

## **DURHAM HOMELESS SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wednesday, June 22, 2016**

**3:00 p.m.**

**Durham County Human Services Building  
414 E. Main Street – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room**

The committee met on the above date.

**HSAC Committee Members Present:** Chair Mayme Webb-Bledsoe (Duke University); Vice-Chair Stephanie Williams (Alliance Behavioral Healthcare); Secretary Fred Stoppelkamp (Urban Ministries of Durham); Mayor Pro Tempore Cora Cole-McFadden; Assistant County Manager Drew Cummings; Meredith Daye, Development Director (Durham Housing Authority (DHA)); Captain Stan Harris (Durham County Sheriff's Department); Linzie Atkinson (Proxy for Lois Harvin Ravin - Durham County Veterans Service Office); Angela Holmes; Jennifer Jones (OEWD); Pam Karriker (Christian Assembly); Emanuel Kearney; Charita McCollers, MSW (Lincoln Community Health Center); and Ve'ga Swepson, Resource Specialist (Durham Technical Community College).

**Committee Members Absent:** John Bowman; County Commissioner Michael Page; Tony Tosh (Active Construction Company); and Dr. Warren Herndon;

**Excused Committee Members:** City Manager Tom Bonfield; Reverend Chris Tuttle (Westminster Presbyterian Church); Calleen Herbert, Interim Director (Department of Academic Community Services Learning Program at North Carolina Central University); Lindsey Jordan Arledge (VA Medical Center); and Jackie Love, Homeless & At-Risk Liaison (Durham Public Schools).

**Also Present:** Nigel Brown (HFNH); Emily Carr, James Echols and Tia Willis (LCHC-HCH); Erica Hall and Emily Lybrand (LATCH); Stephen Hopkins (PAC 1/Co-Facilitator); Valerie Haywood and Sheldon Mitchell (Urban Ministries of Durham); Olive Joyner (Housing for New Hope); Catherine Pleil (FMF); and Janet Xioa (Community Empowerment Fund);

**Staff Present:** Project Manager Lloyd Schmeidler, Project Manager Matthew Schnars, Director Reginald Johnson, Administrative Analyst Keshia Barnette (Department of Community Development) and Tonette Amos (Office of the City Clerk).

**Subject: Call to Order/Welcome**

Chair Webb-Bledsoe called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance. She then read aloud the goals for the HSAC.

**Subject: Minutes Review & Approval – May 25, 2016**

**Motion** by Committee Member Karriker seconded by Committee Member McCollers to approve the Durham Continuum of Care minutes for May 25, 2016 was approved unanimously at 3:12 p.m.

**Subject: Public Comment Period**

Stephen Hopkins, PAC 1 Co-Facilitator, reminded the HSAC that they should be advising the Durham City Council and the Durham County Commissioners on Homeless Prevention Programs. He expressed that it has not been done for quite some time. He also stated that there are gaps in the system and

mentioned that some individuals who are couch surfing (defined as sleeping on someone's couch because they don't have a place to stay) is a form of being homeless and should be counted based on HUD's definition.

**Subject: HSAC Member Vacancies**

Chair Webb-Bledsoe stated there are several vacancies on the committee. The current vacancies mentioned were: Business Category (County appointment) and two Durham Public Schools seats that were held by Minnie Forte-Brown and Jackie Love. She noted that letters were sent to DPS for replacements and the Business Category seat term is for three years. Chair Webb-Bledsoe encouraged the committee to recruit individuals that are qualified for those vacancies.

