**DRAFT MINUTES**

Friday, July 16, 2021, 10:00 a.m.

Virtual Meeting

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

Chair Ashley Odom opened the meeting at 10:00am.

* **Introductions**

Participants self-reported attendance through a shared Google Sheet. A record of attendance is available with these minutes. A quorum was achieved.

* **Approval of Agenda *(Action Item):*** 
  + Motion: Dennis Lauterbach
  + Second: Chrissy Canganelli
  + Unanimously approved
* **Public Comment Period:** A public comment period for the full meeting will be held at this time to accommodate visitors. This period is limited to 2 minutes per person and 10 minutes in total.
  + Jennifer Tibbetts, a member of the public, requested an update regarding the gender balance in Council membership. Ashley Odom reported that the Executive Committee is still working with Iowa Finance Authority’s legal department, but that Jennifer should receive some follow-up on the letter that she submitted.
* **Approval of Minutes from May 21, 2021** *(Action Item)*
  + Motion: Dennis Lauterbach
  + Second: Claire Lindahl
  + Unanimously approved
* **Committee/Task Force Reports**
* **Executive Committee** (*Ashley Odom*)
  + **Strategic Planning Update**:
    - Ashley Odom reported that the Executive Committee has been working with the Bronner Group on strategic planning. A memo to Iowa Council on Homelessness members from Bronner has been posted to the Iowa Council on Homelessness website. Two retreat sessions that all council members were invited to have been completed. There are two upcoming retreat sessions that all council members are encouraged to attend.
* **Nominating Committee** (*Tim Wilson):* 
  + Tim Wilson provided an update on the Nominating Committee. Tim reported that the Nominating Committee met on June 16th and July 14th. There were eight gubernatorial reappointments to the council and eight new appointees. The updated member list can be found on the Iowa Council of Homelessness website. The next Nominating Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 11th at 10:00. Tim discussed the Council’s plan for this year stating that there will be an orientation for new members prior to the Council meeting in September.
* **Policy & Planning Committee** (*Crissy Canganelli*):
  + Crissy Canganelli provided an update on the Policy and Planning Committee. The committee will meet on July 23 to continue the conversation focusing on the upcoming Eviction Moratorium ending on 7/30 and the plans moving forward with state funds and local responses.
* **Public Awareness Committee** (*Alex Freeman*):
  + Alex Freeman provided a brief overview of the Public Awareness Committee for new members. The next committee meeting is July 26 at 9 AM. An invitation and agenda will be sent next week.
* **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Report, Institute for Community Alliances** *(Gary Wickering):* 
  + Gary Wickering provided an update and brief overview for HMIS System Report. He reported that they are currently in consultation with the CoCs in Iowa to develop what they would like to measure for their performance for their CoC competition. They are expanding their online training to make it a better experience for users and preparing for the HUD data changes effective in October. There is an upcoming training in August or September.
* **Continuum of Care (CoC) Updates, as available**
  + Iowa Balance of State CoC (96 counties):
    - Courtney Guntly provided an Iowa Balance of State CoC update and a brief overview for new members. Courtney reports that they are actively working on the application process for the Youth Homeless Demonstration Project. A Youth Advisory Board has been created to assist with the application process as well as a part of the Continuum of Care moving forward. Members of the Youth Advisory Board include youth from ages 14 to 24 to help inform the CoC as they move forward. Iowa Balance of State is undergoing a strategic planning process with Homebase Consulting that is scheduled to be finalized in August. Additionally, they are working with four public housing authorities that have been granted Emergency Housing Vouchers. Those housing authorities include the City of Iowa City, Cedar Rapids Housing Authority, Waterloo Housing Authority, and Central Iowa Regional Housing Authority. Courtney reports that they are also working with Amber Lewis to provide a series of trainings for CoC and ESG grantees that will start Wednesday, July 21. As of July 1, they have resumed the dynamic prioritization of ensuring that those who have the most needs in the coordinated entry system are being served first.
  + Polk County Continuum of Care (Polk County):
    - Abbey Barrow with the Polk county CoC filled in for Angie Arthur and provided an update and brief overview for Polk County CoC. They are currently working with a PR firm to unveil a new name, brand, and website for the organization. They are awaiting HUD’s notice of funding opportunities and guidance for the local CoC application and competition. Their community was awarded 120 Emergency Housing Vouchers and is working to prioritize those vouches. Finally, they are working on implementing the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program grants. They have been operational for over 8 months and are beginning to see an impact on what the housing and supportive services have done for the young people in the community stating that there are 35 new units of youth specific housing as well as additional support services
  + Siouxland Coalition to End Homelessness (Woodbury County):
    - Tessa Shanks, the newly elected board chair for the Siouxland Coalition to End Homelessness, reports that they have accepted 39 Emergency Housing Vouchers and have five vouchers issued. They are participating in the Summer Point-in-Time Count to provide a better understanding of the number of unsheltered individuals in their community.
  + Metro Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless (Pottawattamie County)*:* 
