



Portland Housing Bureau

Portland Housing Advisory Commission

Tuesday, July 3, 2012

3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

JOIN

1435 NE 81st, Suite 100

Portland, OR 97213

✓ = PHAC public member action item

▶ = PHB staff member action item

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Jesse Beason, Marc Jolin, Carter MacNichol, Sarah Zahn, Deborah Imse, Carmen Rubio

Members Excused: Christine Lau, Elisa Harrigan, Rey Espana, Andrew Colas, Shannon Singleton

Agenda Item	Discussion Highlights	Outcomes / Next Steps
Welcome, Review Meeting Purpose	Carter MacNichol chaired this PHAC meeting. He thanked Marc and JOIN for hosting today's meeting, and turned the discussion over to Marc.	
Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness Reset Committee: Overview, Community Engagement Process, And Spending Q&A	Marc welcomed the group. He said today's meeting is to talk about what the community is working on to end homelessness. We want to update PHAC on the reset process and hear from the public regarding the current system and services. What needs to change? Marc invited Sally Erickson to give an update on the 10-Year Plan. Sally said there is still a lot of work to be done to help end homelessness. There have been a lot of successes over the last seven years. Organizations like JOIN have helped move 12,000 people off the streets. There are nine main points of the Plan. One is to move people into housing <u>first</u>. This is different than past strategies that require people to get treatment (drug and alcohol, mental health, etc) before housing. Another principle is	

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	to work with people who are getting discharged from facilities including jails, hospitals, and foster care. We want to work with these organizations to have a housing plan in place before people become homeless. Another point is to improve outreach. This includes working with JOIN, Transition Projects, Cascadia, and other organizations to connect with people and talk about housing resources such as short-term rent assistance. Sally gave Bud Clark Commons as an example of providing outreach and services in the community. The City and County pool resources to better serve the community. We want to increase the number of units of permanent housing for people with disabilities. We are also working on new partnerships such as the New City initiative and others. We have had some success with workforce programs such as with Central City Concern. They have helped over 2,000 people find jobs since 2005. It is also important that we become better at collecting data to evaluate how we are doing.	
Ten-Year Plan Reset: Prioritization Presentation and Discussion	Marc said the 10-Year Plan has been in process for about six years. We have done a lot. Now we need to look at the strategies and see what the public needs and wants to get out the process. Marc introduced Beckie Lee of Multnomah County. Beckie works for County Commissioner Deborah Kafoury. She said that Commissioner Kafoury supports the reset efforts. We want to get people focused on homelessness again. It is important to highlight challenges and increase the urgency of getting more resources. We want to make sure the Plan is serving families and that there is a link between the Plan and domestic violence shelters and service providers. Marc introduced Steve Rudman of Home Forward. Steve said a lot has been done to organize in our community, but the economy has affected the situation. We want to know what we need to do more of and less of. We have done a lot of work we should be	► PHB staff should re-run the exit data on "Rental, no subsidy" to see if it includes units with affordability restrictions.

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	proud of, but the need is dramatic. Marc introduced Traci to the group. Traci said the timing of the reset process is good. It is important to align homelessness and housing needs in our processes. Traci gave the group some background information about Commissioner Fish and the Mayor deciding to merge the Bureau of Housing and Community Development with the housing functions of the Portland Development Commission. Now is a great time to look at our partners and community. Conditions have changed since the Plan was first formed. We need to be more equitable with who we are serving. We have a very giving community that wants to help—we need to be able to tell people how to help and invest when they ask. Marc said the Reset Committee consists of about 25 people. They are community experts and stakeholders. The Committee works to develop ideas to move forward with. Outreach is very important. It is also important to determine which strategies are working. The group meets monthly and has developed a vision statement. Marc said we need to figure out how to prioritize based on limited resources. He said we will have another round of outreach regarding housing, health care, and other issues. The group wants to have a new draft together by this fall to bring in front of the community for feedback. Marc shared some data about people who are unsheltered, in transition, and using shelters. The data was provided to PHAC Commissioners in a Powerpoint document. Marc talked about the statistic that shows 82 percent of people leaving short term rent assistance go into the unsubsidized rental market. There was some discussion about the meaning of not having a subsidy. Jesse asked if it means not having a voucher. Sarah said non-subsidized housing could still be LIHTC. Sally said the statistic reflects not having rent assistance or shelter + care. She said the unit could be designed as an affordable unit, however. Marc	

