

**STATE OF OREGON  
ENDING HOMELESSNESS ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

**May 27, 2011**

**10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Department of Human Services  
500 Summer St. NE Salem, OR 97301**

**Members Present:** Rick Crager, Bill Hall, Marci McMurphy, Annette Evans, Ann Williams, Margaret Carter, Susan Ban, Kris Bilhardt, Trell Anderson, Michael Ward, Janet Byrd, Sally Erickson, Craig Keyston (for Martin Burrows), Rep. Deborah Boone (by phone), Michael Ward, Pegge McGuire, Evelyn Roth, Eileen Devine,

Excused: Sharon Fitzgerald, Martin Burrows, Val Conley, Ed Angeletti, Sen. Chip Shields, Marilyn Miller, Sharon Miller, Jon Stubenvoll

Guests: Bishop

OHCS Staff: Mary Carroll, Coleen Trogden, Lisa Joyce

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Rick Crager calls the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**II. Approval of minutes of the January 21, 2011 EHAC Meeting**

**Motion** – Bill Hall moves the motion

**Seconds** – Trell Anderson

Meeting minutes approved

**III. New Business:**

A. New EHAC member Eileen Devine from the Department of Veteran Affairs, VISN 20 Network Homeless Coordinator introduced herself as newest member of EHAC. Eileen works at the Regional level and is very glad to be a part of the statewide ending homeless efforts.

B. Report on the VA Five Year Plan to End Veteran's Homelessness: Eileen reported that ending homelessness for veterans is the number one priority for the VA and that they have developed an ambitious Five Year Plan to End Veteran's Homelessness using a Housing First model. Eileen gave a brief overview of VA's programs including HUD/VASH program and Grant and Per Diem and the upcoming new program, Supportive Services to Veteran's Families. There are currently 600 HUD/VASH vouchers in Oregon now and we are awaiting

announcements of the allocations of the FY11 vouchers. There will be approximately 6800 vouchers allocated nationally. We are also awaiting the results of the project-based HUD/VASH NOFA. The VA will increasingly use contracted case management services for the HUD/VASH program to avoid having to hire so many additional VA case managers for this intensive case management program. Oregon has 300 GPD program 300 transitional beds in Oregon may receive funding for additional beds in FY11. The VA is also looking to contract more beds under the HCHV, which will help rural communities increase transitional beds for homeless veterans.

There are three VA Medical Centers in Oregon so that everyone has a local VA contact who is working on homeless issues. The Secretary of the VA has pushed the VA to develop collaboration with community partners.

Rep. Boone asked who is eligible to apply for the HCHV program. The HCHV is a contracted program, not a grant program, which makes it much easier for a provider who does not have the capacity to run a large GPD program to contract for just a few beds. An eligible provider is someone who is providing transitional housing or emergency housing and who agrees to a statement of work on providing housing and services. The VA is putting out pre-solicitation notices about this program. The VASH vouchers cannot be spent on transportation, even though it is a real need especially in rural communities.

The Five Year Plan to End Veteran's Plan will coordinate with state and local 10 year plans to end homelessness in order to avoid duplication and develop clear goals and outcomes.

EHAC members who are involved in their local 10 year planning process would welcome the involvement of the local VA for their plans. Some local community stakeholders are awaiting announcement of SSVF, VASH and GPD as part of their planning. Eileen will share the existing Five Year Plans with EHAC for distribution.

C. Report of January 2011 Homeless Count: Lisa Joyce reported that the statewide numbers will soon be released. The state's analysis compared 2009 with 2011 because that was the last year that there was a street count and shelter count. A total of 22,116 were counted as homeless; one-third was children; big increase in the number of single parent families; the number of pregnant youth decreased. The numbers of homeless youth had a 70% increase since 2009. Unemployment and inability to afford rent were the largest reasons for homelessness. Length of homelessness in the state is growing. The average length in the state is 18 months.

The cold weather was a factor in some parts of the state that held down the ability to do a complete street count.

