

**MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF THE
LOW BARRIER HOMELESS SHELTER TASK FORCE**

Held: June 15, 2022

A regular meeting of the Low Barrier Homeless Shelter Task Force was held on Wednesday, June 15, 2022 at 2:00 p.m at Indiana Government Center South, Conference Room 12, Cardinal Hall.

The following individuals were present at the meeting: Tom McGowan, Co-Chair; Jeff Bennett, Co-Chair; Task Force Member, J. Jacob Sipe (IHCDA Executive Director); Task Force Member, Dr. Chelsea Haring-Cozzi; Task Force Member, Karen Holly; Task Force Member, Rick Alvis; Sherry Seiwert (President Downtown Indy); Task Force Member, Rep. Justin Moed; Task Force Member, Sen. Jack Sandlin; Task Force Member, Sen. Fady Qaddoura; Task Force Member, Tim Brown, and members of staff from Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority;

Tom McGowan served as Chair of the meeting and upon noting the presence of a quorum, called the meeting to order. LaKeshia Triggs served as Secretary.

I. Introduction of Task Force Members

Co-Chair McGowan recognized the members of the Task Force.

II. Electronic Participation policy

A motion was made by Sen. Jack Sandlin, to approve the Electronic Participation policy, which was seconded by Rep. Justin Moed. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Rick Alvis to approve the February 28, 2022 meeting minutes which was seconded by J. Jacob Sipe. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Mission of the Low Barrier Homeless Shelter Task Force created by Senate Enrolled Act 218 (2021)

Co-Chair McGowan reminded the task force of its mission, plan, and vision that was discussed at the previous meeting.

V. Existing/Ongoing Homeless Studies

- Co-Chair McGowan reminded the task force of three homelessness studies that was discussed at the previous study. The three studies are Indianapolis Community Plan to End Homelessness 2018 – 2023, City of Indianapolis Office of Public Health and Safety and Low Barrier Shelter Assessment Study.
- Co-Chair suggested to have Josh Barker from IMPD speak at the next task force meeting to discuss the true impact on the police force and the true cost of homelessness on an individual basis.
- Co-Chair Jeff Bennett made remarks about the interviews that were conducted in the Downtown Indy study regarding the type of services that might encouraged them to go to a shelter. In addition, individuals indicated that the desire for individual lockable rooms and individual shower facilities like an apartment unit concept versus a dormitory concept. The ability to access services all under one roof was important as well. Services such as getting an state ID, driver's license or SSN card requires multiple trips to outside locations so the ability to centralize under one roof is important.

- Co-Chair Jeff Bennet discuss operating costs of a such a facility. The costs is about 30 million dollars. The city has set aside 12 million dollars to acquire property. It will take about another 4-5 million dollars to operate such a facility.
- J. Jacob Sipe discussed the Medicaid Crosswalk study that IHCDCA conducted with CSH that laid the framework for receiving a Medicaid waiver to support individuals who can benefit from supportive housing services. This study will be distributed to the task force members.
- Co-chair McGowan discussed the Lafayette concept model. The concept is a day room where people can go and spend the day and get on-site services. They do not spend the night. There is interim component which is a bed and nightstand and then go into a permanent supportive housing.
- Low Barrier Shelter Assessment Study
 - Chairperson McGowan recognized Sherry Seiwert, who presented information regarding the Low Barrier Shelter Assessment Study update
 - The focus is providing wrap around services at one site.
 - There is a gap in the system for individuals with mental health and addiction issues for a place for them to go during the day or evening to not just get them off the street but also receive services.
 - Looked at potential real estate sites in the city. They have looked at the Arrest Processing Center which is in close proximity to downtown but also closely in line with Elevator hill development
 - Will need to locate a site that will not get neighborhood push back. The challenge is that people do not want a shelter in their neighborhood.
 - There is a facility on College Avenue that houses women inmates that can be a potential possibility.
 - Tim Brown suggested an old men's work release center passed south of Speedway. It has housing and programming.

