



Denton County Homelessness Leadership Team

Thursday, December 8, 2016

Meeting Minutes

Appointees Present: Alice Mankoff, Barton Duffy, Chasz Parker, Chief Lee Howell, Commissioner Bobbie Mitchell, Councilman TJ Gilmore, Councilwoman Keely Briggs, Cynthia Harris, Herman Oosterwijk, Isabel Rodriguez, Kathy Srokosz MS, RN, Mayor Chris Watts, Monica Glenn, Roy Metzler, Sandra Robinson, Sherri McDade, Stephen Coffey, Terry Widmer, Thomas Muir, Valerie Foster

Ex Officios Present: Gary Henderson, Courtney Cross, Dani Shaw

Guests Present: Nick McRae, John Cabrales

Appointees Absent: Jessica DeRoche

Welcome & Consideration of August Minutes

Mayor Watts welcomed appointees and guests to the meeting at 8:03 a.m.

Mayor Watts requested a motion to accept the August meeting minutes.

Motion: Stephen Coffey

2nd: Councilman TJ Gilmore

Motion Approved

Review DCHLT Homelessness Summit

Courtney Cross provided a brief summary of the inaugural Denton County Homelessness Summit that occurred Saturday, November 12, 2016 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Denton Public Safety Training Center (719 E. Hickory Street). The summit opening address was given by Congressman Burgess, and was followed by a presentation from Dani Shaw on the economics of homelessness. Local PhD Candidate Elizabeth Wachira gave a digital storytelling presentation homelessness and health, during which local service providers who have worked with people experiencing homelessness shared their reflections of the effects of homelessness. Sophia Checa with Texas Homeless Network (THN) gave a presentation on the importance of data and systems coordination. Summit attendees were offered an opportunity to learn about local organizations serving people experiencing homelessness during an agency exhibition.

Lieutenant Frank Padgett, Officer Lee Weber of Denton Police Department and EMS Battalion Chief Brian Glenn of the Denton Fire Department participated in a Public Safety Panel, during which they shared their experiences and knowledge of working with people experiencing homelessness as first responders. The summit ended with a panel discussion about affordable housing moderated by Dani Shaw and featuring the following panelists: Sherri McDade (CEO of the Denton Housing Authority),

Barney Cosimo (Interim Executive Director of Denton Affordable Housing Corporation), Jodie Boutilier (Habitat for Humanity) and Valerie Foster (Homeless Liaison for Sanger ISD).

Herman Oosterwijk inquired as to whether the summit will be an annual event, and Gary indicated that it would likely become an annual occurrence. Alice Mankoff stated that after attending the summit she was proud to be a Denton citizen. She also stated that the importance of data was made very clear throughout the summit.

Workgroup Updates

Terry Widmer updated appointees on the status of the housing workgroup. She provided a detailed explanation of the housing pilot, including eligibility criteria, partnering with Denton Affordable Housing Corporation (DACH) to house program participants, and Denton Community Health Clinic's role as lead case manager. The United Way of Denton County (UWDC) and Denton Supportive Housing (the organization granting funding for this program) have secured an MOU, and UWDC and DAHC are in the process of finalizing a Master Lease and MOU for the project. Dani Shaw reiterated the collaborative nature of the pilot, highlighting multiple program partners. Additionally, she referred to the intentional tracking of data in order to replicate the program on a larger scale in the future. The current structure of the program brings the project as close to 'Housing First' as it's been. Herman inquired about budget and tracking outcomes and outputs, and Courtney informed the group of the use of various assessment tools and tracking of information using the Efforts to Outcome (ETO) case management software. Terry emphasized the goal of the pilot in reducing barriers for people experiencing homelessness to get and stay safely housed.

Terry reviewed both the October and November workgroup meetings. Giving Hope, Inc. hired a new Housing Navigator and Street Outreach Coordinator, Tyheshia Scott. Dr. George Morrison joined the workgroup representing New Beginnings, a new nonprofit focused on housing school-aged children and their families. The workgroup began to discuss strategic planning, and briefly discussed a shift in focus of their strategic goal from 'supportive' to 'affordable' housing. The workgroup plans to address strategic planning more readily in January after receiving further direction from the DCHLT.

