

Coordinating Committee to End Homelessness (CCEH) Meeting Minutes



February 17, 2010
First United Methodist Church

Facilitated by: Jean DeMaster and Marc Jolin

Prepared by: Dove Hotz

Reviewed by: Steering Committee

Present: Charlie Raymond, Jon Hawkes, Traci Manning, Gloria Willis, Christine Baruveks, Liora Berry, Donald Hice, Melanie Duncan, Melody Tennefoss, Caren Baumgart, Jennifer Chang, Liv Jenssen, Laura Jauber, Kelly Strandlund, Eileen Devine, Beckie Lee, Deborah Kafoury, Andrew Noethe, Kelly Riechers, Lynne Walker, Ken Vickery, Barry Sutton, Amanda Hurley, Rachel Payton, Gary Cobb, Tyrone Rucker, Nicona Aaron, Kerry Lee Sumner, Jill Kahnert, Tiffany Kingery, Mary Lee King, Heather Brown, Renata Wilson, Wendy Kohn, Ross Bennett, Steven Keenan, Christine Hennel, Janet Smith, Theresa Guerrero, Larry Turner, Richelle Wilhite, Ashley Egeland, Susan Montgomery, Shinji Mae, Rebecca Childs

Action Items/Next Steps:

- March 10 grand opening at Madrona Studios <http://oregonon.org/newsletters/oregon-on-the-beat-february-10-newsletter/#Madrona%20Studios>
- Find information about the NAEH conferences <http://www.endhomelessness.org/>
- Find information on the Portland Plan <http://www.portlandonline.com/portlandplan/>
- Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 17, 2010, 3-5 p.m., FUMC Room 202.

Introductions / New attendees / Approval of minutes

Ms. DeMaster facilitated a round of introductions and recognition of new participants. The January minutes were approved without dissent.

Updates and Announcements:

Feb. 11-12 NAEH Ending Family Homelessness Conference. Ms. Chang reported that the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness is leading a national plan to prevent and end homelessness. The plan will expand strategies to include the priority populations of families, youth, and veterans. Mr. Jolin reported that there were lots of conversations about the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program. Portland is several months ahead of some other cities in getting the funds quickly dispersed in the community. Several cities cite concerns on whether the funds were being used for the appropriate purposes and have increased focus to demonstrate that funds have actually reduced homelessness. Ms. DeMaster encouraged members to attend future NAEH conferences that occur in July and February.

“Research Corner” (Ryan Deibert, Portland Housing Bureau)

Mr. Deibert reported some research reviewing past economic recessions and their impacts on homeless adults. The research has shown a “cohort effect” for men born in the 1950’s and 1960’s, who were shown to be twice as likely to become homeless later in life, in comparison to men born in other decades. There is concern that today’s young people in foster care or the juvenile justice system are becoming the next generation of homeless. The official unemployment rate is 10% and there is a widely understood additional underemployment rate of about 17%. The unemployment rate among poor and very poor individuals is substantially higher.

“State of the 10-Year Plan, Part 1” (CCEH Steering Committee members panel: Jean DeMaster, Shannon Singleton, Liv Jenssen, Marc Jolin, Sally Erickson, and Heather Brown)

Panelists reported on the state of the 10-Year plan, highlighting successes and challenges. Ms. Erickson stated a lot has changed since 2004, when our city had more affordable apartments available. 10-Year planning efforts resulted in short-term rent assistance and the formation of synergy amongst programs and community partners. Ms. DeMaster compared ending homelessness to moving a mountain – we have moved a lot of small stones towards our end goal of ending homelessness. We’ve developed lots of good new programs and have built lots of productive partnerships, such as Bridges to Housing. Many silos have been broken down and we’ve done well in developing a better continuum of programs.

Regarding on-going challenges, Ms. Brown said the inadequate supply of affordable housing remains a big barrier. We also need more attention on efforts to promote income acquisition. Mr. Jolin said there are still lots of people on the streets who cannot find help in the existing system. We need to improve our political support and also need more affordable housing and better data for the whole system, to show how the money has been spent and with what results. We can do better at evaluating how people access services and how well we are doing at collecting data. Despite all our remaining challenges, the last five years have been the best in this region for working towards ending homelessness.

The panel then talked about current trends. Ms. Singleton stated that collaboration was increasingly important. Ms. Jenssen encouraged everyone to read the City of Portland’s “Portland Plan” and insist that the 10-Year planning efforts be included. Also, the upcoming census is a great opportunity to have our issues addressed. We can do an even better job at coordinating services in the upcoming 5 years. By 2035, the number of individual households will increase. We are an aging community. They will need services. Affordable housing needs to be accessible to transportation and be ADA compliant.

Commissioner Kafoury said that one significant trend that is occurring (and will continue to occur) is fewer dollars available, especially from Multnomah County. Ms. Ledezma said the City is now facing similar cuts to what the County has been dealing with for 10 years. We need to advocate to preserve our budgets and make sure that we continue demonstrating how our efforts and solutions are reducing homelessness and improving communities in other areas, such as neighborhoods and public safety. Ms. Singleton said there is a need to de-stigmatize homelessness to help get more community buy-in.

“State of the 10-Year Plan, Part 2” (Community Input and Feedback)

The members then broke out into small groups to discuss the above questions, as well as focusing on perceived opportunities and goals. The results will be available separately.

Announcements

- The national Social Security Administration “fleeing felon” law has been overturned. This will affect thousands of people who can now have their benefits re-instated.
- Central City Concern will host a “veterans stand-down and jobs fair” on Monday, March 8, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Ambridge Event Center on MLK.
- Everyone is invited to the Central City Concern’s opening of Madrona Studios on March 10.
- If you have a client who needs care for their pet, please have them contact the PAW team, www.pawteam.org, (503) 535-3844.
- There will be a vigil on March 31, 2:00 p.m., at the Downtown Chapel to remember the homeless who died this year.
- Please support the letter-writing campaign for increased McKinney funding. We have an opportunity to increase this by 28% over last year. Send letters to your Congressional delegation within the week.