

DURHAM HOMELESS SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, August 26, 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, Vice-Chair Mayme Webb-Bledsoe, Secretary Stephanie Williams, Edward Abdullah, Lindsey Jordan Arledge, VA Medical Center, Mayor Pro Tempore Cora Cole-McFadden, Lois Harvin-Ravin, Durham County Veterans Services Officer, Calleen Herbert, North Carolina Central University, Angela Holmes, Michelle Jordan, Assistant for Community Relations, Continuing Education, Durham Technical Community College, Pam Karriker, Christian Assembly, Charita McCollers, MSW, Lincoln Community Health Center, Fred Stoppelkamp, Urban Ministries of Durham (UMD) and Reverend Chris Tuttle, Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Committee Members Absent: Michael Becketts, Director Durham County Social Services (DSS) – proxy for Commissioner Page, Interim Deputy County Manager Drew Cummings, Minnie Forte-Brown, DPS School Board, Captain Stan Harris, Durham County Sheriff's Department, Jackie Love, Homeless & At-Risk Liason for DPS, County Commissioner Michael Page and LaTasha Wilson (SAVE).

Excused Committee Members: City Manager Tom Bonfield, Development Director Meredith Daye, Durham Housing Authority (DHA) and Reverend Warren Herndon.

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

Also Present: Nigel Brown, Housing for New Hope (HNH), Matthew Case, Lincoln Community Health Center (LCHC), Martin Friedman, Housing for New Hope (HNH), Irvin Hervey, Minister For God, Darius Hunt, Healing with CAARE, Inc., Andrew Johnson, Housing for New Hope (HNH), Ursula Mannix, Mannix & Associates, Ernie Mills, Durham Rescue Mission, Lisa Sorg, News & Observer and Pearlle Williams, NAMI.

Subject: Call to Order/Welcome

Chair Bowman called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Subject: Minutes Review & Approval – June 24, 2015

Motion by Committee Member Stoppelkamp, seconded by Committee Member Arledge to approve the HSAC minutes of June 24, 2015 was unanimously approved at 3:13 p.m.

Subject: Welcome New HSAC Member

Chair Bowman recognized and welcomed new HSAC member Calleen Herbert, Interim Director, Department of Academic Community Service Learning Program at North Carolina Central University (NCCU).

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Subject: Public Comment Period

Pearlie Williams (Durham NAMI) expressed her frustrations about being homeless and needing help but not knowing how to navigate the system to receive assistance. She stated that she needs to know what steps she should take and who, other than the provider, can she talk to. Ms. Williams explained that she has many questions and although she is being sent to several different places she does not know what she is doing or where she is going. Ms. Williams stated that so many others are going through the same dilemma. She added that according to Housing for New Hope (HNH), a person has to be a resident of the city for 6 months before they can even receive services. Ms. Williams noted that not only does she need help, but there are people who are coming to her with mental health and housing issues that also need help and don't know how to navigate the system. She made a plea to the HSAC for their assistance.

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden asked that City or County staff respond to Ms. Williams' comments.

Project Manager Matthew Schnars, Department of Community Development, stated that the City does not provide any services; however, they will speak with Ms. Williams after the meeting and get her connected with the right services.

Committee Member McCollers asked what kind of services Ms. Williams needed. Ms. Williams commented that she has the psychological piece covered. However, money is needed for doctor visits.

Committee Member McCollers explained that if Ms. Williams does not have her own place to reside in and she is a patient of Lincoln Community Health Center, she should transition her medical care to the Health Care for the Homeless Clinic. She added that there are certain protocols in place to the different level of access and resources to services that come with being connected to the Health Care for the Homeless Clinic. She further explained how Ms. Williams can get the process started.

Ms. Williams stated that she was told from someone at the shelter that she did not qualify because she had a primary care doctor.

In response to Committee Member Holmes' question about where can Ms. Williams receive housing and where can she be directed to, Committee Member McCollers responded that she is a social worker at Lincoln's Health Care for the Homeless Clinic and as long as the person is a patient in their clinic they can receive social work case management services with no cost. She added that she will also help the person through their current housing process.

Committee Member Holmes shared her personal experiences regarding when she and her family lived at Urban Ministries for 10 months. She pointed out that she did not receive any assistance from Lincoln and she did not qualify for any services with Housing Authority. Ms. Holmes added that by January 20th she will be in the same situation as Ms. Williams and wants to know what will the City or County do for her.

Public comments were also received from Irvin Hervey who wanted to know what is considered homeless in the City of Durham and why does different entities have different definitions for homelessness and can anything be done for individuals who are homeless.

Mr. Schnars noted that the answer varies from program to program based on the funding sources requirements.

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Committee Member McCollers talked about the following access points in the community:

- Open Table Ministries
- Urban Ministries
- Health Care for the Homeless Clinic
- Housing for New Hope
- Duke

Mr. Schnars provided additional comments to address Mr. Hervey's questions about the different definitions of homelessness and requirements of funding sources.

