

Steering Committee for Concord's Plan to End Homelessness

April 25, 2023

Meeting held at Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce and on Zoom

2:00-3:30 pm

Steering Committee Members Present: Byron Champlin, Tom Furtado, Greg Lessard, Linda Lorden, Lisa Madden, Julie Palmeri, Ruth Perencevich, Laura Simoes, Tim Sink, Peter Surmanis, Claudia Walker

On Zoom:, Roseanne Haggerty, Gwen Whitney Gill

Absent: Mayor Jim Bouley, Karen Emis-Williams, Ellen Fries, Deputy Chief Barrett Moulton, Rabbi Robin Nafshi, Kara Wyman

Additional: Karen Jantzen, CCEH Executive Director; Jim Schlosser

Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Byron Champlin, Chair, at 2:02 p.m.

Approval September Minutes: Moved by Greg Lessard and seconded by Tim Sink. Motion passed unanimously.

Welcome New Steering Committee Members: Julie Palmeri, Laura Simoes, Peter Surmanis were introduced to the Steering Committee. Rabbi Robin Nafshi was unable to attend but was acknowledged as joining the committee. Welcome!

Update from City Welfare:

Karen Emis-Williams was unable to attend the meeting but submitted the following update report:

Although the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) hotel assistance for singles ended on 4/2, we did not have an influx of cases. Unfortunately, I do not have any information on where people went.

We have seen an increase in requests for food, electric and rent.

Food: February was the last month Food Stamps recipients received the additional allotment benefit (see attachment).

Electric: utility already disconnected due to lack of payment.

Rent: average cost of an apartment is about \$1,500 with nothing included. We have also seen apartments for over \$2,000/mo. There has been some movement of individuals finding an apartment, but I do not believe this is because of the availability of new housing opportunities. At the same rate, we have seen people already evicted owing over \$7,000 in back rent – now seeking shelter. The common statement, they were not aware ERAP had ended and the landlord never told them they owed rent.

According to the NH Housing Authority housing needs assessment – NH needs close to 60,000 units in the next ten years to meet the need: <https://www.nhhfa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/2023-NH-Statewide-Housing-Needs-Assessment.pdf>.

Update on ERAP:

As noted in the report from City Welfare, they did not see a great influx of individuals with the end of ERAP for Adult Only Households. ERAP for Family Households ends June 30th.

The Emergency Winter Shelter run by the Concord Coalition to End Homelessness closed 1 week later (April 9 vs March 31) as an option for displaced individuals. Seven individuals exiting ERAP utilized the shelter. The Coalition noted an increase in individuals living out of their cars as a direct result of the end of ERAP.

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A discussion regarding the various vouchers and how people received vouchers followed. It was noted that there are several individuals with vouchers experiencing Chronic Homelessness that are not "tenant ready" which emphasizes the need for permanent supportive housing as well as to tenant education programs. The Coalition is in the process of designing a tenant education program.

Update on Landlord Incentive Program:

The program for Concord and Laconia is through a different funding source and therefore is unable to mirror the successful Affordable Housing Incentive Program (AHIP) that was piloted on the Seacoast. CDFA, Granite United Way and the Coalition have been working diligently to design an effective program with the constraints of the funding guidelines.

The committee had a robust conversation regarding the multiple developments that are underway in Concord and in Penacook. While not all the housing in the pipeline can be classified as affordable, by adding to the housing stock it will provide opportunities as people re-think their housing options. Additionally, this increased housing stock will hopefully temper the workforce shortage being experienced by critical service providers in the community. For example, the Community Mental Health Centers across the state have approximately 373 unfilled positions with 90% being clinical openings.

Task Forces:

Community Education has been a part of the City's 10-year Plan to End Homelessness. As noted in December, the time has come to bring this to fruition. The committee began a discussion of forming a task force to recommend a communications plan. Two factors that will influence the plan are the National Alliance to End Homelessness which is readying to release a communications tool kit/best practices, and Concord Hospital is in the midst of conducting their Community Needs Assessment.

Other Business:

Chair Byron Champlin asked that ConcordNEXT, Concord's proposed new zoning codes, be discussed in further detail at a future meeting as it pertains to ending homelessness.

Chris Santaniello, Associate Commissioner, NH DHHS and co-leader of NH Council on Housing Stability will be joining the June meeting to update the Committee on Council activities.

Motion to Adjourn: Moved by Linda Lorden and Seconded by Claudia Walker. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned 3:30 pm

Reminder: Dates for upcoming quarterly meetings: (Third Tuesdays, 2:00-3:30 pm)

- June 20, 2023
- September 19, 2023
- December 19, 2023