

Homeless Coordinating Council Meeting

Thursday, April 28, 2022 12:00-1:00 pm

Via Zoom

Council Member Attendance: Angela Connoly, Scott Duer, Joseph Jones, Kristi Knous, Josh Mandelbaum, and Russ Trimble

Guests: Angie Arthur, Abbey Barrow, Deidre Henriquez, Cynthia Latcham, Carrie Moreno, Emily Osweiler, Marge Ramsey, Shelby Ridley, Patrick Schacherer, Julie Sleeper, Joe Stevens, Diana Vu, Gary Wickersing, Jan Zeleke, Lisa Crabbs, and iPhone

i. Welcome

ii. Approval of January 27, 2021 Minutes

- a. Russ Trimble moves approval of the minutes. Seconded by Scott Duer. Carried.

iii. Point in Time – Winter Count Analysis

- a. Pat Schacherer presented the results of the winter Point-in-Time Count, which serves as a snapshot of homelessness in the community during a 24 hour period
- b. The slides will be sent out to the group for further consideration
- c. Overall, there was a 5% increase due to an increase of folks in emergency shelter.
 - i. Last year, there were more folks unsheltered, so those numbers seem to have swapped
- d. The people who are unsheltered in our community are predominately from Des Moines and the metro communities.
 - i. 15% of individuals were from elsewhere in Iowa and just a couple of individuals from out of state
- e. Permanent housing numbers are on the rise, which is good news. This is due to additional housing vouchers and Permanent Supportive Housing in the community
- f. Rapid Rehousing numbers were slightly down this year, but that could be because there was such a massive influx of federal housing dollars last year. Plus, staff shortages play a role in the pace of getting people housed
- g. The chronic homelessness population appeared higher on this one night, but we don't currently see that as an annual trend
- h. Russ Trimble asked the group about the goals we're working toward as a community
 - i. Though numbers of homelessness are down over the decade, it has been slow or steady over the past few years
 - ii. Resources remain the same so it really becomes a public policy decision what to do next if we want to move the needle

- iii. How can this council make a change and better understand measures and success?
- iv. Success of veterans work could be an example- we were able to make such an impact in veteran homelessness because there was an influx of federal funds and local support
 - 1. We need to match resources with needs
 - 2. Welcome community collaboration and additional voices in this strategic process
- i. Substance use and mental health are up this year, but that's likely due to reporting methodology and will likely level off next year

iv. Update – HCC Extreme Weather Work Group

- a. During work group meetings, the members have been brainstorming barriers to shelter and services during extreme weather events
- b. Want to highlight the importance of leadership and direction from people with lived experience
 - i. Will be partnering with Drake University to conduct a study designed to get feedback from folks who have experienced unsheltered homelessness
 - ii. Will be starting with a questionnaire to get some initial feedback, then will conduct more in-depth interviews in the fall
- c. The group is also working on ways on better coordinate and communicate among street outreach organizations in the community
- d. [Folks can view the jamboard](#) with some notes and Angie will pass along the meeting minutes to this group as well for additional context

v. Polk County Emergency Management – ESF #6 Meeting

- a. Working to partner with Polk County Emergency Management to ensure disaster and extreme weather plans align
- b. A group met on the 22nd to review Polk County's current ESF #6 plan, which was created in 2019. The group also discussed weather amnesty and other homelessness considerations
- c. Conversations are ongoing and part of a larger disaster/weather response planning effort
- d. We can share minutes from the ESF#6 meeting with the HCC group

vi. Landlord Mitigation

- a. Transitioning from homelessness to housing plus dealing with mental health and/or substance use issues can lead to damages or needed repairs in units
- b. In a tight housing market, Shelby Ridley shared that they are seeing a lot of landlord fatigue due to damages and the barriers of serving clients
- c. Providers often work with landlords, mediate, and build relationships, but some landlords are unwilling to work with people experiencing homelessness or housing programs because of risks and potential damages

- i. This becomes an issue because so many affordable units have been lost and/or sold/redeveloped over the past few years
 - ii. Even with program support or a voucher, it is really challenging to find places to live for high barrier clients
- d. Primary Health Care has a Landlord Mitigation fund funded by the Polk County Housing Trust Fund
 - i. Similar to programs in other communities across the county
 - ii. Helps answer the question “Why should landlords want to work with our programs and house people who have experienced homelessness?”
 - iii. This group will consider if such a fund would be helpful moving forward and if metro communities/private donors would be willing to contribute
 - iv. Shelby will consider the financial need for such a fund
- e. This group will also continue discussing larger landlord mitigation practices to ensure affordable housing supply

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

- a. Next Meeting Date – July 28, 2022
- b. Future topics for discussion include landlord mitigation efforts across communities and setting community goals for the reduction of homelessness