Further comments were made by Mr. Hervey who stated that he came into the Durham Rescue Mission and they saved his life. He is a Veteran and he expressed his disappointment on how the system worked with his Section 8 HUD VASH. He added that in his experience it is hard to have a HUD VASH Voucher accepted by an apartment or leasing complex in Durham. He feels that everyone should be on one accord when it comes to the definition of homelessness.

Chair Bowman thanked Ms. Williams and Mr. Hervey for sharing their experiences. He hopes that they both will check in to the access points mentioned earlier so they can get the most appropriate services.

Subject: HSAC Officer Elections

Background was given regarding the Interlocal Agreement between the City and the County that governs the HSAC's annual election and installation of new officers for Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary.

Chair Bowman stated that the Executive Committee reached out to people who might be willing to serve and Committee Member Stoppelkamp has agreed to serve as Secretary for the next year. Names given to serve as new officers for the upcoming year were Vice-Chair Mayme Webb-Bledsoe to move to Chair, Secretary Stephanie Williams, to move to Vice-Chair and Fred Stoppelkamp to serve as Secretary.

At this time Chair Bowman opened the floor for other nominations.

For clarity, Mayor Pro Tempore pointed out that the City did not put the secretary piece in the Interlocal Agreement. However, they did say if there is a Caucasian Chair, then the Co-Chair should be African American to ensure the diversity of the officers.

No other nominations for officers were given.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden, seconded by Committee Member McCollers to approve the following names to serve as officers for the upcoming year: Mayme Webb-Bledsoe, Chair, Stephanie Williams, Vice-Chair and Fred Stoppelkamp, Secretary was approved unanimously at 3:35 p.m.

At this time the meeting was turned over to newly-elected Chair Webb-Bledsoe. As her first task she recognized and thanked Chair Bowman by reading and presenting a plaque to him for his service to the HSAC.

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Subject: 2014-15 HSAC Meeting Schedule

Mr. Schnars gave a brief background on the adoption of the HSAC meeting schedule for the fiscal year. He explained that the schedule has been adjusted due to holidays and the Point in Time Count. A formal approval of the new schedule is needed from the Committee.

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden asked if the Committee could possibly look at meeting every other month versus every month. She commented that she understands everyone's schedules and sometimes there are things that can be done just with staff, the Executive Committee and the Officers except if something needs approval.

Mr. Schnars stated that the HSAC in Durham actually goes above and beyond in regards to what HUD's expectations are. Those expectations require that two meetings of the full body is needed per year which is the minimum. He added that the HSAC has the ability to make this adjustment and that they should review the Interlocal Agreement to see what is the commitment.

Committee Member Tuttle added that the Structure Subcommittee will be glad to look at the possibility of changing the frequency of meetings for the HSAC.

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden would like for the Structure Subcommittee to look at this item in a timely manner. She stated that she will take this matter to the Joint City-County Committee meeting on Tuesday.

Chair Webb-Bledsoe commented that they will hold off on this item until a recommendation is received back from the Structure Subcommittee. Also, during this time Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden will bring this matter before the Joint City-County Committee.

Committee Member McCollers mentioned the meetings that are held around August, September or October each year concerning the funding sources.

Mr. Schnars pointed out that there would still be a need for meetings concerning the funding and right now those dates are not available.

Vice-Chair Williams made reference to the "Special" meeting note located at the bottom of the draft 2015-2016 meeting schedule. She added that these meetings have not been consistent over the past few years. Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden commented that staff has a handle on this and they would notify the Committee when they need to meet.

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden also wanted it known that she was not talking about September 23rd. She added that it would be totally out of the question and they do not plan like that.

Motion by Secretary Stoppelkamp, seconded by Committee Member Bowman to keep the HSAC meeting date of September 23, 2015 until the Committee receives a recommendation from the Structure Subcommittee before the group approves their 2015-2016 meeting schedule was approved at 3:45 p.m.

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Subject: Shelter Transition Policy

Vice-Chair Williams (Performance Management Subcommittee) led a discussion regarding a follow-up to the review of the draft Shelter Transition Policy that was presented during the June 2015 Joint HSAC meeting. Items that were discussed included:

- Scaling down the scope of the policy so that it would be for people who are medically fragile; and
- Changing some of the contact information contained in the policy from “Alliance Behavioral Healthcare” to “Durham System of Care” which would include several other local entities.

Committee Member Bowman suggested changing the wording of item 3 under the “Procedure” section to read “Contact Durham System of Care staff” and keep the other language.

Secretary Stoppelkamp recommended having the providers review the draft policy and then vote on it at the September 2015 meeting.

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden felt that the HSAC members need to move forward with this item especially since the providers have already been involved.

Secretary Stoppelkamp commented if the providers are on board with the revised wording of the policy then he is fine with it. Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden pointed out that the HSAC has the authority to make policy.