**Subject: Mayor Landlord Roundtable**

Janet Xiao, Durham Program Coordinator for Community Empowerment Fund, stated that the Mayor's Landlord Roundtable is a community based initiative that individuals in the room have been working on. She thanked organizations and individuals for their support. Ms. Xiao provided a power-point presentation entitled "Unlocking Doors Initiative – The Mayor's Landlord Roundtable". The following items were mentioned during the presentation:

- In Durham, housing vouchers are a crucial tool that can be used to house those who are under 30% of area median income
- Duke Students have been asked to do research regarding who are the housing voucher holders
- Examples of problems organizations/individuals face regarding housing vouchers
- 168 voucher holders searching for housing with their vouchers (as of May 2016)
- 152 more vouchers – have potential to be issued because of other issues
  - \$2.3 million in federal dollars could be used towards rentals in the community
  - 11 voucher holders expired during year
  - Common occurrence in high occupancy and high rent markets
  - Positive aspects that Landlords need to know:
    - Guaranteed rent
    - 60% of tenants remain in unit after 5 years from move in date
- Why Now?
  - Many shared clients are experiencing the same problems and trying to help resolved those problems
    - Provided examples of problems that occurred
    - Personally expressed that individuals are sick of problem continuing
- Photo from Durham CAN
  - Moment for landlords to act
  - Asked non-profits to be leaders
  - Mayor's Office support
- Community Commitments
  - Dedicated access to the DHA with phone lines specific for landlords
  - Tenant-Specified Support from Non-profits
  - Preparing Properties for Inspection and Have Checklist on Hand
  - Durham Housing Authority Committed to Receive Feedback from Roundtable
  - DHA has Updated their Request for Tenancy Approval (PTFA) Process
- Why Framed as Roundtable?
  - Ideal that might work and need to hear from large group of landlords
  - Hoping this will provide solutions to problems that exist

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- Begin with listening
- Hear concerns, address problem and come up with solutions
- Primary Goals
  - Listen to unheard stories, priorities and experiences
  - Generate landlord ownership and participation
  - Grow long-term network and support landlords
- Event Agenda for June 30, 2016
- RSVP: [unlockingdoorsdurham.org](http://unlockingdoorsdurham.org) (please complete)
- Flyer with event info distributed “The Mayor’s Landlord Roundtable”

Ms. Xiao completed her presentation and opened the floor for questions.

Committee Member Karriker expressed concern about the large apartment complexes that no longer participate in the voucher program. She wanted to know what was being done to address that problem.

Ms. Xiao responded that most large apartment complexes are owned by out-of-state companies and they are not part of the community that they want for this initiative. They are looking for private landlords because those are the ones who are most likely to partner.

Committee Member Karriker stated that it would only solve 10-20% of the problem.

Ms. Xiao stated that some companies own multiple properties and they have reached out to them. She mentioned a company that owns over 1200 units has agreed to be a partner. Durham Realtors Association, Triangle Partners Association and N.C. Housing Finance Agency have agreed to assist with the problem.

Secretary Stoppelkamp expressed concern about agents who approve housing vouchers and rapid rehousing funds approval applications are out-of-state.

Responding to Secretary Stoppelkamp’s question about how many individuals have completed the online RSVP response, Ms. Xiao stated that HSAC members and attendees have not completed the RSVP form. Currently 50 individuals have registered and 25 of those are landlords.

Committee Member Cummings asked for responses to the following items: (1) Will the program bring better analytics to the table to resonate with the landlords; and (2) Will the small percentage of non-payment rate that put landlords in the negative, bring forth some type of financial back stopping.

Ms. Xiao stated that based on the outcomes from focus groups participation regarding housing issues is why they are hosting the Mayor’s Landlord Roundtable. This will narrow down the “What Ifs” and to get answers directly from the landlords. She stated that is a form of data. Ms. Xiao’s group has been working with a Duke Economic Professor along with her students to generate some of the analytics. Ms. Xiao stated that her group knows some things that the landlords care about but needs to get a better data. She hopes that good quantitative data will be generated from the roundtable. Also she stated that her group has been holding conversations with voucher holders to gather data from them. All data will be given directly to DHA.

Responding to a question from LATCH’s representative Erica Hall, Ms. Xiao stated that most landlords who have registered are local and private landlords. She noted that representatives from the Chamber of Commerce and Bar Association will be attending. A web video conference is a great ideal but will not be used for this event. Ms. Xiao expressed that they wanted to have face-to-face conversations. This would be by Durham and for Durham. She stated that key decisions will be made on what direction to take after the event and web video could be used in the future.

