

## DURHAM HOMELESS SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, November 16, 2016

3:00 p.m.

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

The Durham Homeless Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) met on the above date and time.

**Committee Members Present:** Chair Fred Stoppelkamp, Vice-Chair Angela Holmes, Secretary Charita McCollers, Linzie Atkins, Durham County Veteran Services Office, Director Michael Becketts, Durham County Social Services (proxy for Commissioner Michael Page), City Manager Thomas J. Bonfield, Captain Stan Harris, Durham County Sheriff's Department, Interim Director Calleen Herbert, Department of Academic Community Services Learning Program at North Carolina Central University, Pam Karriker, Christian Assembly, Emanuel Kearney, Melody Marshall, Durham Public Schools Homeless Liaison and Ve'ga Swepson, Resource Specialist, Durham Technical Community College.

**Excused Committee Members:** Lindsey Jordan Arledge, VA Medical Center and Meredith Daye, Development Director, Durham Housing Authority (DHA).

**Committee Members Absent:** Mayor Pro Tempore Cora Cole-McFadden, Assistant County Manager Drew Cummings, County Commissioner Michael Page, (Michael Becketts, *proxy*), Reverend Dr. Warren Herndon, Jennifer Jones, Adult Employment Program Coordinator, Office of Economic and Workforce Development, Tony Tosh, Prosperity Recovery Services, Reverend Chris Tuttle, Westminster Presbyterian Church and Mayme Webb-Bledsoe, Duke University.

**Staff Present:** Director Reginald Johnson, Project Managers Lloyd Schmeidler and Matthew Schnars, Administrative Analyst Keshia Barnette (Department of Community Development) and Senior Executive Assistant Sheila Bullock (Office of the City Clerk).

**Also Present:** Shana Carignan, Ryan Fehrman (Families Moving Forward (FMF)); Martin Friedman, Rikki Gardner, (Housing for New Hope (HFNH)); Jayleen McLean, Carol E. Hinton (Healing with CAARE); Lillian Presley (Spaghetti Theatre); Larry Partee' (Formerly Homeless); Brenda Tillman, DHA and Trula Miles, NAMI-Durham.

### **Subject: Call to Order/Welcome**

Chair Stoppelkamp called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. He welcomed everyone in attendance and reviewed the goals of the HSAC.

### **Subject: Public Comment Period**

Lillian Presley, a retired Durham Public Schools teacher, made comments regarding a group that was started last year called "Spaghetti Theatre." She explained that the goal of the group was to celebrate the extraordinary skills of the homeless who are often overlooked.

Ms. Presley provided HSAC members with a daily schedule of Spaghetti Theatre for their review. She explained that participants would be learning social skills and be involved in various other activities. Ms. Presley pointed out that the Spaghetti Theatre group had been meeting at the library; however, they will not be able to continue to meet there. She explained that the group needs a place to meet every day where they will be able to come in and develop their talents and at the end of the week the theatre group

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would have a production that would be open to the public. A small pre-paid fee would be charged for the performances which would pay for the on-going operations of the theatre. Ms. Presley stated that the goal would be that homeless persons would no longer be homeless and they would have ownership and investment in the business.

Chair Stoppelkamp asked Ms. Presley to provide her contact information to everyone. He added if there were individuals who wanted to assist Ms. Presley with her request of locating a venue for Spaghetti Theatre that they contact Ms. Presley.

### **Subject: Recognition**

Project Manager Matt Schnars (Department of Community Development) shared a youtube video from a recent City Council Meeting where a citizen publicly recognized and thanked City Clerk staff, Sheila Bullock for assisting him.

Mr. Schnars noted that Ms. Bullock is a faithful supporter of the HSAC and does a lot for the committee as well as the City of Durham behind the scenes as it relates to homelessness.

Mr. Schnars stated that Ms. Bullock has significant value to the HSAC in the sense that HUD has increased the expectations for communities to demonstrate the level of documentation and organization that is required. He added this is achieved through HSAC minutes prepared by Ms. Bullock. Mr. Schnars commented that Ms. Bullock does a great job behind the scenes and HSAC staff wanted to acknowledge her for all her work.

### **Subject: Minutes Review & Approval – October 26, 2016**

**Motion** by Vice-Chair Holmes, seconded by Committee Member Harris to approve the HSAC minutes of October 26, 2016 with any revisions was approved unanimously.

### **Subject: Homeless System Performance Monitoring**

Mr. Schnars reviewed a document with Committee Members concerning HMIS data quality timelines benchmarks as well as license utilization monitoring.

### **Subject: HMIS Evaluation**

A power point presentation was given by Mr. Schnars which provided an overview of HMIS deficiencies effecting Durham’s homeless housing system. HSAC staff is recommending that the HSAC send a letter to the North Carolina Governance Committee expressing their concerns that Durham has regarding the governance and administration of the statewide HMIS.

In reference to the following statement Mr. Schnars read earlier:

“Because Durham has high expectations and standards for all aspects of our Homeless Housing System .....

