

**COLLECTIVE IMPACT ON HOMELESSNESS STEERING COMMITTEE  
MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2015**

**Steering Committee members or alternates in attendance:**

Mayor Ben McAdams (SLCo), Glenn Bailey (Crossroads Urban Center), Kerry Bate (Housing Authority), Deborah Bayle (United Way), Rick Foster (LDS Church Humanitarian Ctr), Jonathan Hardy (DWS), Josh Romney (Pioneer Park Coalition), Keri Jones (YWCA), Jill Love (SLC Government), Jason Mathis (Downtown Business Alliance), Tony Milner (Family Promise), Matt Minkevitch (The Road Home), James Morgese (KUED), Tiffanie Provost (Axiom Property), Tara Rollins (SLC Homeless Coordinating Council/Utah Housing Committee), Fred Ross (SLC Police Dept.), Gordon Walker (DWS), John Wilkes (Citizen).

**PLEASE SCHEDULE THE FOLLOWING**

- The next meeting is on March 18, 2015, 8:30am – 10:00am, North Bldg. N2-800
- Scheduled meetings are on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month from 8:30 – 10:00
  - April 8, 2015
  - May 13, 2015
  - June 10, 2015

**Welcome**

Mayor McAdams welcomed everyone and thanked them for their attendance and for the input the County received from the January 22, 2015 forum. Mayor McAdam's goal is to create a service delivery model that helps individuals who are in crisis move to stability. The Mayor believes this will take a collective vision and collective action. He asked members of the Steering Committee to use their expertise and experience to define success, identify the resources needed to be successful, and to be clear in expressing their individual and collective agendas. He encouraged Steering Committee members to think of the Mountain Accord as a model: the process has brought a very diverse group of interests together to create a common understanding and a path forward to protect and preserve the Wasatch Mountains. He believes strongly that a similar initiative can change the trajectory for our homeless residents.

**Materials**

Data will be at the foundation of our work. Packets were handed out that included copies of reports distributed in preparation for this meeting and in response to requests from the prior meeting. Our intent is providing agendas and materials to prepare members for the meetings discussion two weeks prior.

**Presentations from members of the Steering Committee**

A cornerstone of Collective impact is sharing individual and systems perspectives in order to develop a common agenda. The purpose of this meeting was to share information that can help set a foundation for our common agenda.

**Domestic Violence: Presenter Keri Jones**

The YWCA has been in service since 1906. Currently the largest and most comprehensive service provider for survivors of domestic violence. The YWCA operates a 181 bed emergency shelter, 48 transitional housing units, and individualized advocacy. The State's first Family Justice Center is located at the YWCA and houses 15 different partners. The YWCA prioritizes in serving families that are affected by domestic violence. In 2014 the YWCA served 9,000 individuals but was unable to meet just over 1,000 requests for shelter services.

- 49% in residence were able to access services.
- 46% got jobs and/or increased their incomes.
- 29% enrolled in higher healthcare education

Key considerations in housing and homeless prevention for this population include:

- Housing must follow strict safety measures and the YWCA follows the Federal Confidentiality Standards.
- Transitional housing is a necessary step for domestic violence victims.
- Trauma is a huge component to homelessness and addressing its impact is necessary.

### **The State's Perspective: Presenter Gordon Walker**

Gordon believes there are sufficient resources to house people and to create housing, stating *"there is always room for anyone that wants a bed"*. Among signs of progress he cites:

- The Olene Walker Loan Fund is very supportive of requests when they are presented, and has grown to \$124 million;
- Chronic homelessness has been reduced by 72% from the original count,
- A Governor appointed board provides funding for low income supportive housing projects.
- The Road Home has been able to repurpose up to 180 beds.

### **Affordable Housing: Presenter Tara Rollins**

Tara presented data showing how *"housing can be complicated"*. As advocates it is important to acknowledge the correlation between un and under-employment, low wages, poverty, the lack of median income housing, and commute time / expenses. She counters that there are not sufficient resources to house people, and that rental costs are a driver for homelessness. In Tara's view *"There is an extreme housing problem"*.

- 75% of people pay more than 50% of income on rent.
- After foreclosures and lower wages post recession, many people could not go back to owning a home increasing demand for affordable rentals.

Barriers to affordable housing can be reduced or limited by government action.

- Government wants the sales tax base from big box business – but sales clerks earn \$8.16 per hour.
- Government invests in tourism – but wait staff and housekeepers earn \$9.16 per hour. There are a lot of these jobs in the Salt Lake County.
- Government created The Good Landlord laws; these limit the ability of people leaving incarceration to find homes. Many of these individuals live in Salt Lake County
- Government has the assets that could compliment the housing development funds.
- Government has the ability to create ordinances that would create housing inventory people could afford

Tara believes there is insufficient leadership in housing. There is no cabinet-level position *"no one knocking down the door of the Governor and making housing a priority in the State."*

### **Faith: Presenter Tony Milner**

Tony presented on the roll faith communities play now, and their potential for even greater engagement. Family Promise of Salt Lake will serve 35 families this year, proving stable housing and two years of supportive services so these families don't return to homelessness. Tooele is developing a Family Promise Program and Ogden is considering a program. The program has the potential to grow in the County, and receives *"tremendous support from the Faith Community"*.