Additional discussion followed concerning whether to vote on the policy or wait until the providers had an opportunity to review it.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden, seconded by Committee Member Bowman to approve the HSAC Homeless Housing Medical Discharge Policy with the changes as noted in item 3 “Durham System of Care staff” should replace “Alliance Behavioral Healthcare” was unanimously approved at 3:58 p.m.

Subject: HIC & PIT Policy

Mr. Schnars explained that as Durham’s CoC Decision Making Board, the HSAC is required to adhere to certain HUD regulations and guidelines when conducting the annual homeless point in time count.

The Performance Management Committee drafted the HIC and PIT policy and it was reviewed by the HSAC at their May 2015 meeting. Edits and revisions have been incorporated into the policy and a formal approval is needed by the HSAC.

Motion by Committee Member Bowman, seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden to approve the HIC and PIT policy as printed was unanimously approved at 4:00 p.m.

Subject: 2015 Consortium of Care and State ESG Process Update

Project Manager Lloyd Schmeidler, Department of Community Development, reported that the Notice of Availability (NOFA) has not been released yet. Staff anticipates that when HUD releases the NOFA they will have approximately eight weeks to prepare Durham's application which includes a collaborative application and individual project applications that the HSAC approves. Staff feels at this point it is not necessary to have the HSAC call a special meeting to approve project applications for Continuum of Care (CoC) funding.

According to Mr. Schmeidler, staff believes the preliminary amount that the Durham CoC will be eligible to apply for is up to \$1,252,158.00 per HUD. Hopefully this amount will be confirmed when the NOFA is released. If the amount is approved there will be \$126,702.00 for a new project.

Genesis Home has agreed to accept reallocation of the Family Matters grant for transitional housing in the amount of \$158,332.00. Staff recommends that this amount be reallocated for rapid rehousing for homeless families. There is also a statement of intent to apply for the anticipated amount for that new project funding.

Mr. Schmeidler also provided some information on the State Emergency Solutions Grant funding process.

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden asked if it would be possible to do a news article to inform the public of what is coming up, what will be available and staff's recommendations. Mr. Schmeidler responded yes it is possible. In response to his answer, Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden asked that Mr. Schmeidler get with Beverly Thompson to do a publication so the entire community will know what's going on.

Subject: HSAC Homeless Housing Performance Report

Mr. Schnars presented a summary of the HSAC homeless report entitled "*Durham Homeless Housing System – Multiyear System Performance Report.*" Some of the highlights included:

- HEARTH ACT
- HSAC Background
- The Goal
- Who is becoming homeless? / Who is becoming housed?
- Subpopulations
- Newly Homeless
- Self-Resolving
- Returns to Homelessness
- Permanent Housing Exits (*Successful*)
- Length of Time Homeless
- Key Points

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden requested information on the racial breakdown of persons who are homeless. She added there is an urgency to assist our black males. She would like to know what the root cause is of homelessness for every homeless person but especially for the black males and Veterans. This is important so they can start working on the root cause because this is how change is effectuated.

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Mr. Schnars stated that he did not have the racial breakdown of persons who are homeless but he could get that information.

Secretary Stoppelkamp suggested that it is jobs with a living wage and affordable housing. There are folks with a minimum wage job but there is no affordable housing that can sustain them with a minimum wage job.

Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden pointed out that discrimination is still alive.

Secretary Stoppelkamp mentioned exiting into permanent housing and he wonders if there are numbers on folks that are exiting into permanent supportive housing that would allow units to open up for more people to enter permanent supportive housing.

Mr. Schnars noted that there was information on bed turn-over rates.

Reverend Ernie Mills, Durham Rescue Mission (DRM), made reference to page 13 of the report concerning exiting to permanent housing. He commended the HSAC because he feels the group has done more to improve this than the DRM. He feels the exiting is moving in the right direction. However, according to the report, the unsheltered count is continually rising – which is very scary. He feels that the economy is hurting and there are so many people being laid off.

In reference to comments made by Mayor Pro Tempore Cole-McFadden concerning black males, Ms. Pearlie Williams stated that black males are not lazy but so many of them don't have high self-esteem. They are coming out of incarceration – it's a tragedy to see but you have to have discipline. She added there is no structure and she feels that the churches and community is not supportive enough. Transition needs structure.

Subject: Excused Absence

Tonette Amos, Office of the City Clerk reported that City Manager Tom Bonfield, Reverend Warren Herndon and Meredith Daye requested excused absences from today's meeting.

Subject: Reminder - 2015 Project Homeless Connect

The 2015 Project Homeless Connect will be held Friday, October 2, 2015 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Durham Bulls Athletic Park (DBAP).

The next regular meeting of the HSAC is scheduled for Wednesday, September 23, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. in the 2nd floor conference room of the Durham County Human Services Building, 414 E. Main Street.

Subject: Adjourn

With no further business to come before the body, Chair Webb-Bledsoe adjourned the meeting at 4:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Sheila Bullock
Office of the City Clerk