**DRAFT MINUTES**

Friday, September 17, 2021, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Virtual

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

Chair Ashley Schwalm opened the meeting at 10:02 a.m.

* **Introductions**
  + Participants self-reported attendance through a shared Google sheet. A quorum was confirmed at 10:03 a.m.
* **Approval of Agenda *(Action Item)***
  + Motion: Dennis Lauterbach
  + Second: Clare Lindahl
  + Unanimously approved
* **Public Comment Period**
  + Jennifer Tibbetts inquired about the issue raised previously about gender balance. Ashley Schwalm responded that she would check back with IFA legal counsel for a response they had planned to provide.
* **Approval of Minutes from July 16, 2021** *(Action Item)* 
  + Motion: Ben Brustkern
  + Second: Dennis Lauterbach
  + Unanimously approved
* **Committee/Task Force Reports**
* **Executive Committee** (*Ashley Schwalm*)
  + **Strategic Planning Update**: Ashley shared an update regarding this plan. The plan is finished and is posted online. The committee is working to figure out how to best continue with forward progress, tracking the plan, and following through. One item raised is the size of the Council, currently at 38 members. Looking at recommending changes to the Iowa Code to bring the size down to possibly 19 members, although this is flexible. Ashley reviewed some other proposed changes in response to the strategic planning; the proposed draft document is posted online for full review. Tim discussed the possible timing of any changes this year; this would be needed very soon for this year’s session; otherwise would need to wait until next year. The Executive Committee may review further to finalize any recommendations.
  + One suggestion was shared for state agency representation: Change language to something like “8 of the following 12 state agency representatives,” and then leave it more open, rather than specifying which agencies to include.
  + Additional comments or input from members or other stakeholders should be emailed to Tim Wilson or Ashley Schwalm ([aschwalm@famres.org](mailto:aschwalm@famres.org) or [tim@homeforwardiowa.org](mailto:tim@homeforwardiowa.org)).
* **Nominating Committee** (*Tim Wilson)*
  + Tim shared an update: The committee will meet next on September 23rd at 1:30pm. Waiting to hear on possibly new representative from the State Association of Counties.
* **Policy & Planning Committee** (*Crissy Canganelli*)
  + Crissy shared an update: The committee last met on July 23rd with IFA staff and discussed the state’s Iowa Rent and Utility Assistance Program. Will next meet on September 21st to discuss a proposed new state Rapid Rehousing proposal.
* **Public Awareness Committee** (*Alex Freeman*)
  + Ashley noted that we are looking for a new chair for this committee. Alex noted he is happy to work with the next person who will be chair, to help them get started. Main item is eagerly awaiting how to move forward with the strategic planning vision, and how the Public Awareness Committee can best support that vision.
* **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Updates, Institute for Community Alliances (ICA)** *(Gary Wickering)*
  + Gary shared several updates. ICA is going through the Continuum of Care (CoC) competition process, as well as supporting CoCs with the development of competition materials.
  + Gary noted that ICA is available to assist with data needs; reach out as needed, although preferably not at the 11th hour.
  + Data Standards training coming up, regarding HUD changes to the HMIS data standards.
  + Participated in a HUD call recently; data changes take effect October 1. System Performance Measures reporting to HUD will open soon. This will entail some data clean-up; ICA may reach out to agencies with needs related to this.
  + In November ICA anticipates a Point in Time (PIT) Count Notice from HUD.
  + ICA has a new staff member starting soon, Nicole Kinkennon-Bettis.
* **UnevictIA Presentation** *(Amal Barre,* [*https://www.unevictia.com*](https://www.unevictia.com)*)* 
  + Amal works for Oakridge in Des Moines, which is a Section 8 and social services organization, and Amal also works with the research initiative, Unevictia. The goal of this project is to make evictions data more accessible statewide, to increase awareness about housing instability statewide, as well as the challenges and opportunities present in our current ecosystem. The project launched in May 2021. The research data comes directly from Iowa courts. This data was initially difficult to obtain, at least at the level of dwelling addresses, due to privacy reasons. However, the data the courts were able to release still included zip code data as well as the landlords and tenants involved in evictions proceedings. Amal shared a presentation with detailed information based on this research. Currently their website has zip code-level data for 26 Iowa counties; the goal is to have the remaining county data published by October.
  + Amal noted that in Minnesota, the state legislature changed from a three-day eviction notice period to a 14-day notice period, which was very helpful especially when rental assistance is pending but where it sometimes simply takes longer than three days to obtain assistance.
  + It was noted that evictions are expensive for landlords to file, so there could be some buy-in from landlords into changing processes and timelines to better facilitate them being able to receive rental assistance on behalf of tenants that are behind on their rent.
