**DRAFT MINUTES**

Friday, May 21, 2021, 10:00 a.m.

Virtual by Teams

**Meeting Minutes & Other Resources:** <https://www.iowafinance.com/homelessness/homeless-service-agencies/iowa-council-on-homelessness/>

*Participants self-reported attendance through a shared Google Sheet:*

[**https://tinyurl.com/May-2021-ICH-Attendance**](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ftinyurl.com%2FMay-2021-ICH-Attendance&data=04%7C01%7Camber.lewis%40iowafinance.com%7Cf87adfd190a04ee2f99f08d91a3179f4%7C0e7d394658c840c4b5ca04ab67de9145%7C0%7C1%7C637569622083274093%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0&sdata=KNzzrsY0QhhMmZyoPwdHrkwvlujb90QcjjE2IEytCVg%3D&reserved=0)

Vice-chair Dax Oberreuter opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m., filling in for chair Ashley Schwalm. A quorum was achieved by 10:04 a.m.

* **Introductions**
* **Approval of Agenda *(Action Item)***
  + Motion: Dennis Lauterbach
  + Second: Hope Metheny
  + Unanimously approved
* **Approval of Minutes from March 19, 2021** *(Action Item)*
  + Motion: Dennis Lauterbach
  + Second: David Hagen
  + Unanimously approved
* **Strategic Planning Update** *(The Bronner Group)*
  + Lauren Ricci from The Bronner Group provided an update on the Council’s strategic planning initiative. Lauren noted a survey will already have come out by email; they are looking for responses by the end of the day today. Another engagement tool is they are asking people to sign up for virtual focus groups on a variety of topics, 12 in total. Recipients may forward to appropriate colleagues that may be interested. Lauren also described some upcoming retreats this summer. A status report update in written form describing all of this is also available online as one of the resources for this meeting.
* **Committee/Task Force Reports**
* **Executive Committee** (*Dax Oberreuter for Ashley Schwalm*)
  + Dax noted that the main work of the Executive Committee currently is engaging with and guiding the strategic planning initiative.
* **Nominating Committee** (*Tim Wilson)*
  + Nominees for Terms to begin July 2021
  + Tim provided an update. The committee has met and reviewed applications submitted through the Iowa Talent Bank. The committee is recommending a slate of members:
    - Recommend reappointment for Ben Brustkern, Crissy Canganelli, Mariliegh Fisher, Alex Freeman, David Hagen, Ron Lund, Ashley Schwalm, and Tim Wilson.
    - Recommend new appointments for two-year terms: Amy Peterson, Latifah Faisal (as Representative for Iowa State Association of Counties), Joshua Duden, David Lyons, Trevor Fannon, Michael Hardy.
    - Recommend appointment for completion of unexpired term: Edgardo Ortiz-Hernandez.
  + Tim noted the gender balance isn’t perfect with this slate of recommended members (more males than females), but the balance of political party affiliation and geography would be much improved.
  + Jennifer Tibbetts, not a Council member but a member of the public, requested to speak to this issue, and shared concern. After some further discussion, Tim also noted there was a limited number of applicants, and that all female applicants to the governor’s office are included in the list of proposed members.
  + Motion from committee to approve this slate of recommended members.
  + Second: Karin Ford
  + Unanimously approved
* **Policy & Planning Committee** (*Crissy Canganelli*)
  + The committee did not meet recently, but Crissy will be sending out a Doodle poll soon; the committee is likely to consider developing recommendations for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to address homelessness services.
* **Public Awareness Committee** (*Alex Freeman*)
  + Alex provided an update, describing a Day on the Hill stand-in communication piece, which is a letter currently posted in the resources for today. The letter is intended to serve in lieu of the Homelessness Awareness Day on the Hill event this year. Alex asked members to read the draft and customize as members see fit, and then send to their legislators. It’s not a policy proposal, but it is a request to visit a local shelter if one is present, and to learn more about homelessness. Alex asked members to email him if they send this letter to their legislators to let him know.
* **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Report, Institute for Community Alliances** *(Gary Wickering)*
  + Gary provided a Point in Time presentation from this year’s count. This is for all Iowa Continuum of Care (CoCs) in Iowa, except for Pottawattamie County which is part of the Omaha CoC. The presentation will be made available in the resources section online for this meeting.
* **Continuum of Care (CoC) Updates, as available**
  + Iowa Balance of State CoC (96 counties)
    - Dennis Lauterbach, chair of the CoC Board, provided an update. The permanent board is now formed, with 15 members, taking over from the interim board that recently finished. There are five committees. Currently working on a strategic plan. They plan to provide a limited amount of funding for members with lived experience of homelessness to support their participation in the strategic planning efforts.
  + Polk County Continuum of Care (Polk County)
    - Angie Arthur, CoC Director, provided an update. Some current priorities include:
