

Homeless Coordinating Council Meeting

May 18, 2023

12:00-1:00 pm

Via Zoom

Council Member Attendance: Bob Andeweg, Robert Brownell, Joseph Jones, Kristi Knous, Josh Mandelbaum, Matt McCoy, Mary Sellers, Russ Trimble.

Guests: Angie Arthur, Abbey Barrow, Cody Devereaux, Deirdre Henriquez, Kasperian Kittredge, Amber Lewis, Luke Lynch, Carrie Moreno, Diane Tinker McCoy, Nicole Naab, Leon Negen, Emily Osweiler, Joe Stevens, Ehren Stover-Wright, and Sue Woody.

1. Welcome and Introductions– Josh Mandelbaum – HCC Chair

2. Approval of January 26, 2023 Minutes– Voting Item

- a. Mary Sellers moves approval, seconded by Matt McCoy. Carried.

3. Homeless System Numbers and Updates

- a. Angie Arthur shared that it's important for this group to stay up to date with what's going on in Polk County's homeless response system and changes over time
- b. The need for homelessness supports far outweighs available resources (685 individuals and 65 families on the waitlist for services)
- c. Black/African American individuals are heavily overrepresented in the homeless response system due to systemic inequities
- d. The needs of individuals experiencing homelessness is also increasing—mental health, physical health, substance use, disabilities...
- e. Targeted investments in affordable housing and supportive services work to end homelessness- but we don't have enough resources currently.
 - i. Community, cross-system collaboration will be key to our success
 - ii. It is currently very difficult to serve youth under 18 in our system

4. Update – Unsheltered Study and Next Steps

- a. Angie Arthur provided an update on the Unsheltered Des Moines Study conducted in partnership with Drake University.
- b. Polk County Homeless Service Providers came together for two facilitated sessions to process the results of the study and begin to prioritize a plan of action to better serve folks within the system
- c. The study has been a great resource to better understand homelessness in the community for elected officials and partners—using data to find solutions

5. Point in Time – Winter Count Analysis

- a. Kasper Kittredge with the Institute for Community Alliances share that the Point-in-Time Count is required by HUD. It is an opportunity to count everyone experiencing homelessness in the community on that one night
- b. This winter, 644 people were experiencing homelessness which is up 6% from last year, but very similar to pre-pandemic numbers
- c. 80% of individuals who were unsheltered became homeless while living in Polk County. Another 15% were from other counties in Iowa
- d. The Count also contains self-reported demographic information and details about barriers individuals face like mental health, domestic violence, and substance use
- e. Will be interesting to think about HUD's de-investment in Transitional housing and how that impacts these numbers
- f. Area service providers also must submit data so we can get an understanding of the bed capacity in the community and changes over time

6. Outreach Project at the Central Library

- a. Sue Woody shared that the City of Des Moines is funding a social worker within the library system. They are currently working on a job description for a position to support the Library staff and patrons with resources
- b. Sue will return to the next HCC meeting to share more information once the position is hired

7. Final Questions, Thoughts, and Next Steps

- a. Next Meeting will be August 17th, 2023