

DURHAM HOMELESS SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, February 25, 2015

3:00 p.m.

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

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

Committee Members Present: Chair John Bowman, Secretary Stephanie Williams, Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden, City Manager Tom Bonfield, Assistant County Manager Drew Cummings, Edward Abdullah, Lindsey Jordan Arledge, VA Medical Center, Reverend Warren Herndon, Lois Harvin-Ravin, Durham County Veterans Services Officer, Pam Karriker Christian Assembly, Fred Stoppelkamp, Urban Ministries of Durham (UMD), Reverend Chris Tuttle, Westminster Presbyterian and Jason Wimmer, OEWD.

Excused Committee Members: Dr. Janice Harper, Assistant Vice-Chancellor, University Programs, NCCU and Michelle Jordan, Assistant for Community Relations, Durham Technical Community College.

Absent Committee Members: Vice-Chair Mayme Webb-Bledsoe, County Commissioner Michael Page, Director Michael Becketts, Durham County Social Services, Minnie Forte-Brown, DPS School Board, Captain Stan Harris, Durham County Sheriff's Department, Angela Holmes, Jackie Love, DPS Homeless and at Risk Liaison, Charita McCollers, MSW, Lincoln Community Health Center and Latasha Wilson (SAVE).

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

Also Present: James R. Alston (Triangle Veterans Wellness Outreach Center (TVWOC)), Tomesia Barnes (Durham VA Medical Center), Martin Friedman, Cynthia Harris, (Housing for New Hope (HNH)), Sandra Lassister, Tiara Lassister (Stick & Stay Prevention, Inc.), Reverend Ernie C. Mills (Durham Rescue Mission (DRM)), Terry Morris (Vets to Vets United, Inc.), Patrice Nelson (Urban Ministries of Durham (UMD)), Catherine Pleil (Durham Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN)) and Tiana Terry (Volunteers of America).

Subject: Call to Order/Welcome

Chair Bowman called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m.

Subject: Minutes Review & Approval – January 21, 2015

Because there were not enough HSAC members present to constitute a quorum; Chair Bowman suspended approval of the January 21, 2015 minutes.

Subject: Public Comment Period

James R. Alston, Triangle Veterans Wellness Outreach Center (TVWOC), announced he had attended a recent *Disabled Americans Convention* in Washington, DC where Congress talked about changes and upcoming programs that will assist Women Veterans.

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Mr. Alston also stated that Triangle Veterans will be hosting a large forum April 17th through April 18th. The location has not been determined yet. Scheduled to attend is the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and others who are involved in the well-being of Veterans such as Dr. Terry Morris, Vets to Vets United, Inc.

Committee Member Herndon introduced Mrs. Sandra Lassiter and daughter Tiara Lassiter (Stick & Stay Preventions, Inc.) who provided information on their recovery homes located on Liberty and Quincy Streets in the East Durham area.

According to Ms. Tiara Lassiter, Stick and Stay Preventions, Inc. is involved in creating community gardens for children which gives them something to do during the summer and helps to get them off the street. Ms. Sandra Lassiter stated that the organization also provides individuals with housing upon being discharged from the hospital.

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden felt it would be good for the Lassiters to attend a PAC 1 meeting at Holton Career and Resource Center to let the residents know what they are doing in the community.

Subject: Point In Time Count

Lloyd Schmeidler, Project Manager (Department of Community Development) gave the following update on the Point In Time Count:

- Point In Time Count was conducted on January 28, 2015.
- 70 volunteers participated in the un-sheltered count including Council Member Schewel and members of the HSAC.
- The Count included a complete canvassing of the Durham downtown area between NC-147, Geer and Broadway Streets, the Brightleaf to Dillard Street area as well as the American Tobacco and the transit center.
- 44 un-sheltered people were counted, lowest number since 2009.
- Community partners recognized for their support include: Open Table Ministry, Housing for New Hope and St. Joseph Episcopal Church.
- Data is continuously being collected from other community partners, emergency shelters and transitional housing programs.

Mr. Schmeidler reported that the software provider for the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is still updating the Point In Time and the housing inventory counts for the software. The update should be completed by the end of February 2015. He added that HUD requires that Point In Time Count and the Housing Inventory Count information be entered into HUD's online reporting system by April 30, 2015.