      1. Plans for the new Covid-19-related Emergency Housing Vouchers. The CoC and the Des Moines Municipal Housing Organization have decided to accept all 120 vouchers allocated by HUD. They are working to identify the best population to receive these vouchers, and considering landlord incentives.
      2. American Rescue Plan and the funding for the Dept of Education to support homeless students; $5.1 million for the State of Iowa.
      3. Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program. All 35 units of housing in the various programs are filled. There is a Housing Youth Navigator to help youth find housing. Also working with the drop-in youth connection center, and supporting mental health services. Reviewing Rapid Rehousing and other program standards as they apply to youth; a recent Adultism training, which was helpful in understanding the kinds of challenges that youth experience.
      4. Emergency Rental Assistance Program is still moving forward. Polk County and Des Moines operate their programs separately from the rest of the state; they expect to fully expend the first round of funding sometime in June; will be working with partners for the second round of this funding.
  + Siouxland Coalition to End Homelessness (Woodbury County)
    - Clara McFarland, with the City of Sioux City, filling in for Amy Keairns, provided an update. The city leads the CoC in Siouxland. They are working to plan the new Emergency Housing Vouchers, and determining prioritization. They are also working on some Coordinated Entry updates.
  + Metro Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless (Pottawattamie County)
    - Randy McCoy is the Director of the CoC and provided an update. They are currently digging through Point in Time Count data; big focuses right now are better understanding the data and how the pandemic has impacted the homeless population.
* **State Agency Representative Updates** 
  + Department on Aging
    - Dax provided an update. Local Area Agencies on Aging provide some rental and other assistance. Looking into home modifications. Have applied for some grants recently to assist with keeping people in their homes longer and keeping them safer. Also discussed calls for mobile home repairs; the Polk County area is working on a plan to address these needs.
  + Office of the Attorney General
    - Lori Miller provided an update on VOCA – the Victims of Crime Act Fund; through the Attorney General’s Office, and current funding. Funding has decreased some, so their office is navigating how to best manage this. This funding supports victim services in Iowa.
  + Department of Corrections
    - Katrina Carter provided an update: One positive is that there are very few individuals incarcerated with Covid currently; they are looking at the next few months in being able to go back to more normal operations. A statewide Reentry group meets regularly; many participants have transitional housing programs that assist in meeting the housing needs of the reentry population. Katrina noted that 95% of people incarcerated will be reentering communities, so we need housing for these individuals.
  + Economic Development Authority
    - Joyce Brown provided an update: IEDA has three housing programs offered. One is Homebuyers Assistance. The second is Upper Story Rental Conversion, which can be especially helpful for rural areas with small town main streets. The third is a Housing Sustainability program, where the goal is to help people remain in their homes, through home modifications, repairs, and energy efficiency updates. CDBG may also be utilized in some ways to support housing going forward.
  + Department of Education
    - Carolyn Cobb provided an update. ARP-HCY is the name of the new education funds related to Covid. The department is planning use of these funds and also waiting on guidance from the federal government on rules. Also summarized the current status of the McKinney Vento competitive grant program across the state. Carolyn noted that Emily Teeter has joined their department and will have some involvement with the Council going forward.
  + Finance Authority
    - Justin Knudson provided an update:
      1. The current National Housing Trust Fund round will close July 2nd; the program helps produce affordable housing for extremely low-income households.
      2. Also currently reviewing applications received for the HOME program.
      3. Disaster housing: The state received approximately $200 million in initial funding for the Covid-19 Iowa Rent and Utility Assistance Program (IRUAP). The team is making good progress on ironing out some initial challenges with the roll-out of the program. There are about 12,000 applicants in the queue. Applicant households must match with a corresponding landlord application, which requires some back-and-forth, and takes more time than the previous program last fall which relied more on self-attestation. About 4,000 applicants have that match so far. Iowa Communication Action Agencies are partnering to assist in reviewing applications for the program. Iowa Workforce Development is also partnering, providing tenants and landlords with a place to go for access to technology and support if needed.
      4. Forward-looking: there is also another tranche of about $160 million in funding potentially available for the same program, and the agency is discussing what that might look like and whether it’s necessary given what we’ve already received.
