

Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless
Meeting Minutes
June 9, 2010

The Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless (TICH) met on Wednesday, June 9th, at 10:00 a.m., at the Texas Workforce Commission, 1117 Trinity Street.

Agency Members Present: Mike Doyle (Office of the Governor); Ricky Garcia (HHSC); Lance Hamilos (DARS); B.J. Wagner; Philip Cochran (TEA); Beverly Donoghue (TWC)

Advisory Members Present: JoAnn DePenning (J.DePenning Consulting); Melissa Mason (Texas Council on Family Violence); Barbara James (Texas Homeless Education Office); Ken Martin (Texas Homeless Network); Eric Samuels (Texas Homeless Network); Theresa Tod (Texas Network of Youth Services)

Staff Support: Stuart Campbell (TDHCA), Mary Dodson (TDHCA)

Guests: David Long (Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation-TSAHC, Texas Liaison to the USICH), Mindy Green (TSAHC), Terri Roeber (TDHCA), reporter for *The Texas Observer* (no name on sign-in sheet)

Welcome and Introductions:

Stuart Campbell welcomed members present in person or via conference call. Members introduced themselves.

Minutes from Prior TICH Meeting:

Stuart presented minutes from the TICH general meeting held on March 3, 2010. TICH members traditionally have not formally approved meeting minutes.

Subcommittee Reports

Statewide Definition/State Agency Coordination – Ken Martin: The subcommittee met on June 4, 2010. It is developing a definition based on a schema created by the European Union. The proposed definition describes a continuum of living situations that are broader than “homeless.” A working title is “Texas Housing Status Continuum.”

Promote Data Integrity/Improve State Investment – Eric Samuels: The subcommittee met on March 29, 2010. THN has compiled data from the Continuum of Care (CoC) 2009 applications. Eric is also creating a list of all the homeless shelters in the state.

The subcommittee continues to explore the possibility of data warehousing. Meeting with CoC lead agencies and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) administrators from around the state would be a good next step in planning for data warehousing. Beverly Donoghue suggested that even more people were living in homeless situations in 2009 and 2010 because of the downturn in the economy.

Mike Doyle said that Prison Fellowship has bought a ClientTrack license and is talking with Tarrant County employees about sharing clients’ data. One difficulty with ex-offenders is

substantiating a person's "homeless" status prior to entering prison. Barbara James asked if the two groups are tracking data on youth exiting the Texas Youth Commission (TYC). Some youth stay in TYC beyond their discharge date because they have nowhere else to live. Mike replied that the groups are considering youth in foster care because the housing vouchers are for persons over age 18. Barbara asked Theresa Tod if she knows more about the issues with TYC, but Theresa said she is not very familiar with that issue. Mike explained that approximately 10% of prisoners exit into homelessness. In Tarrant County, 3,000 persons are on parole and 5,000 are on probation. Beverly suggested that using less state funding for prisons might result in more state funding to serve homeless ex-offenders.

Eric distributed a handout entitled "Family Homelessness Increases 27% in Texas from 2007 to 2009."

Increase Prevention Activities/Improve Outreach and Education - Beverly Donoghue:

The subcommittee has not met since the March TICH meeting. Beverly discussed that the plan being developed by TICH will be a state agency plan, showing how state agencies can work together to address and end homelessness. Ken has drafted some action items and strategies, and the subcommittee will follow up on those.

Increase Supportive Housing/Improve Discharge Planning: The subcommittee met on June 2, 2010, in conjunction with the Housing Workgroup of the TDCJ ReEntry Task Force. B.J. Wagner said topics of discussion included the team charter for the subcommittee/workgroup; TDCJ's Temporary Housing Assistance Program (THAP) that assists persons on parole with housing; Phase 2 of data collection; and engaging private landlords and utilizing faith-based resources facilitate re-entry into the community.

Mike said that persons being released from state jails have the highest recidivism rate, but they are not eligible for THAP. Mike recommended getting a community involved and invested early in the process of releasing ex-offenders back into their own communities; this will likely increase the acceptance of the housing and the releasees. Mike also recommended involving apartment owners instead of apartment managers, who may be interested in helping but who may be hindered by owners' rules.