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Chair Webb-Bledsoe encouraged everyone in attendance to go to the website and sign up so that Ms. Xiao will know how many people to plan for and especially asked those individuals who have good knowledge about the process to try to be in attendance. Since there were no more questions, Chair Webb-Bledsoe thanked Ms. Xiao for her presentation.

Ms. Xiao distributed a flyer with more information about The Mayor's Landlord Roundtable seminar.

#### **Subject: 2016-17 CoC & ESG Funding Priorities & Process**

Project Manager Lloyd Schmeidler (Community Development Department) presented background information and recommendations that were distributed prior in the meeting on a memorandum dated June 15, 2016 referencing "2016 Funding Priorities for CoC & ESG Funding".

After going over the recommendations that would be voted on, Mr. Schmeidler stated that HUD made an error and provided their department with updated information earlier in the week, which changed some of the outcome in CoC Funding analysis.

- The second sentence change is that Permanent Housing Bonus will be at 5% instead of the "15%" that is stated on memorandum. That is a 2/3 reduction.
- Confirmation has been received from a current recipient willing to reallocate two projects (Transitional Housing and Permanent Supportive Housing projects) which makes those projects eligible for \$76,636;
- \$68,000 (5%) is the estimated amount for Permanent Housing Bonus
- Estimated total available \$144,000 for one or more new CoC project
- Recommendation is that they use any new or reallocated funds for Permanent Supportive Housing for Chronically Homeless Persons

Mr. Schmeidler clarified information about Rapid Rehousing Investments analysis as it relates to SSVF\* (multi-county) funds that Durham will be receiving. He expressed that \$1.5 million needs to be divided between 20 counties.

Responding to a question from Committee Member McCollers, Mr. Schmeidler stated that he's unsure if declines can be tracked as it relates to the definition changed for Chronically Homeless. He also stated that staff has not done any analysis to see how the change in the definition has impacted their numbers. Mr. Schmeidler provided the prior definition for Chronically Homeless as a family or individual with a disability who has been homeless continuously for a year or longer or who has had four or more episodes of homeless within the last three years. The current definition that went into effect earlier this year indicates the communicative time that the family or individual was homeless would need to equal a year or longer.

Committee Member McCollers expressed concern about reallocating funds to Chronically Homeless if people are having a difficult time qualifying under the new definition.

Mr. Schmeidler stated that if they can house everyone who meets the new definition according to HUD prioritization process then they can go down the list and then address the ones who meet the old definition.

Vice-Chair Williams personally feels they have individuals who meet the 365 days but do not have the documentation that is needed. She stated that there is only one team that does street outreach documentation and that team can't get to every single person, so there is no clear documentation of where they are staying. The problem being faced is that individuals can't do self-certification.

Committee Member Cummings stated that funding for the HMIS that came into place six years ago needs to be utilized. He expressed that it is important to have a good database system and stressed the importance that people need to put information into it. He wanted to know what is the HMIS being used for.

Mr. Schmeidler responded that the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is used to generate the point-in-time count and for other projects that are using the HMIS. That makes the process easier and seamless, so all the projects with Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing can generate their point-in-time count numbers, which also includes the unsheltered count that is done by volunteers.

Responding to another question by Board Member Cumming regarding the annual snap shot, Mr. Schmeidler stated the following:

The HMIS produce annual numbers of how many people are accessing the HMIS on an annual basis;

The annual count data suggests that the projects are using the HMIS and has remained readily stable over the years;

The annual count states that a 20% decline in Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing between 2012-2015 (1615 people); and

There is a need to do more to get better measures.

Catherine Pleil (Families Moving Forward (FMF)) stated that agencies are using the HMIS all the time and made favorable comments about the system.

Committee Member Cummings stated that he would love to know all the uses that the HMIS generates.

Mr. Schmeidler requested that members contact him or Matt Schnars if they have questions about homelessness in Durham. Staff will respond, as they did with Dr. Herndon's question regarding unemployment, in a timely manner.

Committee Member McCollers stated that it appears that some people don't have a clear knowledge of HMIS and may need individual assistance to understand the value and what they are endorsing.