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	suggested we re-run these numbers to clarify. Marc read the vision statement to the group and it was provided the PHAC Commissioners in their meeting materials packet. We need to meet federal requirements such as HUD goals but we work with a tiered approach. We focus our strategies on what works for different populations first, and then consider how to fit in HUD requirements. We have asked PHAC and the public to help us direct priorities going forward. We want to first vet our strategies and look at them through the lens of our populations. Sarah asked if the State's current healthcare focus will play in to prioritizing. Steve said we want to be efficient with our resources and align the housing system with the health care system. Traci said it is important to focus on outcomes and what we would like the system to look like. She said we are great with building and subsidy but sometimes get tripped up on support services. This is something we are working on by partnering with the new Tri-County Medicaid Collaborative. Jesse said that in light of the data about people going directly into the housing market (not using subsidy), perhaps it is easier to not have services attached, to work them separately. Traci said it is great to have 0-30 percent housing attached to services when it is needed. At the same time, some people are work-able. Some need subsidy if they have barriers to the rental market. Beckie mentioned the importance of coordinated care. Hospitals and care providers are now being held accountable for their outcomes. She said it is important we are talking about these issues. Carter asked what the timing is for the reset process. Sally said there will be more outreach in September and a retreat at the end of September. Recommendations will go before Council at	

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	the end of the year or early January. Carter asked if this will result in a new Plan. Sally said it will be a recalibration of the current Plan. Carter asked if we will create targets of where we are likely to go based on existing data. Traci added that the reset work should inform work plans such as the budget, development priorities and how loans are structured. We need to coordinate with both the County and Home Forward. Carter mentioned the importance of measurable outcomes. Beckie said we do not know the numbers, i.e., how big a problem homelessness is. We need to figure out next steps, especially how to get more funds.	
Public Testimony	Carter opened the meeting for public testimony. Kari Grunwald: Kari became homeless four years ago when she lost her income and consequently her home. Her situation is a result of the economic downturn. Kari said she does not have a drug or alcohol problem nor does she require mental health services. She said it is now hard to rent again because of her eviction record. She would like to push the City, County, State, and Federal governments to rewrite eviction laws to consider people who were evicted as a result of the bad economy—specifically for people who are not dealing with substance or mental health issues. Kari added she has had many jobs and it appears to potential employers that she cannot keep a job; she wants people to understand that this instability is a result of the economy not her behavior. She said there is a stigma around the homeless. Kari would like to see more community messages – on tv, radio, etc – to raise awareness about who homeless people are. They should not be shunned. Eric Calhoun: Eric is a senior at Portland State University. He was laid off from his job at the library and cannot get rehired because of new job requirements there. He lost his student housing and became barred from registering for classes. He said there was no process to deal with the situation he was in – he	

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	was just evicted. He said Portland State thinks is exempt from the Landlord Tenant Act and he would like to know why and who is exempt. Marc Jolin agreed to discuss the matter with him after the meeting. Lynne Walker: Lynne said it is important to prioritize resources. She would like to see more resources for older women who are not going back into the workforce. They do not always have access to market rate housing at this stage of life. Lynne said Portland Housing Bureau has done an amazing job so far. She would like to see more access for people with service animals. Lynne said she sees issues with not allowing smoking in housing and finds the loss of Fairless Square crippling. She would like to see more access for families with adult children who have disabilities. Lynne said there are not enough public toilets in Portland. Richard Edwards: Richard said he is new to being homeless. He lost his home because his landlord was not paying taxes and lost the house. Richard and his family were evicted as a result. Richard thanked JOIN for helping him and his family. He has two children. JOIN helped get the kids back into school. Richard said he has a new perspective on being homeless. He thought it would never happen to him. Homelessness in Oregon is very different than in Arkansas. Richard added that 211info has been very helpful for him. Oscar McMurry: Oscar would like to have more education about aligning homeless services with health and drug addiction services. He said if you start with Home Forward or a similar organization you can get a place to live but do not receive other assistance. He said if you don't know about programs to help with rent assistance, you end up back on the streets in a homeless cycle. Oscar said he would like to know what efforts are being made to provide domestic violence services for those without children. He said men and women are hurt every day by	

