross section of the criminal justice system (Prosecutors, Judiciary, Public Defenders, Police and Business owners). Antonia expressed that it is agreed by those who participate in these committees that cycling people through the criminal justice system is not the way to address homelessness.

Ebony suggested that someone with lived experience be included on the Committee to ensure that decisions are made with input from people experiencing homelessness.

The **Motion** to create the Adhoc Committee on Decriminalization of Homelessness was approved unanimously.

**Committee | Subcommittee | Adhoc Workgroup Updates**

Strategy and Planning Committee – Renee Baiurunos and Sharan London

- Goal to develop a strategic plan for the next three years
- Values:
  - Housing first and person-centered approaches
  - Diversity, equity and inclusion
  - Collaboration across the system
  - Data and results-based decisions
  - Continuous change and improvements
- What has been done:
  - Gather feedback and recommendations from the February Community wide meeting
  - Developed the Strategy and Planning Committee with representation from the homeless providers, County Government including DHHS, DHCA, HOC, Collaboration Council
  - Created working groups to discuss implementing each of the values.
- Vision: A home for everyone in Montgomery County, where the experience of homelessness is rare, brief, and one-time only
- Mission or Role: To strive to be a leader in the work to end homelessness across our Nation. Through commitment and collaboration, we will create effective systems to achieve our vision.
- Population-Specific targets to end homelessness among:
  - **Achieved** in 2015 – Veterans
  - **Achieved** in 2019 – Chronically homeless individuals
  - 2020 – Families with Children
  - 2021 – Unaccompanied youth
  - 2022 – Seniors
  - 2023 – Everyone experiencing homelessness
- Next Steps: To draft strategies and present a final action plan to ICH in the fall based on the work of the working groups.
- The working groups are:
  1. Address Racial Disparities Across the System
  2. Build and Support Strong, Adaptable, and Equitable Programs to Address Client Needs
  3. Coordinate Effectively Across Systems
  4. Build and Support Affordable Housing Solutions for Individuals within the Homeless Continuum
  5. Increase and Diversify Funding
  6. Educate and Advocate for Change

Outcome and Improvement Committee – Nouna Sekhpossian

- Role:
  - Establish performance targets appropriate for populations and program types in consultation with recipients and subrecipients
  - Monitoring recipients and subrecipients performance
  - Evaluating project outcomes of ESG and CoC programs, and reporting those outcomes to the Partnerships and Funding Committee
  - Providing training and support on best practices
  - Overseeing HMIS, including establishing an HMIS subcommittee with specific functions
- Composition of Committee crosses a wide variety of public and private partnerships. There are a few vacancies
- The CoC system has 6 large components:

|                                |                       |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| ○ Street Outreach              | ○ Emergency Shelter   |
| ○ Transitional Housing         | ○ Rapid Re-Housing    |
| ○ Permanent Supportive Housing | ○ Market Rate Housing |

- HUD Performance Measures
  1. How many people experienced homelessness?
  2. How many people are becoming 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?
- How is Montgomery County doing?
 

Data charts based on data from HMIS were shared that showed that Montgomery County trends were overall decreasing.

System-wide goals as of 2018

  - **Achieved:** Decrease the number of people experiencing homelessness on any night by 10%
  - **Achieved:** Decrease the average length of homeless by 8%
  - **Achieved:** Increase the number of households placed in permanent housing to 40% of all exits
  - Maintain the already low percent of households returning to homelessness, so that no more than 16% of housed households return with two years.

HUD 2019 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) – Amanda Harris

The 2019 NOFA was released on July 3.

- Background: The annual HUD NOFA allows for communities across the country to apply to HUD for funding.
- Role of DHHS: Montgomery County DHHS will act as the Continuum of Care Collaborative Applicant. Duties will include:
  - Coordinating, preparing, collecting information, and submitting the CoC Program application
  - Applying for CoC Planning Funds
  - Designing, operating, and following a collaborative process for the development of applications and approving submission of applications in response to a CoC Program NOFA
- Role of Allocation subcommittee: The Allocation Committee duties include:
  - Design, operate and follow a collaborative process for the development of applications and approve submission of applications in response to a CoC Program NOFA
  - Reviewing and Ranking Project Applications
- Role of ICH: The ICH duties related to the HUD CoC Application include:
  - Approving Allocation Committee members
  - Determine funding priorities
  - Approving Project Rankings
  - ICH members with conflicts will be asked to recuse themselves from the decision-making process.
- Just as a reminder for the 2020 HUD CoC Competition, the Partnerships and Funding Committee of the ICH will be responsible for nominating Allocation Committee members and recommending funding priorities.
  - The full ICH will be responsible for final approval of Allocation Committee members, funding priorities, and ranking of project applications.
  - ICH members with conflicts will be asked to recuse themselves from the decision-making process.
- Available funding: This year there is \$2.3 billion for new and renewal projects. There is an additional \$50 million for a domestic violence and human trafficking bonus project.
- Montgomery County numbers: The ARD (annual renewal demand) is estimated to be \$8.982,609 million and Tier 1 is about \$8.475,947 million and bonus project \$449,130, the DV bonus is \$350,357 and CoC planning is \$269,478.
- Ranking projects: Projects are ranked in order
  - Tier 1 projects are awarded based on our community application and generally speaking any project ranked in Tier is highly likely to get refunded. Equal to 100% of Annual Renewal projects for the first time and 94% of the combined Annual Renewal amounts for all other projects
  - Conditionally awarded from the highest CoC score to lowest CoC score

