

Steering Committee for Concord's Plan to End Homelessness

Meeting Notes November 20, 2018

Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce

2 pm- 3:30

Steering Committee Members Present: Peter Evers, Byron Champlin, Claudia Walker, Lew Feldstein, Ruth Perencevich, Tim Sink, Steve Duprey. By phone: Pamela Puleo, Karen Emis-Williams

Absent: Kara Wyman, Rosemary Heard, Ron White, Nicole Shultz-Price

Additional: Ellen Groh, CCEH

Minutes of the September Meeting approved.

Prison Study commission (Tim)

It was the Chamber of Commerce that initially advocated for this Study Commission to evaluate the impact of the discharge of state prisoners (SB 392). All in all, Tim feels like it was a worthwhile effort and resulted in good data being collected. We confirmed that there is a disproportionate impact on Concord and a few other cities from release of State prisoners. The study also showed there is a large impact on Concord from the release of people from the County jail.

Discussion on whether the Steering Committee should advocate for the legislation recommended by the Study, and/or a modification of those recommendations or other legislation related to homelessness. The Study Commission stated:

Legislative Initiatives should include:

- 1.) *Establish a fund for landlords for reimbursement for damages associated with leasing to individuals being released from correctional facilities.*
- 2.) *Increase funding in State's Affordable Housing Fund for special populations (e.g. person's with felony and/or misdemeanor convictions).*
- 3.) *Public Housing Authority screening tool should be reviewed to ensure consistency across and removal of automatic exclusions associated with individuals with felony and/or misdemeanor convictions.*

These three initiatives are intended to create more geographic diversity in housing opportunities for individuals leaving correctional facilities in our State. (From Senate Bill 392, Commission Report of Findings and Recommendations)

It was noted that proposal (1) might be expanded to include other populations that have high barriers to housing, such as releases from NH Hospital, or people coming from homelessness.

It was noted that proposal (3) might not be necessary anymore- Steve reported that within the last 6 months public housing and Section 8 housing vouchers can no longer exclude people convicted of felonies as a matter of course.

Since this is a budget year, this would be the time to introduce something.

Byron agreed to speak with Mayor Bouley about the 3 recommendations for legislation that were included in the Study Commission report to see if the City wants to advocate for any of these recommendation, and/or if there was other legislation that would impact homelessness they were considering advocating for. A follow-up discussion could be held by a subgroup of this Steering Committee, (including Karen Emis-Williams, Byron Champlin, Tim Sink, Peter Evers,) with the Police Chief and Tom Aspell regarding potential legislation that could impact homelessness in Concord.

Peter Evers noted that a “white paper” was recently created by the NH Community Behavioral Health Association on availability of beds for people experiencing mental health crisis. (Reducing Variability in Emergency Department Treatment for Patients in a Mental Health Crisis.) The report will be sent out to Steering Committee members.

Response to loss of family winter shelter space (Ellen)

Ellen gave an overview of the process- numerous service provider agencies met many times over a period of weeks to address the issue that the Winter Shelter cannot accommodate families going forward, as it has for the last 3 winters. The Steering Committee reviewed the memo which will be sent to Mayor Bouley, Tom Aspell, and to the Steering Committee itself. Ellen and Ruth noted that this was a very useful, collaborative process for these service agencies involved, and each gained a deeper understanding of each other’s services, capabilities and limitations, and it strengthened their ability to work together to serve clients efficiently and effectively.

Steering Committee Governance:

This subgroup will meet and create a written set of policies on the Committee’s governance structure, including the process to be appointed to this Committee, term limits, etc, to be reviewed by the whole Steering Committee at our **January 15th meeting.**

Next Meetings:

The Steering Committee will continue to meet every other month, on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, from 2 pm- 3:30.

Tuesday January 15, 2019

Tuesday, March 19, 2019

Tuesday May 21, 2019

Summer meetings- to be determined

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Groh, Executive Director, Concord Coalition to End Homelessness