      5. Also discussed the new upcoming funding through the HOME-American Rescue Plan (HOME-ARP) program, for approximately $30 million. This fall we should have more guidance from HUD on this program.
  + Department on Human Rights
    - Bill Brand was present at the meeting but could not be heard for an update.
  + Department of Human Services
    - Karen Hyatt provided an update: Through the SAMHSA PATH program, has been offering some training. There are two more coming up: June 2nd, from 1 – 4pm, Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness. Also June 16th, 1 – 4:30pm Compassion Fatigue, from Paul Dagnon. All current providers have been renewed for another six years. Also a Revolving Loan program that includes a partnership with Medicaid and with IFA. Covid Recovery Iowa is still in place and providing services. Also discussed SOAR training and continuing application needs.
    - For more info or links to the trainings please contact Karen at khyatt@dhs.state.ia.us or 515-601-7899.
  + Department on Public Health
    - Karin Ford provided an update: Cody Crawford, another Council member, also recently joined the Department on Public Health. Cody is the new grant manager for a SAMHSA-funded grant. Cody shared information about this program: Focuses on case management for individuals in treatment and recovery; includes helping people find resources for housing stability. Goal for the total length of the grant is to serve 1,200 individuals. Results have been positive so far.
    - Crissy asked about the communities selected to participate in the grant, and specifically about Iowa City, and if there is the possibility to better connect the work to Coordinated Entry and homelessness assistance providers. Cody welcomed further conversation about this and encouraged others to reach out also to help better make these connections. His email is [cody.crawford@idph.iowa.gov](mailto:cody.crawford@idph.iowa.gov).
  + Department of Public Safety
    - No member was present from Public Safety.
  + Department of Veterans Affairs
    - No member was present from Veterans Affairs.
  + Workforce Development
    - Scott Mather provided an update. Scott discussed the upcoming end of enhanced Covid-19-related employment benefits, although regular unemployment benefits will continue. Scott also noted the benefits of the online jobs placement system. Local staffed offices are open for employment/reemployment assistance. They can provide guidance on resumes and such, and the use of computers. Local offices are not open for unemployment assistance; those requests are being handled by phone. After June 1st, additional employment workshops/webinars will be available.
    - Angie Arthur commented in the chat: “June is a challenging month with ending of services - supplemental unemployment ends, UDSA food boxes ends, and eviction moratorium scheduled to end. I have heard rumblings that the 15% SNAPS increase may also be ending in June.”
* **Old Business**
  + Council member Joe Gezel noted he is back after some medical issues. He works with the Heal House in Indianola. They will be full next week. Joe invited interested visitors.
* **New Business**
  + None
* **Public Comments**
  + Jennifer Tibbetts added to her comments earlier on gender equity in Council membership. Jennifer provided a reference to the [Iowa Code](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/2020/69.16A.pdf) that addresses gender equity in boards and commissions, and specifically this excerpt: “All appointive boards, commissions, committees, and councils of a political subdivision of the state that are established by the Code, if not otherwise provided by law, shall be gender balanced as provided by subsection 1 unless the political subdivision has made a good faith effort to appoint a qualified person to fill a vacancy on a board, commission, committee, or council in compliance with subsection 1 for a period of three months but has been unable to make a compliant appointment.”
  + Jennifer asked for details on any steps the Council took to pursue gender equity.
  + There was discussion about the difference between Council recommendations and appointments made by the governor’s office; the governor is responsible for making all appointments to Council seats, and doesn’t make appointments solely based on Council recommendations.
  + It was again noted that of all the applications received, every application from a female was included in the recommended slate of members.
  + Hope Metheny noted that her experience as a board member is that the issue of the need for gender balance has been specifically addressed in her own nominations process in the past.
  + Dax noted that all Nominating Committee meetings are public meetings and all are welcome to participate and provide input during the nominations process.
  + David Binner suggested that at a future meeting, the Council could discuss the issue further and decide if it wanted to review its historic gender balance of the past few years. David invited Jennifer to contact him to discuss this approach.
* **Next Meeting:** Friday, July 16, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.
* **Adjourn**
  + Motion: Karin
  + Second: Gary
  + Unanimously approved
  + The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:50 a.m.

*Draft minutes submitted by Amber Lewis*