    - Randy McCoy, the executive director of the Metro Area CoC, reports that they are working on a new Strategic Plan scheduled to be finalized in September. He states that they are administering funds for the City of Omaha’s Rental and Utility Assistance program and reports that they have disbursed around 11 million in funds. Additionally, they have received 142 Emergency Housing Vouchers and are working on prioritizing and issuing those vouchers.
* **State Agency Representative Updates** 
  + Department on Aging *(Dax Oberreuter):*
    - Dax Oberreuter provided a brief overview of the Department on Aging for new members. He reports that they are working to disburse the Rescue Plan funds. Dax believes that the funds will be spent to assist with keeping older Iowans in their homes and developing a program to assist with elder abuse crisis intervention. The department has noticed an increased need for rental and utility assistance related to the pandemic and has been working to assist those in need. The Capable Program assists in minor home modifications and is available in Dallas, Mills, Pottawatomie, and Cass County. Additionally, they were awarded funding for the Retired Senior Volunteer Program. The program will offer meal delivery, homemaker, and respite services to assist with keeping people in their homes.
  + Office of the Attorney General *(Lori Miller):* 
    - Lori Miller, the grant administrator for the Iowa Attorney General’s office Crime Victims Assistance Division, reports that the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding was reduced substantially. She states that they are currently waiting for the VOCA bill in Congress to pass so that more funds are available to distribute throughout Iowa. Additionally, they received $1 million in American Rescue Act funds from the Family Violence Services Prevention Act. They are currently working on completing the contracts for those funds which will be used for those suffering from family violence or dating violence.
  + Department of Corrections *(Katrina Carter):* 
    - Katrina reports that the Department of Corrections started phasing in-person visits last week. They continue to seek out housing options for those who are aging and have committed sex offenses.
  + Economic Development Authority *(Joyce Brown):* Not present
  + Department of Education *(Carolyn Cobb):*
    - Carolyn Cobb, the Homeless Coordinator for Education, reports that the Department is working on writing their plan to submit to the Federal Department of Education to access almost $6 million in ARP homeless children and youth funds.
  + Finance Authority *(Terri Rosonke):* 
    - Terri Rosonke provided an update on the Iowa Rental and Utility Assistance Program. In order to process a higher number of applications, IFA has partnered with an energy company to review utility only applications and a Texas based group named Witt O’Brien to assist with processing the remaining applications. The Texas based group has brought more than 200 case managers to process applications. To date more than 8,000 applications have been received and more than 2,100 households have been awarded assistance totaling almost $6 million dollars across 86 Iowa counties.
  + Department on Human Rights *(Bill Brand):* 
    - Bill, the Division Administrator, reports that they received funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). LIHEAP is being offered around the state at local community action agencies to assist families in paying their utility bills that are in arrears. They have also been awarded funds for the Low-Income Water Assistance Program. This is a new initiative from the federal government to assist households in paying for their water utility bills. They are working on their state plan that will be submitted to the Federal Department of Health and Human Services for approval in August.
  + Department of Human Services *(Karen Hyatt):*
    - Karen Hyatt reports that their RFP for the Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) Program has been finalized. The following contractors were renewed: Heartland Family Services, Council Bluffs; Primary Health Care, Des Moines; Black Hawk Grundy Mental Health Center, Waterloo; Vera French, Davenport; The Abbey Center, Iowa City and Cedar Rapids; Hillcrest Family Services, Dubuque; Institute for Community Alliances, HMIS Provider. They received an extension through December for the Covid Recovery Iowa program which offers free counseling, support, and engagement activities for individuals affected by COVID-19.
  + Department on Public Health *(Karin Ford):* 
    - Karin Ford reports that she recommended that low-income housing, no housing, and homelessness be recognized as a public health issue for their planning. She reports that she hopes this recognition will make lack of housing a priority.
  + Department of Public Safety *(vacant):* N/A
  + Department of Veterans Affairs *(Bob Steben):* Not present
  + Workforce Development *(Scott Mather):*
    - Scott reports that all Workforce Development offices in the state are currently open. They offer employment assistance, virtual workshops, and tuition assistance.
* **Old Business:** 
  + None
* **New Business:** 
  + Tim Wilson recognized all nominating committee members and welcomed all new members in attendance. New members that were in attendance include the following: Mary Ingham, Director of Crisis Intervention Service; Brandy Waller, CEO of New Vision Homeless Services; Latifah Faisal, Story County Board of Supervisors; Shane Walter, CEO for Sioux Rivers Regional Mental Health and Services; Trevor Fannon, Communication Specialist for the City of Dubuque; Michael Hardy, Volunteer.
* **Next Meeting:** Friday, September 17, 2021 **– in person at the Iowa Finance Authority, 1963 Bell Avenue, Des Moines OR virtual**
* **Adjourn:** 
  + Motion: Dennis Lauterbach
  + Second: Gary Wickering
  + Unanimously approved
  + The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:00am

*Draft minutes submitted by Mollie Brees*