City Manager Bonfield asked for clarity on the use of the word “our.” Mr. Schnars explained that our HMIS is a statewide system that Durham shares with twelve other CoCs. City Manager Bonfield expressed concern about the administration of “our” and added wouldn’t the system be state owned? Mr. Schnars stated that Durham is responsible in having HMIS and the HSAC is responsible for

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selecting, monitoring and administering it. Every CoC assumes individual responsibility and the HSAC is responsible and accountable to make sure the system meets the needs of Durham's Homeless Housing System.

HSAC members viewed a video entitled "Continuum of Care 2.0 – Designating and Operating and HMIS." Below is a list of key concerns highlighted in the presentation:

- Compliance with HUD requirements for HMIS Lead Designation
- Poor HMIS training for Users and Local System Administrators
- Conflict of Interest between Software Vendor and HMIS Lead
- HMIS Software Usability Survey suggests other software may be better
- HMIS Lead and Software Vendor communication is hindered due to statewide structure
- NCCEH is burdened with disproportionate amount of work

Mr. Schnars noted the following other options available that staff was not previously aware of:

1. Maintain status quo and continue to accept a system that is performing poorly; or
2. Initiate formal communications with the Governance Committee and/or HMIS Lead Agency (MCAH)

Secretary McCollers asked if Durham was currently under contract with Michigan who maintains the HMIS. Mr. Schnars stated yes it is under contract until June 30, 2017.

In response to Secretary McCollers' question as to whether other CoCs were having this conversation, Mr. Schnars stated no. She also asked if HUD had a software recommendation. Mr. Schnars responded no and added that HUD will not have a recommendation because they have to be fair to all the vendors. HUD leaves the decision up to the CoCs.

Mr. Schnars pointed out that the HMIS Software Usability Survey that went out across the country indicated that people are having the same concerns about their software vendor.

Secretary McCollers expressed her feelings that it is disheartening to know that the HSAC went through a very tedious process to designate the Michigan group and now to come to this point to find out everything that's going wrong. She asked if the group does go with Option 2 and if their requests are not met is that a proposal for Durham to withdraw from the relationships with the other CoCs around the North Carolina and try and do something on their own.

In responding to Secretary McCollers' inquiry, Project Manager Lloyd Schmeidler (Department of Community Development) commented that Durham withdrawing their relationships with other CoCs and doing something on their own may become an option but they are not currently looking at that. He added that another concern mentioned among the CoCs across the state was the training issue.

Committee Member Karriker asked if staff had concerns regarding the HMIS in the beginning prior to HSAC members voting. In response Mr. Schmeidler stated that these are some of the challenges that come from being part of the statewide network. Further comments were made regarding the HMIS.

Committee Member Karriker also asked if any of the providers in attendance at the meeting had used the software and wanted to comment on it. Mr. Schnars reported that providers have participated in several surveys and results show that the system "leaves a lot to be desired."

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In response to Secretary McCollers' question about if there were any efforts being made to assist other CoCs around North Carolina understand the impact and valid concerns that Durham has, Mr. Schnars explained that staff is proposing a letter from the HSAC be sent to the N.C. Governance Committee. The letter will highlight Durham's concerns and deficiencies as well as what aspects are not being met by HMIS.

Chair Stoppelkamp stated that if there were any objections to the letter being sent out; this was the time for folks to be heard. Hearing no objections, Chair Stoppelkamp said the letter would be sent.

#### **Subject: HSAC Signature Initiative Follow Up**

Chair Stoppelkamp reminded everyone that at the November 2016 meeting HSAC members voted to have Coordinated Intake for Single Adults be the signature initiative. Below are next steps for the initiative:

- Upcoming meeting on Friday, November 18, 2016 with some key players
- "Think Tank" event scheduled for 10:00 a.m. during the CEHD meeting on Thursday, November 17, 2016 at Families Moving Forward

Outcomes of the meeting and "Think Tank" event will be presented at the December 2016 HSAC meeting.

#### **Subject: Reminders**

The next HSAC meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 21, 2016 at 3:00 p.m. due to the holiday.

#### **Subject: Announcements**

Mr. Schmeidler announced that the National Coalition for the Homeless encourages communities to observe the first night of winter to remember people who died homeless in communities. Spencer Bradford, Director of Durham Congregation in Actions, is planning a "Homeless Memorial Day Service" on December 21, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at Durham Central Park.

Mr. Schnars reported that Mayor Bell was invited to the White House as a result of the Mayor's Challenge to end Veterans Homelessness. Durham was one of 40 cities that achieved the goal of the challenge. Mayor Bell was unable to attend the event; therefore, Mr. Schnars was given the opportunity to go to the White House.

#### **Subject: Adjourn**

Chair Stoppelkamp wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and Happy holidays.

**Motion** by City Manager Bonfield, seconded by Committee Member Karriker to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously.

With no further business to come before the Committee, Chair Stoppelkamp adjourned the meeting at 4:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Sheila Bullock, Senior Executive Assistant, Office of the City Clerk