- Tier 2 are scored based on our community application and the individual project application. CoC Score- Up to 50 points, CoC Project Ranking- Up to 40 points, Low Barrier to Entry- Up to 10 points
- HUD Policy Priorities and Program Highlights for 2019 NOFA
  - Ending homelessness for all persons
  - Creating a systemic response to homelessness
  - Strategically allocating and using resources
  - Using an evidence-based approach
  - Increasing employment
  - Providing flexibility for Housing First with service participation requirements

Allocation Subcommittee – Linda McMillan and Carlos Aparicio

Linda McMillan stated that to get an overview of the NOFA allocation process (ranking and scoring) to review the ranking sheets and application from last year that are posted on the website at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/homelessness/Continuumofcare.html>.

Carlos Aparicio shared that all the members of the subcommittee are residents of the County and their objective is to provide the best application and to get the most money possible. It is a challenging task because the County has great projects and wonderful providers.

The CoC 2019 Competition - Evaluation Criterion. All projects must meet the HUD eligibility threshold

|  |
|--|
| Renewal Projects   |
| <p><b>Program effectiveness</b> – cost effectiveness and HUD standard performance measures</p> <p><b>Scope of work</b> – description of services, housing first approach and alignment with CoC Priorities, etc</p> <p><b>Severity of Needs</b> – serving households with high acuity and % of households with extreme vulnerabilities</p> <p><b>Outcome Measures</b> – increasing income and rapid placement (with 5 business days) rapid exits to PH (within 30 days)</p> <p><b>Past performance</b> – no unresolved findings, clear monitoring reports and no non-compliance findings for 2 consecutive years</p> |
| Bonus Projects and Domestic Violence Projects  |
| <p><b>Experience</b> of the applicant or sub-recipient in providing services</p> <p><b>Design</b> of Housing and Supportive Services – Alignment with CoC Priorities</p> <p><b>Timeliness</b> – will the project be ready to house the first program participants</p> <p><b>Financial</b> – cost effectiveness</p> <p><b>CoC Participation</b> – 100% referrals from Coordinated Entry System and DHHS</p>   |

Highlights of the Discussion:

- The priority will be rapid-rehousing adding 450 units. The County has added 100 RRH units.
- The next homeless initiative is housing families with children
- All projects will be ranked scored and ranked.
- Most of the funding will be in Tier 1 but some projects will drop to Tier 2
- HUD want applications consolidation.
- The Planning Grant is not part of the ranking
- The application is due to HUD on September 27

Communication Committee – Chapman Todd

The Communication Committee provides external or general public communication and outreach. The committee has three areas:

- Education about best practices through the website
- Marketing high level messaging for complex items (i.e. Campaigns-veterans, chronic and families)
- Taking the lead on special events and developing logos

Ebony Johnson requested an updated Homeless Resource Brochure to be posted on the website. Roberto suggested Webinars to be added to the website.

Adhoc Workgroup on Prioritization for Permanent Supportive Housing – Kacy Barker and Mary Phillips

- Chair and Cochair of the Systems Coordination Committee (previously known as Operations). Representatives from Emergency Shelter, Street Outreach/ In-reach, Scattered Site Permanent Supportive Housing and Site-based Permanent Supportive Housing. Staff at various levels including case managers, program directors and agency leadership
- The workgroup reviewed the Reviewed Coordinated Entry Data including variance in VI-SPDAT scores, distribution of assessment scores, housing placements, etc.
- Researched other Coordinated Entry systems including communities using "dynamic" prioritization
- Review current assessment tools and housing placements
- 

The workgroup identified following vulnerability indicators:

- Poor access to mainstream services
- Poor engagement with services
- Unsheltered
- Veteran
- Poor management of activities of daily living
- History of exploitation
- Length of time to serve as a tiebreaker

Next Steps:

- Further define vulnerability indicators
- Determine how vulnerability indicators will be documented and verified
- Create a timeline for implementation

Population-specific target for ending homelessness among all residents of MC- Chapman Todd and Nili Soni

- Update on @HomeTogether (Families)
  - The length of time is 30 days no longer than 45 days.
  - Definition and goal of family homelessness has not been updated by the Federal government
  - There will be monthly updates sent to the listserve on the family initiative
- Update on Inside (Not Outside) and Zero: 2016
  - To date MC has housed 420 chronic individuals (functional zero number is 12)
  - To date we have housed 153 Veterans (functional zero number is 6)

Roberto welcomed Raymond Crowel the new Director of DHHS to the ICH. Roberto shared that the purpose of the ICH is the governing board of the CoC and provides advice to County government. The ICH is made up of 25 people from various provider agencies with DHHS is our lead agency. The Commission is currently requesting changes to the legislation that will be implemented after review by the County attorneys and adoption by the Executive and Council.

Meeting adjourned.