* **Continuum of Care (CoC) Updates, as available**
  + Iowa Balance of State CoC (96 counties)
    - Courtney Guntly provided an update. She noted that CoC applications are due by end of the day today. Also working on finalizing a new strategic plan, with some sort of launch in early 2022. Notified earlier this week by HUD that their application for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project was unsuccessful this year, but will hope to apply again at the next opportunity.
  + Polk County Continuum of Care (Polk County)
    - Angie Arthur provided an update. There has been a rebranding and new name of their organization: Homeward. Focusing on strategic partnerships toward ending homelessness. <https://www.homewardiowa.org/>. Like the Balance of State, they are in the midst of responding to the HUD NOFO for CoC funding. Applications are due in later September.
  + Siouxland Coalition to End Homelessness (Woodbury County)
    - Clara Macfarlane Coly shared an update. Shout-out to IFA for the recent HousingIowa Conference. Sioux City hired a diversity and inclusion liaison for the City, and has started implementing some changes, for a positive impact for the community. Everyone is working on the CoC applications as well, with due dates coming up.
  + Metro Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless (Pottawattamie County)
    - Bob Sheehan shared a brief update. MACCH is also working on the federal CoC competition.
* **State Agency Representative Updates** 
  + Department on Aging *(Dax Oberreuter).* 
    - Dax provided an update. Some programs targeting rural areas and increasing services. Working to ensure communities have emergency plans in place. Inundated with needs for evictions assistance.
  + Office of the Attorney General *(Lori Miller)*
    - Implemented a new grants management system recently. Has a training outreach team available to share information about what the Crime Victim Assistance Division does. Working on a statewide implementation plan for the federal Office of Violence Against Women. Their office has a new division director, Sandy Tibbetts Murphy.
  + Department of Corrections *(Katrina Carter)*
    - Not present.
  + Economic Development Authority *(Joyce Brown)*
    - Six applications for Upper Story Housing Program; would allow for 30 new units in rural Iowa if approved. Reviewing applications for Workforce Housing incentive program.
  + Department of Education *(Carolyn Cobb)*
    - Emily Teeter provided an update. The state ARP-HCY was submitted to the federal government. District level liaison calls to the state have increased with the fall return to school.
  + Finance Authority *(Terri Rosonke)*
    - There is a lot happening in the housing relief world. Governor Reynolds recently announced a new $100 million investment in housing from the state covid recovery fund. The Governor also made the decision to apply for the second tranche of federal Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) money, ERA2, for an additional approximately $150 million, to add to the previous $195 million. A recent new bill introduced federally to reform the ERA1 and ERA2 programs would streamline the two and make the process smoother for all rental assistance applicants. As of yesterday, over $15 million has been paid out so far from the state from ERA1. IFA will be working on a new proposal with the Policy & Planning Committee, for a proposed new Rapid Rehousing program, also using ERA2 dollars.
  + Department on Human Rights *(Bill Brand)*
    - Not present.
  + Department of Human Services *(Karen Hyatt)*
    - As of yesterday, DHS awarded some additional technical assistance dollars for the PATH program. Covid Recovery Iowa grant was extended through December and may be continued further. They are receiving a lot of calls daily on all three hotlines; working on providing staff sessions on stress, anxiety, self-care, etc. Karen offered to send information on mobile crisis centers and access centers, and crisis stabilization services.
  + Department on Public Health *(Karin Ford)*
    - Karin is working more on health equity work currently at her agency, which includes making sure housing is accessible for people with disabilities.
  + Department of Public Safety *(vacant)*
    - Not present.
  + Department of Veterans Affairs *(Bob Steben)*
    - Not present.
  + Workforce Development *(Scott Mather)*
    - At the field office level, one common thread is that when they reopened their offices in June after being closed to the public for 15 months, have seen a reduction in customers taking advantage of their services. Would like to make sure people are aware of the available services, and for service providers to help share this with people that can benefit from these services. Not only unemployment assistance; also available to help with short-term training all the way up to two-year degrees, help with resumes, help people move from temporary employment to obtaining longer-term employment, and more.
* **Old Business: None**
* **New Business**
  + Clare shared that she thought the recent strategic planning process was great; our partners at the Bronner Group were good at facilitating the process. Appreciated how they had built in ways the Council could operationalize the plan and build capacity.
* **Next Meeting:** Friday, November 19, 2021
* **Adjourn**
  + Motion: Gary Wickering
  + Second: Karin Ford
  + Unanimously approved
  + The meeting adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

*Minutes submitted by Amber Lewis*