

Interagency Council Meeting Summary

September 12, 2011

IAC Members Present:		IAC Members Absent:	
Doreen Cato (First Place)	Barbara Langdon (EDVP)	Mohamed Aden (Muslim Housing Svcs)	
Darasavanh Craven (CAC)	Emily Leslie (City of Bellevue)	Dennis Brown (WDVA)	
Ceil Erickson (Seattle Foundation)	Marilyn Mason-Plunkett (Hopelink)	Deborah Doyle (DSHS)	
Nora Gibson (Life Long Care)	Jackie MacLean (KC DCHS)	Michael Hursh (City of Auburn)	
Manuela Ginnett (SKCCH)	Stephen Norman (KCHA)	Kate Joncas (DSA)	
Bill Hallerman (AHA)	Mark Okazaki (Neighborhood House)	Jim Theofelis (Mockingbird)	
Mike Heinisch (KYFS)	David Okimoto (UWKC)	Marty Wine (City of Renton)	
Bill Hobson (DESC)	Michael Ramos (Church Council)		
Harry Hoffman (HDC)	Nancy Sherman (CAC)		
Rick Hooper (Seattle OH)	Sue Sherbrooke (YWCA)		
Jason Johnson (City of Kent)	Dannette Smith (Seattle HSD)		
Colleen Kelly (City of Redmond)	Kathleen Southwick (Crisis Clinic)		
Dinah Ladd (Seattle Public Schools)	Tom Tierney (SHA)		
Paul Lambros (PHG)	Janna Wilson (Public Health)		
Community Members Present			
Bill Block (CEH)	Tara Conner (Plymouth)	Joseph Adriano (City of Bellevue)	Andrea Akita (Seattle HSD)
Gretchen Bruce (CEH)	Sharon Kelso (DSHS)	Maureen Kostyack (Seattle OH)	Kate Speltz (KC DCHS)
Bill Kirlin-Hackett (ITFH)	Chris West (DSHS)	Karen Murphy (Building Changes)	Ken Taylor (Valley Cities)
Meghan Altimore (Hopelink)	Lynn Davison (Clegg & Assoc.)	Linda Peterson (KC DCHS)	Rebecca Laszlo (Community)

Welcome, Introductions and Consent Agenda

Sue Sherbrooke and Stephen Norman, Interagency Council (IAC) co-chairs, opened the meeting. The July 2011 meeting summary was approved as presented.

Ceil Erickson, Grant Manager with the Seattle Foundation, was approved for membership to the IAC. Welcome Ceil!

Public Comment

Bill Kirlin-Hackett reported that the Interfaith Task Force on Homelessness will host its 11th Annual Building Political Will event on Wednesday, October 19th at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Bellevue.

Governing Board / Funders Group / CAC Recap

Stephen noted that the meeting summaries from the July and August Funders Group, Governing Board and CAC were included in the packet. In the interest of time, he asked that everyone review them on their own.

Announcements

Paul Lambros initiated a conversation on perceptions of public safety in downtown Seattle, specifically the Belltown neighborhood. He reported that he is seeing/reading/hearing increasing concerns of disruptive behavior in Belltown, which some attribute to the increasing numbers of housing and social service programs and others attribute to nightclubs. Plymouth Housing Group has investigated and found that, for the most part, the people responsible for the behavior are not PHG residents and suggested that the IAC and colleagues find opportunities to speak up and educate community members that providing housing to people isn't the cause of these behaviors. In fact, safe and stable housing has been proven to reduce disruptive behavior. Sue noted that providers are in agreement with community members that disruptive behavior is unwelcome in the neighborhood – it puts their clientele and programs at risk and programs seek to halt disruptive behavior if they see it. Members agreed that community education is valuable and part of our charge as the Committee to End Homelessness.

Resetting the Ten Year Plan Goals

Lynn Davison (formerly with Common Ground and an IAC member, and currently a consultant with Clegg & Associates) attended the IAC meeting to facilitate the discussion on resetting the goals under the Ten Year Plan. She noted that this topic came about as a result of the July Governing Board meeting at which the Governing Board affirmed the CEH workplan for 2011 through 2015, with its five investment priorities: 1) Production; 2) Families Initiative; 3) HEARTH & HMIS Implementation; 4) Veterans 5 YP; 5) Client Care Coordination; and three task forces 6) Transformation of Single Adult Shelter; 7) Youth and Young Adults; and 8) Immigrants and Refugees. To guide implementation of these (and balance the necessary resources) they urged the IAC and Funders Group to establish criteria and recommendations

for resetting the goals under the Ten Year Plan as necessary. They provided guidance for this work by establishing the foundation that CEH should, “remain committed to a Ten Year timeline and be clear about what is realistically achievable by 2015. At the same time, we should have ‘stretch’ goals to which we aspire despite the economy and realities we face.”