B.J. said that the Texas Correctional Office on Offenders with Medical or Mental Impairments (TCOOMMI) has made great strides with owners of some nursing homes, and the key to that success was helping nursing home owners to trust that TCOOMMI would not walk away from the clients after placement.

Mary Dodson said that at the subcommittee/workgroup meeting, April Zamora of TDCJ said that the TICH subcommittee will also address discharges from health and mental health facilities and from foster care.

Regional Interagency Council on Homelessness

TICH Member Heloise Ferguson with the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs serves on this Council, but she was not able to participate in the TICH meeting today.

United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

David Long with the Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC) explained that he is the Texas liaison to the USICH. He wants to communicate information both ways between the USICH and TICH. He is working with Mike German with the Region 6 ICH and Anthony Love with the USICH. David said Mike could put together a regional meeting with government agencies and non-profit organizations to show efforts that are working to end homelessness. Stuart said that government agency travel budgets are limited, so David's willingness to liaison will be helpful and valuable.

David announced two upcoming conferences:

1. National Coalition for Homeless Veterans from June 21-23
2. National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) from July 12-14

Mary distributed copies of "What We Learned," a summary of the process that the USICH used to develop the national plan to address and end homelessness entitled *Opening Doors*.

<http://www.ich.gov/>

Texas Homeless Network (THN) Update

Ken said HUD has not yet announced awards for the new projects in the 2009 CoC Balance of State (BoS) competition.

Eric said the 2010 CoC BoS application process is progressing. Applicants and THN have submitted the CoC registration documents and the Electronic Housing Inventory Chart (eHIC) including data from approximately 200 shelters. The BoS CoC includes 198 counties. Eric distributed a "Tentative 2010 Application Process Timeline."

A final report on the Point-in-Time Count and Survey will be available soon. Eric distributed a draft version of the report.

THN's Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) program to provide homeless coalition liaisons around the state is operational. That program might be able to make a VISTA member available to TICH.

Ken announced that the annual THN conference will be held from October 6-8 in Corpus Christi.

HUD's Proposed Change to the Definition of "Homeless"

Mary distributed a HUD listserv announcement about the proposed rule for the definition of homelessness and two analyses from the NAEH regarding the proposed changes.

Update on the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP)

Mary distributed data showing the number of persons and households served with HPRP and the funds expended from September 1, 2009, through March 31, 2010. 15,544 persons in 6,297 households have been served, and \$8,789,836 has been expended.

Barbara asked how schools are coordinating with HPRP. TDHCA does not have information about school and HPRP coordination.

TICH Web Page Updates

Mary announced that the TICH Web site has been updated. Please see updates at <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/tich/agencies.htm>.

Update on Homeless Housing and Services Program (HHSP)

Stuart said that the HHSP funding will likely be examined closely in the next Legislative session, so having a state plan to address and end homelessness would be helpful. The plan will focus on what state government agencies can do to help local communities.

All eight contracts are operational. The eight grantees are funding various activities with the funding. Approximately \$5 million of the \$20 million has been drawn down, to date.

General Announcements

Stuart offered that TICH quarterly meetings could be held in various cities around the state. Ken said that THN has quarterly board meetings around the state, and the TICH could join those.

Stuart asked if the TICH members would like to hold a meeting at the THN conference in October, and the response was, "Yes." Mary will work with Ken to schedule the meeting. That will result in three fall meetings for the TICH: Sept. 10, Oct. 8, and Dec. 1.

Melissa Mason with TCFV distributed copies of *Serving Texas Families: 2010 Statewide Directory of Family Violence Service Programs provided by the Texas Council on Family Violence*.

Melissa also described an innovative new TCFV program to assist domestic violence victims to work toward long-term economic stability rather than focus solely on emergency, short-term services. Shelters and workforce solutions centers are teaching job skills and establishing Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) with victims to support their economic security. "...the impossible choice between an abusive relationship and homelessness has been erased for some Texans." (<http://www.tcfv.org/>)

Barbara said the preliminary count of homeless students in schools in Texas shows 85,000, but the Texas Homeless Education Office (THEO) staff know this figure is low. For example, one school in San Antonio reports more than 300 of its students are experiencing homelessness.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:00 noon.