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	their significant others or neighbors. He said it is dangerous to stay in shelters and he prefers to sleep outside where he can protect himself. Deborah responded to Oscar's comment, saying that there has been much progress made on State laws protecting renters who are victims of domestic violence. The victim cannot be evicted even if the unit was damaged as a result of a domestic violence incident. Deborah added that landlords have a responsibility to changes locks and so on. She said we are near making victims of domestic violence a protected class in Oregon. To speak to Richard's comment, Deborah added that renters are better protected in Oregon when it comes to landlords being foreclosed on. The bank must notify the tenants and they are allowed to stay in the unit for a period of time after foreclosure. Marc added that domestic violence was not a discussion in the 10-Year Plan but will be a focus of the reset. The Committee intends to speak with domestic violence service providers to discuss how to address these issues better and improve the information loop. This discussion will include Bud Clark Commons and 211info. Becky: (Becky submitted written testimony but did not speak at the meeting; Carter read her testimony aloud.) I am homeless and on Section 8. Most landlords will not rent to voucher holders. There is a need for those on Section 8 to be able to rent more easily – possibly a hotel/motel for homeless. Another member of the public provided testimony but did not give her name. She said she has a bill with Home Forward that she is unable to pay in full. She said she could pay half of it but they will not provide service again until she has paid in full. She said she needs help and asked if they will help her find housing if she pays half the bill. Steve said Home Forward requires back bills to be paid in full in these situations and agreed to speak with her after the meeting.	

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	John: John said he is a JOIN client and volunteer. He said the homeless population has grown greatly as more mental health patients are released from programs. He said he is physically able to work but cannot find a job and does not have a permanent address. Steve told John he can use JOIN as a mailing address. John also mentioned the expense of bus tickets being a problem. Marc said getting people back to work is a focus of the reset process and told John there is a job program through Central City Concern that could be helpful. Another member of the public provided testimony but did not give her name. She said she never thought she would be homeless and it happened in the blink of an eye. She has a lot of anxiety about it. She was able to find a place but got in over her head and would like to receive longer-term assistance to become more stable. Wade said he received a voucher for an apartment and that Home Forward was supposed to be looking for housing for him. They told him they were “sort of” looking. He is living in a motel right now. He never chose to live on the streets by choice. Barry said he is a person with a disability and he came homeless in 2005 when he was locked out of his apartment. He came to JOIN for help in 2010. Trying to get help through the County, he had trouble finding out who his case manager was and getting them to help him. Barry said JOIN has not helped him communicate better with his case manager. He expressed his frustration with the bureaucratic system and said people are only here because they are being paid to be there.	
Meeting Wrap-Up and Planning for Next Meeting: Strategic Plan	Carter asked the Commissioners to review last month’s minutes. Deborah motioned to approve the minutes and Marc seconded the motion. The minutes were approved. Traci told the group that PHAC now has only 11 members because	► Daniel will facilitate the subcommittee for planning for the August PHAC meeting.

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Outcomes Review	Brian's term has expired. We have two posts to fill and the application period will open soon. Carter said the next meeting is August 7 and will cover the Strategic Plan. Daniel needs volunteers for a subcommittee to plan for the next meeting. She will follow-up. Carter adjourned the meeting.	