Sally Erickson commented that the count is unfunded and local communities have to depend on volunteers and overly-stretched non-profits to conduct the counts. She would like to have EHAC use the data in the counts for planning and for updating the state's 10 year plan. For example, according the data, larger families experience longer terms of homelessness than other

families. We should use this information to prioritize and target development of units of affordable housing with 3 or more bedrooms. Now that the data is in Service Point, we should have the ability to drill down to get data to develop policy.

Marci McMurphy reported that she was very happy that they were able to input the data directly into the HMIS system and she believes this will eliminate duplication and error. Wheeler County counted its first homeless person in this count. Unfortunately, the Homeowners Stabilization Initiative took place in December and January placed a great deal of stress on agencies. She would like to count double up as homeless. The ROCC is discussing standardizing the PIT count to develop a standard definition of homeless, standardize training and coordinate efforts.

Susan Ban also thought that entering the data directly into HMIS helped improve the data quality. They are seeing a big increase in homeless youth. Lane County is losing almost a half of its homeless families funds due to county reprioritizing and budget cuts.

Bill Hall reported that Lincoln County has never done a street count and only shelter counts. Gathering sufficient numbers of volunteers to go out to the camp sites and woods is challenging.

Mary Carroll reported that HPRP assisted 9,000 people in Oregon either become housed or stay in their homes. The new Emergency Solutions Grant will adopt the homeless prevention and rapid re-housing goals of HPRP, but is only funded at a fraction of the expiring HPRP.

Annette Evans reported that the end of HPRP is a big concern for Washington County. They used HPRP to align their prevention programs and their shelter count. Because of the systems change that they were able to develop, they continually reduced the emergency family in 2010 and only had 17 families on the waitlist in January. The Shelter Plus Care wait list was reduced from 90 to 20, and Washington County's eviction court cases were reduced by 500 in 2010. They have asked the County for bridge funding to continue prevention, low-barrier housing and rapid re-housing efforts.

Sally asked if OHCS would send out the Annual Report for comment. She also recommended that we be thoughtful about using graphs to compare counts over the years because of the changes in methodology and the misleading message it may send out due the swings in homeless numbers.

Kris Bilhardt asked how the statewide count of domestic violence shelters went this year. Because the communities are still working to finalize numbers and review the process, we don't know how the count with DV shelters did this year.

Trell Anderson discussed how we can use this data in conjunction with other data, such as the VA and the homeless school children. Can we use the graph that shows homeless numbers increasing along with a graph that shows decreasing resources or some other tools for local communities to use the data to address local issues, needs and gaps.

Lisa Joyce commented that the different methodologies are challenging to try to align the

data.

Margaret Carter that while we need to continue to improve our consistency of data collection meanwhile we have to control our messaging around homelessness – especially for the legislature.

#### **IV. STAFF/WORKING GROUP REPORTS**

##### **A. Report on messaging by Neighborhood Partnership: Talking about Homelessness – Use your passion, increase your impact**

Janet Byrd reported that Neighborhood Partnership has expanded their long on the successful series of trainings and workshops held in conjunction with DEMOS, a non-partisan public policy research and advocacy organization. Advocates, staff and community leaders from housing, services and community justice agencies have participated in a series of messaging and media training. Neighborhood Partnership's contract with DEMOS will continue.

##### **B. Report from the 10 Year Plan Subcommittee**

Staff from OHCS and CSH will work with local community stakeholders to hold a 10 Year Plan Charrette in October 2011 for 17 counties to develop local plans to end homelessness. A Steering Committee will meet to develop the issue areas that will receive the intensive training at the Charrette. At the end of the charrette process, local communities will have about 75% of their local 10 YP completed.

#### **V. Discussion of EHAC Model**

EHAC members viewed a PowerPoint presentation on the current EHAC and Interagency Council on Hunger and Homelessness model; interagency councils in other jurisdictions, including Washington State, Utah and Massachusetts. Members discussed different options for improving the current model so that members can increase their involvement in systems change, foster inter-agency collaboration and carry out the goals of the state's 10 year plan. The Council decided to appoint a subcommittee to have an in-depth discussion of various options to change the model and bring back recommendations to the full EHAC committee.

Adjourned at 12:00pm