### **Poverty: Presenter Glen Bailey**

Crossroads Urban Center began 50 years ago, and indication of the nature of poverty in our community. Services include a food pantry and a low cost thrift food store. In 2014 Crossroads served 22,500 households:

- 41,000 with emergency food, prescriptions, baby items such as formula and diapers, baby kits, and Transit passes.
- There is normally a line out the door on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
- The Thrift Store served over 88,000 households.

- 37% of these people were homeless.
- 20% are receiving some sort of assistance.
- 37% are under the age of 18.

The program provides a 3 day emergency food supply up to 6 times in a 12 month time period, and many of their clients are people who are on the street (homeless), and the others are the people Tara spoke of – those whose incomes cannot meet the high rents of Salt Lake County.

- People who just paid their rent or utilities; something that they could not avoid paying without being cut off from services or eviction. These people do not want to throw themselves into chaos of homelessness and they worry about the food last.
- The number one call Crossroads receives is from people looking for help with rent or utilities. There are very few agencies that offer that service.

Salt Lake County has serious pockets of poverty. He agreed wholeheartedly with Tara’s assessment: The gap between wages and affordable housing is critical.

- Glen cited a recent study finding that 16.6% of Salt Lake County and 17% of Midvale residents live in poverty.
- In 2001 8.6% of Utahans were living in poverty, today it is 12.7%.
- In 2002 there were 35,000 households participating in the Food Stamp Program. This October, there were 91,000 households. It peaked in 2011 at over 100,000 households.

Glen also raised the issue of representation from low income and poor people in this and other groups concerned with housing. *“We can talk about how we are going to address homelessness, we can talk about that forever, but if we do not address some of the under lying causes that push people into homelessness, we are not going to solve the problem.”*

**Business: Presenter Jason Mathis**

The Downtown Alliance interest in homelessness issues grew over the past 2 years when they started to see a big increase in the number of homeless people getting services around the area. The Downtown Alliance became concerned about what that meant for the larger community, and for the homeless. Incidences of crime went up, not because of homeless individuals, but because of the people preying on them and the environment.

The Downtown Alliance is focusing on mitigating and strategizing how they can play a constructive role and find solutions. They want a downtown that is safe, a downtown that is vibrant, and a downtown that is welcoming for everyone, including homeless people. Among their actions:

- Expanding the hours of the Weigan Center
- Putting together a clean team by working closely with the police department.

Jason stressed that what needs to be addressed are the root of the causes that lead to homelessness. The Alliance is pleased that Mayor McAdams is calling for a Collective Impact approach because the community needs to think holistically about what can we do as a community as a society.

The Harvard economist Edward Glaser points out the cities are often places that have a lot of poor people. Not because the cities make people poor, but because impoverished people come to an urban center because it’s a source of strength and wealth and it’s a place they go to rebuild their lives. Jason hopes that we can come together with a community wide strategic plan, recognize the role that every entity plays, and build long term solutions that address the root causes as well. *“It is not acceptable that in a society as wealthy as ours and a community as blessed as ours, that we have people whose last best option is to sleep under a viaduct or having to go to a shelter.”*

**Employment: Presenter Jonathan Hardy**

The objective of DWS is to help everyone in need get a job. DWS has targeted Initiatives for the homeless population, especially for families. These include:

- Short term rental assistance for up to 4 months while DWS is helping with employment services.
- Assistance getting additional benefits
- 5 full time employees work on the Rapid Rehousing Initiative for families stationed at the Road Home and the overflow shelter in Midvale, the Fourth Street Clinic, the Weigan Center and the Permanent Supportive Housing sites. The goal of these workers is to engage people in core services, helping them to get connected to jobs and benefits.
- DWS offers certification for the Homeless Tax Credit, a State tax credit for hiring someone who is homeless and providing at least \$4,000.00 in wages. The Tax Credit is capped at \$100,000.00.

Jonathan thinks the following are what is working for DWS:

- Permanent Supportive Housing Sites
- Working with a non-profit, Vantage Services (formally Valley Services), which engages people in a supportive employment environment.
- Transitional employment opportunities in partnership with the City, the County, and Higher Education for contracted supportive employment.

Challenges from DWS's vantage point include:

- Transportation.
- Engaging with people at the scattered sites. It is difficult to engage in the case management model when the people are not there on a regular basis.

#### **Supportive Housing: Presenter Kerry Bate**

Permanent supportive housing takes people with high needs, extensive histories of homelessness and disabling conditions, and provides them with rich voluntary supportive services so that they can stay housed. Key to the program is:

- Good services and good support
- Bringing in the right people into the program.