Reverend Ernie C. Mills (Durham Rescue Mission) wanted to know an estimate of how many homeless there were in the county. Mr. Schmeidler stated that they did not have a number to release at this time.

Committee Member Herndon asked about the number of families affected in the Count. Mr. Schmeidler commented that no un-sheltered families were found during the Count. Committee Member Herndon noted that there are times when parents have been incarcerated but they have children. He wanted to know if any children were found during the Count. Mr. Schmeidler stated the HSAC's Youth Results Team conducted an additional survey of homeless youth; however, the data for this survey is

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still being analyzed. Matthew Schnars, Project Manager (Department of Community Development) noted as it relates to the Point In Time Count, there were no un-sheltered homeless youth.

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden pointed out that some organizations such as Love and Respect in East Durham, the Durham Rescue Mission, Healing with CAARE and others do not receive any money from the City or anywhere else for the role that they play in eliminating homelessness. She feels that these agencies should be applauded and thanked for doing this without any public assistance.

Committee Member Herndon asked if it would be wise to thank these organizations at some later date with a small reception to recognize them.

Mr. Alston pointed out that there are Veterans who have housing vouchers for 1-bedroom apartments but find that only 2-bedroom apartments are available. He asked what could be done regarding this situation.

Committee Member Arledge noted that it is a HUD regulation that if a person only qualifies for a 1-bedroom unit based on their family size that is all they are allowed to rent. She added that different housing authorities handle this matter differently. However, the Durham Housing Authority adheres to this regulation.

Mr. Alston feels this matter needs to be addressed to HUD. Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden announced that she will be attending a meeting in Washington, D.C. and one of the sessions will address the Mayor's challenge on ending homelessness. She will report back an update on any findings regarding this matter. Also, she will bring this issue up to the Human Development Committee of the National League of Cities, on which she serves.

Subject: HMIS Transition Update

Mr. Schmeidler gave an update on the process of transitioning the HMIS to the Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness (MCAH). The administration will transfer officially on May 1, 2015.

In response to Committee Member Cummings' question about whether the system was serving other purposes, Mr. Schnars explained there are functions of the system that are not being taken advantage of and the system has the ability to do more. He added that one thing that Durham is able to do that MCAH is not doing is the Coordinated Intake System. The referral process has been automated through CHIN and has worked well.

Subject: 2015 CoC Process

Background information and timelines on the 2015 CoC Application and funding process were provided by Mr. Schmeidler. The process will include completion of the Grants Inventory Worksheet which is a spread sheet that provides information of the grants that would be eligible for renewals in the 2015 grant cycle. Mr. Schmeidler announced that based on the projects that are eligible for renewal in the 2015 cycle it looks like Durham will be eligible to apply for approximately \$1,124,431.00 of CoC funds in the 2015 cycle; assuming that HUD is not going to have additional monies to make available to Durham for additional CoC projects.

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According to Mr. Schmeidler, the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) is likely to be released in late May 2015. The completion of a collaborative application is required this year which is a process that was not required in the 2014 cycle.

In response to Committee Member Herndon's question as to how many units were bought on last year, Mr. Schmeidler stated that he was not sure but this year Goley Point, which was funded partially with CoC funds and is a Durham Housing Authority (DHA) project, will be opening by the end of March 2015 with 28 beds for use by the chronically homeless. Denson apartments, a project of Casa, is eligible for first time renewal in 2015 and opened Phase I in November 2014 with 11 units.

Mr. Schnars pointed out that a mobile application was used this year by volunteers for the Point In Time Count which allowed for real time processing of information.

In reference to the HMIS transition process, Mr. Schnars announced that all of the materials including meeting minutes, budget projections and anything associated with the process is being gathered and is available to the public on the N.C. Coalition to End Homelessness' website.

Mr. Schnars also noted that if the NOFA is released in late May or June and the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) happens in July/August there could be some over overlapping with these two processes which will mean more work would be involved. With the release of the NOFA, timely rankings of the projects have to be done. Since the HSAC usually does not meet in July, this process would require the HSAC to have a special meeting in July and/or August 2015.