Stephen provided the Data Workgroup update. The group has continued to review the established, comprehensive definition for homelessness, and determine available and needed data points in order to identify next steps for collecting and compiling necessary information. The group very briefly began to discuss strategic planning, and discussed the importance of Coordinated Entry in improving the amount of quality of data needed to identify gaps in Denton County's housing crisis response system. The Data Workgroup will join the Denton County Homeless Coalition's Coordinated Entry Steering Committee in January to learn about Coordinated Entry in more detail and discuss the possibility of joining forces in the implementation of CE.

Courtney updated the group on community conversations she conducted along with Alex Reed with local groups Able Disabled and Outreach Denton. Alice Mankoff asked about homelessness among students at the local universities, and Alex confirmed that in previous meetings with University of North Texas (UNT) library staff stated that some students have been known to live in their cars.

Strategic Planning

Mayor Watts directed the discussion towards strategic planning. He opened the discussion by expressing the need to appoint an ad hoc strategic planning committee to develop a long-term plan for making homelessness rare, brief and nonrecurring in Denton County. The Mayor expressed the risks of being too narrow or taking on too much, along with the need to begin to identify solutions and determine a direction for the future. Mayor Watts stated the following responsibilities of the Strategic Planning Committee:

- Review mission and vision
- Establish realistic time frames for achieving goals
- Determine the best approach to long term planning (ex: strategic plan vs. strategic framework)
- Provide direction for the workgroups; allow workgroups to set their strategic goals and work plans

Appointees stated the importance of looking at solutions from a regional/county perspective, analyzing sources and streams of funding, and setting short term, achievable goals that can lead to long-term change and success. The general consensus among the group was to establish a three to five year plan to be evaluate annually, with annual implementation goals set by workgroups and ultimately approved by the leadership team.

The group agreed that recruiting six appointees to the committee was the best decision, in order to ensure sufficient representation of not all appointees were able to attend meetings. The following appointees agreed to serve on the strategic planning committee: Jessica DeRoche (was absent at the meeting, but agreed prior) Sherri McDade, Alice Mankoff, Councilwoman Keely Briggs, Valerie Foster, Chief Lee Howell, Dani Shaw (Ex-Officio) and Courtney Cross (Ex-Officio). It was agreed that Dani and Courtney will coordinate to bring a strategic planning framework to the committee at their first meeting, which will take place in January 2017.

Backbone Support Update

Courtney reviewed the accomplishments of the DCHLT throughout 2016 and shared the 2017 meeting schedule. She briefly reviewed a jobs program that is being developed collaboratively with Monsignor King Outreach Center, Vision Ministries, Serve Denton, Our Daily Bread, the United Way of Denton County and the City of Denton.

New Business/Public Comments

Mayor Watts asked for any new business. Councilwoman Keely Briggs informed the group that she was attending a meeting December 12th to learn about a panhandlers program briefing. Dani Shaw agreed to send Councilwoman Briggs a draft of the Denton jobs program prior to her Dallas visit.

The meeting was adjourned by consent at 9:16 a.m.

Next Meeting:
Thursday, January 12, 2016 @ 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.
United Way of Denton County Office

Vision:

Every person in Denton County has a place to call home that is safe, affordable, accessible and supported by community resources.

Mission:

The Denton County Homelessness Leadership Team fosters an effective and coordinated system of homelessness prevention and intervention, resulting in homelessness that is rare, brief and nonrecurring through:

- Community awareness and connection
- Data-driven, evidenced-based, fiscally responsible recommendations
- Innovative solutions around affordable housing, access to primary and behavioral health care services, adequate incomes and coordinated services
- Mobilizing, advocating and empowering public-private community-wide collaboration

Secretary

Date