Lynn led the discussion by expressing three givens:

- 1) Everyone remains committed to ending homelessness
- 2) We know there is more to be done
- 3) The environment in which we conduct this work has changed significantly since 2005.

Given that, how would the IAC approach the conversation of resetting the 10YP Goals? The group discussed the advantages and disadvantages to resetting the goals. Advantages to resetting goals:

- It will be more realistic (given current economy). Said another way – the economy necessitates it
- It would be based on recent learning
- It would help retain / reset a sense of urgency
- It would allow us to align with emerging opportunities (Vets Plan, Healthcare Reform)
- It would help us recast measures of future success
- It would help us celebrate existing success.

Disadvantages to resetting goals

- It could cause us to lose our sense of urgency if we recast them lower
- It could have an impact on political will
- It could be seen by some as an admission of failure and result in loss of public confidence

The group’s consensus was that it makes sense to reset the goals as it will help build Political Will by recognizing the realities in which we are currently operating. Marilyn Mason Plunkett noted that where the Ten-Year Plan and CEH have shown remarkable success is in changing systems and restructuring how we do business – both within individual programs and across partnerships. Given this, we should emphasize systems changes goals (versus focusing exclusively on numerical goals) to achieve continued gains under the 10YP.

Other key learnings from the last five years:

- The vets plan includes emerging best practices and strategies. (It is also one of the few areas in the federal budget in which funding/resources have increased. A larger lesson here is that we should, wherever possible and as practical, position ourselves to secure and leverage new resources.)
- There is less public and private funding
- The Housing First model works – with additional key learnings in specific practices within the model
- At the same time, even as we have created over 4,000 units of housing (much of it based on a housing first model) we are not keeping up with the need – the Front Door is larger than the Back Door. Programs report having as many requests for assistance in the first six months of 2011 as they did for all of 2010. For all our success, we may not ‘move the needle’ on homelessness in the next few years.
- Cost offsets in other systems haven’t translated into direct investments into housing by those systems (though the passage of MIDD, VHS Levy, 2163 and other fund sources is somewhat attributable legislators and the community understanding that housing works.)
- Construction / Production is only part of the answer.
- Families are increasingly high need. There is an assumption that family homelessness is mostly an economic issue but that is not the experience of providers in the field.
- Ending homelessness cannot be accomplished by local funders, providers and community doing their best in a regional effort. Ending homelessness requires adequate investment at the federal level, with affordable housing and economic opportunity. This fact needs to be highly publicized.

Members discussed that one key thing we *don’t* know is the appropriate balance between prevention and after-the-fact intervention. While most everyone agrees that it would be better to prevent people from

becoming homeless in the first place, we don't always know what it takes to keep people housed. Members noted also that 'what it takes' can vary significantly by population.

Members discussed ways to adjust the goals

- Redefine homelessness (working versus absolute)
- Change the focus to systems goals as opposed to unit/numerical goals (or, align numerical goal with reality)
- Get away from population goals.
- If we do establish population goals, we need to avoid one-size-fits-all approach to populations. (Population goals need to be tailored.)
- Change timelines in some areas where progress is slower

Members next discussed whether / how to reset goals and noted that while each of the various sub-populations have specific needs and strategies that may be quantified, it may not make sense to establish stand-alone population goals – it creates a sense of pitting populations against each other. In the end, there were three themes of overlapping agreement.

- 1) Acknowledge that we haven't addressed the level of need, and that in fact, need for housing and support has grown since the beginning of the Ten Year Plan in 2005. However, data and information on the unmet need and newly homeless is scattershot and in some cases, unknowable (e.g., hidden homelessness such as couch surfing / doubled up families). What we do know is that ending homelessness cannot be done at a regional level alone; rather it requires a safety net upon which communities and households can rely.
- 2) CEHKC should remain committed to current production goals because, lacking better data on the level of unmet need, current production goals are our best analysis of what is needed / what we can achieve.
- 3) Major focus, however, will be on systems change efforts to guide (and document) the progress we seek and results we achieve. Systems change goals and resultant strategies may vary considerably by population.

