

Denton County Homelessness Leadership Team

July 14, 2016

Meeting Minutes

Appointees Present: Alice Mankoff, Angie Cadena, Barton Duffy, Chasz Parker, Commissioner Bobbie Mitchell, Councilwoman Keely Briggs, Cynthia Harris, Isabel Rodriguez, Jessica DeRoche, Med. NCC, LPC, Kathy Srokosz, MS, RN, Mayor Chris Watts, Monica Glenn, Sherri McDade, Stephen Coffey, Terry Widmer, Valerie Foster

Ex Officios Present: Gary Henderson, Courtney Cross

Guests Present: Doreen Rue (for Herman Oosterwijk), Barbara Ross, Pat Smith, Alex Reed

Appointees Absent: Chief Lee Howell, Councilman TJ Gilmore, Herman Oosterwijk, Roy Metzler, Sandra Robinson, Thomas Muir

Mayor Chris Watts called meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

Welcome & Introduce New Appointees

Mayor Chris Watts provided the welcome and introduced new DCHLT appointees, Monica Glenn, Board Member of the Denton Chamber of Commerce.

Consideration of May and June Minutes

Mayor Watts directed members to the May and June meeting minutes for review. Upon no comments or motions to amend the minutes, Mayor Watts requested a motion to accept them as written.

Motion: Valerie Foster

2nd: Stephen Coffey

Motion Approved

Workgroup Reports/Updates

Terry Widmer gave an overview of the Housing Workgroup's day-long meeting June 27th. The workgroup was divided into three sub-committees tasked with finalizing details regarding a 10-unit housing pilot in Denton: Logistics, Direct Service and Policies and Procedures. The workgroup is finalizing eligibility criteria and a referral process for the program, as well as securing in-kind commitments from partner agencies. The anticipated go-live date for the pilot is September 1, 2016.

Stephen Coffey provided a report of the inaugural Data Workgroup meeting that took place July 29th. The workgroup is composed of services providers and community members with experience in data science. The group reviewed the work of the City of Denton's Housing the Homeless Taskforce, discussed the goals set forth by the DCHLT and quickly reviewed existing homelessness and housing data.

Courtney Cross and Alex Reed provided an update on the Consumer Workgroup. Currently the Denton County Behavioral Health Team (DCBHLT) and the DCHLT are not seeking to combine consumer workgroups. The DCHLT is still seeking a consumer workgroup chair, and Courtney requested guidance from the leadership team regarding workgroup recruitment. The consensus among the leadership team was to consult the Housing Workgroup regarding consumer workgroup appointments and possible chairs.

Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)

Courtney Cross provided a presentation to appointees outlining the history of the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) in Denton County, and the potential loss of ESG funding for the community. Courtney informed the group that Dani Shaw with the City of Denton submits this grant on behalf of the Denton ESG Collaborative, and that she played a pivotal role in assisting with the preparation for the presentation.

ESG funding comes from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and is disseminated to Continuums of Care (CoCs) throughout Texas via the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs. The Denton ESG Collaborative consists of the City of Denton (as the ESG Lead Agency), and belongs to the CoC known as the Balance of State (BoS), which consists of roughly 214 counties throughout Texas.

The purpose of ESG funding is to help persons who are at risk of homelessness or homeless quickly regain stability in permanent housing. Funding goes towards programming such as street outreach, emergency shelter, homelessness intervention and prevention, and program management components such as database software and agency administration.

Due to an increasingly competitive grant application process, Denton County is at risk of not receiving ESG funding for the first time since the 1980s. The Denton ESG Collaborative lost the majority of its points on the grant application due to the lack of affordable and accessible housing for low income families and individuals throughout the county. This potential funding loss could impact approximately 1500 individuals during the next grant year.

Early appeals to TDHCA earned the collaborative some points back on their application, but unfortunately not enough to award them any funding. As of July 14, 2016, Dr. Alonzo Peterson of Giving Hope, Inc. is appealing on behalf of the collaborative. TDHCA's board of directors will make their final decision July 28, 2016.

Courtney outlined the work currently being supported by the DCHLT through the Data Workgroup to assess current numbers of homeless and at-risk individuals and families throughout the county, as well as affordable housing. The discussion then turned to board members representing the Denton ESG Collaborative agencies in the room for their feedback and comment on recent developments.

Appointees then discussed additional next steps for the DCHLT regarding support of agencies losing funding, and possible ways to quickly bring affordable housing to the county. The group discussed short and long term implications of and tasks regarding the grant.

In the next year the collaborative will need to decide if and how to seek additional funding and, and the community will need to determine how to acknowledge gaps in services. In the long term, the community will need to consider changes that will ensure funding is obtained moving forward.

Mayor Watts asked Chasz Parker if there was a way for the DCHLT to influence this process, and Chasz suggested appointees reach out to state representatives in show of support.

Appointees asked board members of the respective ESG collaborative organizations to come to the August meeting with feedback regarding the effects of potential loss of funding on their organizations, and what type of support they will request moving forward.

Backbone Support Update

Gary Henderson introduced Alex Reed, the new Community Impact Director for Health and Mental Health Initiatives at the United Way of Denton County (UWDC). Gary also informed the team of a recently awarded grant from the Texas Health and Human Services Commission for two, full-time case managers dedicated to connecting Denton County Veterans and their families to community resources.

Gary informed the team of an upcoming need for the development of Speaker's Bureau slides and a committee to share the work and information of the DCHLT throughout the committee. This will be addressed in coming meetings.

New Business: No new business was recorded.

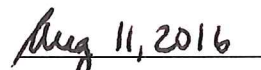
Public Comments: No public comments were received.

The meeting was adjourned by consent at 9:26 a.m.

Next Meeting: August 11, 2016 @ 8:00 a.m.

United Way of Denton County Office


Secretary


Date