Chair Webb-Bledsoe asked if anyone had additional questions on the item and no one spoke. Chair Webb-Bledsoe opened the floor for the motions that were printed on the 2016-17 CoC & ESG Funding Priorities & Process memorandum.

Board Member McCollers expressed concern about the language that is being used for Chronic Homeless status as it relates to funding. She expressed there is a need to accommodate individuals under the old definition.

Board Member McCollers stated that the old definition is included in the NOFA but just not mentioned in the motion.

Mr. Schmeidler stated a prioritization process is being used to identify Permanent Supportive Housing and Chronic Homeless individuals.

Project Manager Matt Schnars explained how the process will answer the question ‘Do we have Chronic Homeless solved in the community?’ and also provided several examples of how the prioritization process will be executed.

A motion was made (Drew Cummings) and second by (Angela Homes) to approve the following recommendations listed below at 3:59 p.m. (14/0)

1. Durham CoC grant for Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) implementation should be ranked as Durham’s top CoC funding priority in order to minimize the risk of losing CoC funding for the HMIS. Losing CoC funding for the HMIS would force the CoC to identify other funds for HMIS, including potentially requiring HMIS participating agencies to invest additional funds in HMIS implementation; and
2. Rapid Rehousing should be the priority for any new or reallocated Emergency solutions Grant (ESC) funds for the 2016 funding period; and
3. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) for Chronically Homeless Persons should be the priority for any new or reallocated funds in the 2016 Continuum of Care (CoC) Homeless Grants Competition.

Community Development Director Reginald Johnson stated that staff will put on an agenda item for a future meeting to explain how HMIS works. He pointed out that it is essential that everyone on the board have knowledge and understanding of how HMIS works.

**Subject: Performance Measures Policy**

Mr. Schnars presented background information and key points listed on the agenda in item 7. The Community Development Department drafted a policy entitled “Durham Continuum of Care Policy & Procedure” that will create the HSAC Performance Management Sub-Committee. The responsibilities are outlined on the policy. Individuals were asked to visit the two websites listed in the “References” section on the handout. The seven performance measures mentioned are listed below:

- Return to Homelessness
- How many people become homeless for the first time that were never homeless before
- How long are people homeless for
- What is the length of time people are homeless in community
- Measures that evaluate only CoC funded projects (increasing earned income)
- Measures that evaluate only CoC funded projects (increasing income – benefits)
- Measure on access to permanent housing

Mr. Schnars stated that the policy is proposing not to create programing project level measures for every system measure because it is not realistic to do it for all. He went over the three listed in item #8 that will have program level measures and HMIS will be used to generate. Mr. Schnars noted they are currently in the process of the preliminary generation of the measures from item #8 that are due to be submitted August 1, 2016.

Mr. Schnars opened the floor for questions and there were none.

**Subject: Homeless Quiz**

Mr. Schnars presented a quiz entitled “Durham Homeless Housing System Quiz” that was distributed earlier in the meeting. The group reviewed the questions listed below and Mr. Schnars provided the following answers:

1. “Continuum of Care” or “CoC” refers to:  
Answer: (d) All of the above
2. In Durham, approximately what percent of households experiencing homelessness are comprised of families with children?  
Answer: (b) 25%
3. People who have been experiencing homelessness for long periods of time and have severe substance abuse, medical, and/or mental health conditions will need help to address their conditions(s) before they will be able to be successfully housed  
Answer: (b) False
4. Approximately one out of every two people (50%) experiencing homelessness in Durham are over age 50?  
Answer: (a) True
5. The annual community wide homeless Point in Time (PIT) count includes a count of people who:  
Answer: (c) Are staying on the streets, in Emergency Shelter, or in Transitional Housing programs.
6. Approximately what percent of the total funding in Durham’s homeless housing system comes from HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) & Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG)?  
Answer: (a) 15%

**Subject: Reminders**

- No HSAC meeting scheduled for July 2016
- Next HSAC meeting is scheduled for August 2016
- Committee Members will be electing officers at the August 2016 meeting

**Subject: Adjourn**

With no further business to come before the body, Chair Webb-Bledsoe adjourned the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Tonette Amos  
Office of the City Clerk