Members discussed certain data points that may be helpful to catalogue:

- Document the level and sources of funding that have declined
- Document changes in the economy and the context in which we operate
- Rather than track just the housing units that are actually produced / fully funded under the ten year plan, we should also track the number that housing developers have at the ready, just waiting for funding.

This conversation will continue at the October IAC meeting.

2011 Legislative Agenda

Bill Block announced that the 2012 legislative Breakfast has been scheduled for Thursday, January 5th, 2012 at Mercer View Community Center. He reviewed the proposed legislative agenda for 2012, noting that today's discussion is informational. The IAC and Governing Board will be asked to affirm the agenda at their respective October meetings. The proposed legislative agenda includes:

- **Ensure adequate funding of the Home Security Fund:** The legislature must resist adding any more programs to the Home Security Fund, and should extend the \$20 per document fee imposed by HB to 2017, and close the existing shortfall by adding a \$10 per document recording fee through 2015.
- **Continue to Fund the Washington State Housing Trust Fund:** The last two sessions have seen both cuts and targeting that have drastically reduced the production of housing to the end homelessness. We need recognize the number of projects in the pipeline that need this last piece to succeed and fund it to the maximum extent feasible.
- **Preserve and Strengthen the Housing and Essential Needs Program:** In 2011 the Disability Lifeline (DL) Program was dissolved. To replace a small portion of the available services this program offered, three new programs were developed through HB 2082. The total investment in this population will drop from \$168 million per biennium to \$64 million per biennium. The program has a number of problematic aspects that we may need to ask the legislature to fix, but it also represents

an extremely important investment in stability for these households. Even as we work to address issues with the program, we need to ensure that it does not become yet another cut in the safety net.

- **Further fund Foster Youth to 21:** Since 2006, we have made strong efforts to reduce the number of youth aging out of foster care without a plan for safe housing. 2011 was the first year that Washington State opted in to the federal Fostering Connections Act, resulting in an entitlement for youth turning 18 without a high school diploma or GED, so that they can remain in care until 21. The 2012 proposal will be to identify another population to opt in to FCA. States receive a 50% match for any group that is covered by the Fostering Connections Act.
- **Amend our HMIS Data System to Allow Verbal Consent to Participation and Shift from an “Opt In” to an “Opt Out” Format:** When the state mandated HMIS data systems, it required that providers obtain prior written consent from clients using the informed consent standards applicable to human experimentation. This has resulted in a very large number of people declining consent, which severely limits our data collection and makes us uncompetitive in national grant applications. Across the nation programs operate on either an implied consent or an “opt out” format. While being sensitive to the needs of special populations like domestic violence victims, whose information should not be entered, we need to come into line with the practices of the rest of the nation and improve our data collection.

Partner organizations such as Washington Low Income Housing Alliance or Tenants Union have requested that CEH support items from their legislative agenda. These items include:

- Improving the option to waive impact fees for affordable housing. HB 1398
- Remove Barriers to Housing: Enact Fair Tenant Screening Policies. SB 5826
- 1811 Eastlake Replication
- Help ensure that substandard living conditions in hotels and motels can be inspected.
- Take back the TANF box – put TANF back under joint control of the Governor and the Legislature.

More details on these legislative agenda items were provided in handouts distributed at the meeting and can be obtained by contacting program staff with the Committee to End Homelessness.

Janna Wilson noted that legislation around healthcare reform will evolve during the legislative session, too late for the CEH to vote on it as part of its legislative agenda. Bill Block suggested that Janna draft some principles by which the CEH should evaluate whether and how to lend support to legislative items specific to healthcare reform. The Governing Board could vote on these guiding principles, and then as the legislative session unfolds, the CEH advocacy committee would be able to develop an appropriate response to emerging legislation.

October IAC Meeting

The next IAC meeting will be Monday, October 3rd. On the agenda for the October IAC meeting:

- Continue (perhaps finalize) the discussion on resetting the goals of the 10YP
- Vote on the 2012 Legislative Agenda
- Update on Homeless and Essential Needs
- Update on the task forces recently convened as part of the Mid Plan Review

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm. Respectfully submitted,

Gretchen Bruce, CEH Staff