Subject: Mayor's Challenge Overview

Mr. Schnars summarized a discussion that took place at last month's HSAC meeting about the Zero 2016 framework being used in parts of the country to define what it means to end homelessness among Veterans. He directed Committee Members' attention to the following documents for their review and provided some highlights of each:

- *Zero 2016 Benchmarking Framework Durham*
- *Defining an End to Homelessness*
- *Mayor's Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness*

City Manager Bonfield asked for an explanation of the *Zero 2016 Benchmarking Framework Durham* document; specifically the section dealing with Veterans Homeless Inflows and Veterans Outflows. Discussion and comments followed regarding this matter.

In reference to the document "*Durham Homeless Services Advisory Committee Homeless Housing System Performance Report*" included in Committee Members' packages, Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden referenced page 6 entitled "*Permanent Supportive Housing Retention*" and asked how many Veterans reside in Andover I, Sherwood Apartments, Williams Square and Andover II.

Mr. Schnars was unsure but stated that he would get those numbers to Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden.

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Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden also wanted to know if the residents in the units have any source of income and if so how does it count toward their room and board; do they receive their checks directly or does it go to management and management handles it for them.

Committee Member Williams explained that residents receive their own checks and pay 30% of the cost of their rent and utilities per month. She added that several of the programs do not require income for people to enter the housing. If the person is working on getting disability or getting a job, then once they start receiving income that is when they start paying a certain percent of their income for rent and utilities.

Additional discussion followed concerning residents' income, being able to move into the private sector and permanent housing.

Subject: HSAC Performance Report

In the interest of time and to be able to receive Tiana Terry's (Volunteers of America) presentation, Chair Bowman suggested skipping the *HSAC Performance Report* item.

Subject: Volunteers of America – Supportive Services for Veterans & their Families (SSVF)

Ms. Terry gave an overview of the Supportive Services for Veterans & their Families (SSVF) program. Her power point provided the following information:

- Brief background of Volunteers of America
- Various types of programs: Homeless Veteran's Reintegration Program (HVRP), Maple Court (Grant Per Diem), Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE)
- SSVF Program (Grant funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs)
- Grant for SSVF was awarded in 2013 to serve 14 counties including Durham
- Grant was renewed for a second year effective October 1, 2014 and in 2015 two additional grants were awarded.
- Number of Veterans Served in Durham County
- Participant Eligibility Criteria
- Housing First Model
- Target Population
- Temporary Financial Restrictions and Veterans Needs
- Barriers to Housing
- How SSVF Complements other Programs
- Homeless Data
- Statistical Data and Retention
- Referral Process

Mr. Alston asked if one day of basic training was included to mean one day of active duty. Both Committee Members Arledge and Harvin-Ravin responded no and clarified that it is one day of active duty, not training.

Committee Member Herndon pointed out there could be anywhere from 1,000 to 1,500 new units built in Durham and individuals could be coming from all over. He asked with all of the great work being

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done and trying to end homelessness by a certain period of time, will Durham be blind sighted by the number of individuals that are either released from military or attracted to Durham over the next 5 years.

Mr. Schnars stated that the VA has reviewed this situation on the federal level and he briefly explained the process of “surge” funding.

Committee Member Herndon asked if systems will start talking to each other as they move forward. Mr. Schnars noted that this where the HSAC comes in to ask stakeholders for better coordination.

Patrice Nelson, (UMD) commented that there is a lot to celebrate as it relates to placing Veterans in housing with SSVF and families with Rapid Re-housing using short-term subsidies. These individuals continue to be housed. However, in reviewing the Zero: 2016 chart, there is still a large gap of chronically homeless single adults. However, the funding and resources are not there for them.

Ms. Terry stated that the SSVF program also assist about 85% of single Veterans.

Subject: Announcements

Mr. Schmeidler announced the Community Development Department is in the process of preparing the 2015-2020 Consolidated Plan. A survey is available on-line at www.durhamnc.gov on the Community Development’s website. He stressed the importance of everyone in attendance as well as members of the community in completing the survey. The Consolidated Plan directs the work of the Community Development Department as it relates to targeting the use of CDBG, HOME and ESG funds that the City receives from the federal government. Survey will be available on-line through March 6, 2015.

Subject: Adjourn

With no further business to come before the body, Chair Bowman adjourned the meeting at 4:41 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the HSAC will be Wednesday, March 25, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. at the Durham Human Services Building located at 414 E. Main Street in the 2nd floor conference room.

Respectfully Submitted

Sheila Bullock
Office of the City Clerk