VI. 2022 Permanent Supportive Housing Institute

Co-Chair McGowan recognized J. Jacob Sipe, who discussed the following topics:

- IHCDCA hosting the institute which has been go on for approximately 12 years.
- There have been 26 developments created across the state around permanent supportive housing.
- The Lafayette model came from the institute.
- There are 8 teams that were selected to be part of the Indiana Permanent Supportive Housing Institute this year. 60 million dollars was allocated from IHCDCA to fund these developments.
- The teams are focused on using coordinated entry which is how they utilize intake of homeless individuals and prioritize based on their needs whether it is disability, substance abuse disorders, and overall services they need.
- The teams will present their presentations tomorrow, June 16 at the Indiana Supportive Housing Institute Finale.

VII. Coalition for Homelessness Intervention and Prevention

Co-Chair McGowan recognized Dr. Chelsea Haring-Cozzi, who discussed the following topics:

- The single point in time data is not made public yet.
- For the last 10 years, the single point in time count is flat.
- The range is 1500-1900 individual. The study was conducted in January (last 10 days of January).
- In 2021, there were 7437 individuals who showed in shelters or on the streets.

- In Indianapolis, most people who experience homelessness show up in shelters. The solution is permanent supportive housing for individuals who have substance abuse issues and mental health issues.
- The task force must look at other models in other cities. Milwaukee has the lowest unsheltered population in the country. They have mastered leasing units. The services are brought to the units.
- In Tucson, Arizona there is a facility that the taxpayer built. This is a never said no facility. They have an area in the back where the police can take an individual that is actively using. They work with the judge, prosecutor, public defender, and social worker to give services to the individual instead of making arrests.
- Co-chair met with Marion County Prosecutor Ryan Mears. The problem that Prosecutor Mears is having is that there are not enough beds. The judges will not give beds to someone who is creating problems on the streets. Prosecutor Mears asks to create a location for the police to take people to be assessed.

VIII. Wheeler Mission Update

Co-Chair McGowan recognized Rick Alvis, who discussed the following topics:

- In 2015, Wheeler Mission finished the shelter for men on Market Street. Within a year we were running maximum and had to add beds.
- The Wheeler Mission found another need in the community which was single men with children.
- The Wheeler Mission has one complete floor for single men with children at the Hampton Inn downtown.
- The Mission currently has 600 people under roof. During the past winter, it had 900 people. Last year, there were 1200 people under roof during COVID.
- Despite significant increases in funding, the problem has gotten worse. In 2013, the federal government had a policy shift as a one size fits all approach, but it has not reduced homelessness.
- We need to move beyond subsidized housing assistance. We need the wrap around services not just housing only. The root cause is drugs, alcohol, and mental health.
- There are 3 tiers of homeless people in Indianapolis.
 - First tier- people can go into housing immediately.
 - Second tier- other vast number have the drug and alcohol problems. Every year, we experience 3000-4000 new guests who enter the system.
 - Tier 3- group is so acute in their homelessness that they will never come to a shelter. This is about 10%.
 - The Mission has hired off duty police officers to reduce the violence and challenges.
 - The Mission is committed to ending homelessness one person at a time

IX. Development of Low Barrier Homeless Shelter

- Co-Chair McGowan believes we don't need any more studies. There have been three studies. There is tremendous desire to do something.
- Co-Chair McGowan emphasized that we have to be careful that we don't replicate services.
- Co-Chair Jeff Bennett mentioned that the Downtown Indy study explained the concept of the one stop shop with services under one roof.
- Horizon house is the day center for Indianapolis. They just completed a strategic plan. Some of the expanded services is providing wrap around services. The chairs will meet with Horizon house and look at what Horizon House is currently doing.

- Co-Chair McGowan emphasized that the task force has to get to a scope of work with the data we have. The task force needs to zero in and understand the funding mechanism.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30pm. Next Task Force Meeting Time and Location-TBD