

Homeless Coordinating Council Meeting Minutes
February 15, 2024
12:00-1:00 pm
via Teams

Present: Mary Sellers, Matt McCoy, Russ Trimble, Kristi Knous, Joseph Jones, Robert Brownell, Chris Coleman, Scott Duer, Bob Andeweg

Guests: Patrick Schacherer, Randy Jansen, Ashlan Lippert, Cynthia Latcham, Julie Eberbach, August "Dutch" Geisinger, Tammy Weir, Melissa Oneil, Amber Lewis, Sarah Martin, Luke Lynch, Carrie Moreno, KarLee Kearns, Penny Orewiler, Carolyn Gathright, Scott Sanders, Eric Kool, Joe Stevens, Leon Negen

Staff: Angie Arthur and Amy Croll

Meeting called to order at 12:02 pm

1. Welcome

Chairman Russ Trimble welcomed new members, Chris Coleman and Joe Gatto, both with the City of Des Moines to the Homeless Coordinating Council.

2. Approval of November 16, 2023 Minutes – Voting Item

Brownell moved. Sellers seconded. Motion passes.

3. Election of Chair and Vice Chair – Voting Item

Trimble called for nominations.

Trimble nominated Chris Coleman. Brownell seconded.

Knous nominated Susan Judkins. McCoy seconded.

Trimble called the vote. Motion passes. Coleman will be chair and Judkins will be vice-chair starting in May 2024.

4. Update on Homeless System Gap Analysis (Arthur)

a. Findings

The gap analysis powerpoint was reviewed. Discussion was held regarding if we know the last known address of an individual when they engage in the system. HMIS does capture the last known address of an individual when they enter the Polk County CoC system. Most of the time, individuals entering our system are from the metro area.

The gap analysis has been well received as a mechanism to direct funding for homelessness services. The Iowa Finance Authority has decided to also fund a similar study to determine gaps within the state-wide homeless system.

5. Point In Time Count (Schacherer)

- a. As it currently stands, the full completion of the Unsheltered component of the PIT Count is “finalized” and the number currently stands at 145. ICA is waiting on CISS finalized sheltered numbers from the PIT night to ensure all duplications have been eliminated. As of now, this is slightly higher than last year’s number of 129 and lower than this summer’s 184 PIT count.

6. Advocacy - Angie Arthur

a. Eviction Expungement

The eviction expungement legislation was reviewed, highlighting the key component is to provide an opportunity to expunge an eviction in the instance of dismissed charges, evictions as a mechanism of threats or coercion, and the removal of historically old evictions.

Currently, language is being considered that allows a record to be sealed at the time of the court hearing.

An eviction default is, on average, \$900, and cannot be removed from a record whereas a mortgage/bankruptcy will be expunged from a record within 7 years and is typically a much higher expenditure than an eviction.

b. SSB3175 – Cicero Initiated Bill

Bill was introduced on Monday with a sub-committee meeting at 8:30 am on Tuesday. Significant elements to this proposal include criminalizing homelessness, punishing cities, and redirecting funding from permanent supportive housing to policed encampments.

At least twenty-five advocates were present, and many testified against the bill. While the bill is dead, we are monitoring to ensure this does not return this year or in future years.

Important to note that a very similar bill was passed in Missouri and then overturned by the Missouri Supreme Court. A current Federal Supreme Court case is underway to decide if criminalization of homelessness can occur. A final decision should be made by next legislative session.

Legislation provides the opportunity to have further conversations with legislators who would like to support individuals experiencing homelessness.

Russ Trimble: Eviction expungement is HF 548. Movement on HF 548. Russ will look into if it needs to be re-assigned within 7 days in the Senate to be viable.

7. Review Dashboard with Community Information - Schacherer

Review of the dashboard is a standard meeting agenda item. The dynamic dashboard is available on the Homeward website. From Oct 1-Dec 31, 2023, 673 entered into the system whereas 385 left. We have had more people entering the system than leaving the system.

8. Final Questions, Thoughts, and Next Steps – 5 minutes

Mary Sellers reminded that while this Council focuses specifically on homelessness and Housing First, gaps within various system have a

compounding effect on the most vulnerable in our community. Systemic issues are interconnected and compound impact. For example, when individuals enter the homeless system, they are also likely food insecure as well. The United Way of Central Iowa released a Food Insecurity Model last week that highlights the need to collaboratively address broader issues related to poverty.

Trimble highlighted that along with food, public transit is also key to keeping individuals out of the homeless system. DART, our public transit system, is a key component to ensuring individuals can get to work, get groceries, and manage their daily living needs. Supporting individuals to be self-sufficient requires multiple systems collaborating effectively.

February 21, 10-12 pm: Iowa Homelessness Coalition Day on the Hill.

Legislative Advocacy Alerts can be subscribed to on the Homeward website:
www.homewardiowa.org/take-action/advocate

Russ will reach out to the Ankeny and Johnston Mayors to identify a representative to serve on this Committee from those communities.

Next Meeting Date – May 16, 2024

Meeting adjourned: 12:58 PM