

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