The Housing Authority feels these are pressing issues and needs:

- A centralized triage that evaluates needs so that those most at risk are accessing the services.
- An onsite wrap around service for substance abuse, mental health and physical health. This area is weaker than it should be. "If we can get the right people in there with the right services, we can prolong their lives, we're going to increase their satisfaction with life and they will have a really good outcome".

#### **Homeless System Performance Measures: Presenter Valerie Walton**

Valerie provided a handout on the current National and Local Homelessness Goals.

- Goal 1 - End Veteran Homelessness by end of 2015.
  - Working partners are HUD and VA, USICH – Opening Doors, a local organization, Zero: 2016 and HUD Mayor's Challenge.
- Goal 2 - End Chronic Homelessness by end of 2016.
  - Working partners are HUD, USICH – Opening Doors, Zero: 2016 and the State of Utah and County 10 Year Plans.
- Goal 3 - End Family and Youth Homelessness by 2020.
  - Working partners are HUD and USICH – Opening Doors.

HUD's guidelines for measures and goals have become more concrete and tangible and tell us what must be looked at system wide to meet Grant requirements. HUD is laying its performance measures and system indicators:

- Time spent homeless
  - How much time are people spending in the emergency homeless shelter,

- How much time are people spending in transitional housing?
- Housing retention and exit destination
  - How many individuals are leaving shelter for permanent housing?
- Outreach
  - How successful are these teams in working with homeless on the streets?
  - What percentage (%) are they working with that are getting placement (such as shelter and permanent housing),
  - How much are we really helping this person to get off the street?
  - Do people in outlying areas (i.e., Midvale, Sandy, West Jordan or West Valley) receive the same help and services as those downtown?
- First time homelessness.
  - How many first times homeless people were enrolled in the prior 24 months in the homeless programs prior to becoming homeless?
  - How many are returning or leaving the program, are they returning and leaving in intervals? (6 months, 1 year etc.)
- Jobs and income growth
  - What is the individuals income as they enter the program, what is it at the mid-year mark and at the end of the program?

### **Emergency Shelter: Presenter Matt Minkevitch**

Matt handed out a description of the services provided by the Road Home, noting the agency has earned four stars, highest ranking, for nine years running from Charity Navigator. This places them within the top 2% of nonprofits nationwide in helping people step out of homelessness and back into the community. The Road Home recognized in the late 90's that they could be more effective by helping people get into housing and that became the focus area. Services offered are: Emergency services, clothing, hygiene items, and transportation out of town if that is what the person needed, case management, ID's, birth certificates and Housing.

The Road Home collaborates with:

- Catholic Community Services, sharing space at the Weigand and St Vincent DePaul Center,
- Fourth Street Clinic , which provides medical expertise and The Road Home provides medical beds,
- The Rescue Mission, which provides accessible shelter for people with anxiety and spiritually based recovery,
- Volunteers of America, which provides treatment while the Road Homes provide treatment beds, and with whom they share an outreach team and services to tenants in permanent support housing,
- DWS to provide funding for housing and employment case management.

A ten year comparison provides an overview of changes to our housing and homelessness systems:

- In 2004 The Road Home had a budget of \$4 million: \$1 million in housing and \$300,000 in rental assistance payments.
  - In 2014, The Road Home has approximately \$13.6 million budget. The significant part of this increase is due to securing competitive national grants. \$6.7 million in housing and \$3 million in rental assistance.
- In 2004 they served 2,100 people for shelter, 163,096 nights, provided less than 50,000 housing nights and maintained a waiting list for shelter.
  - In 2014 they served 7,082 people for shelter, 349,111 nights, provided 454,626 housing nights and during peak season roughly 1,100 people nightly in shelter and an equivalent amount nightly in housing.

What is working for the Road Home:

- Housing – permanent supportive housing, housing for veterans, and rapid rehousing for families. Creating housing opportunities with supportive services for most of the most distressed people in our community

- Shelter – over 100% occupancy. About 30-60 beds are used twice in a 22 hour period. (flipping the beds) Having as many people in housing on any given night as in shelter during the peak season.

#### Key Improvements Needed:

- New housing opportunities. The collective efforts have slowed.
- The shelter is congested and there are long lines due to a laborious check-in process and no daily storage. As a result *“There is a high concentration of humanity along the Rio Grande corridor”*.
- Drug dealing outside of the shelter. This detracts from the overall good provided by the Road Home

#### Discussions of Presentations

The Committee discussed the need for more permanent, supportive housing, and to not lose sight of the root causes of homelessness: addiction, poverty, health issues, and changes in circumstances. The County should focus its efforts once again on the creation of permanent solutions.

#### Adopt Vision for Collective Impact on Homelessness

The next meeting will focus on the adoption of a common vision. The current draft reads:

*The Salt Lake County Collective Impact on Homelessness Steering Committee shares this common vision: We are committed to creating an integrated, efficient, and effective system to end homelessness in Salt Lake County. We will use our collective expertise and data to design systems that provide access to safe, affordable housing and the supportive services that are a pathway from homelessness to success.*

The meeting adjourned at 10:00