

The Iowa Council on Homelessness

DRAFT MINUTES

Friday, November 17th, 2023, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL:

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

Please use this link to sign the attendance record: <https://tinyurl.com/Nov2023ICH>.

- **Introductions ([member list](#))**
 - **Voting members:**
 - Ben Brustkern
 - Crissy Canganelli
 - Marilieg Fisher
 - Rachel Geilenfeld
 - David Hagen
 - Mary Ingham
 - Dennis Lauterbach
 - Hope Metheny (vice-chair)
 - Ashley Schwalm
 - Tim Wilson (chair)
 - Vacant
 - **Non-voting members (state agencies)**
 - Eugenia Kendall (DHHS)
 - James Pender (DHHS)
 - Karen Hyatt (DHHS)
 - Lori Miller (Attorney General)
 - Katrina Carter (Corrections)
 - Vacant (Education)
 - Terri Rosonke (IFA)
 - John Ralls (Veterans Affairs)
 - William Berning (Workforce Development)

Chair Tim Wilson opened the meeting at 10:05 am. A quorum of members was achieved.

- **Approval of Agenda (Action Item)**
 - Motion: Dennis
 - Second: Ben
 - Unanimously approved
- **Approval of September meeting minutes (Action Item)**
 - Motion: Dennis
 - Second: Hope
 - 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.
 - None
- **Committees**
 - Executive Committee:
 - Discussion: recommendation of Boards and Commissions Review Committee
 - Tim reported that the committee met last month and continued the discussion about the pending end of the council. He stated that the council has been

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recommended for termination by the Boards and Commissions. The decision is subject to approval by the legislature in January. Tim reported that there were a couple of meetings held for members of the public to discuss what needs to happen if the council is eliminated. He stated that there were around 30 participants between the two meetings. Tim reported that there were needs identified at the meetings including continuing to have a day on the hill, continued discussions on the rise in homelessness issues for older adults and those with disabilities, and continued relationships with providers and state offices. Tim stated that they discussed what some of the best models for moving forward would be and if the council would turn to an informal group or if they would join an existing 501 (c) (3). There was an agreement that the council has been missing strength in advocacy that a lobbyist would be able to fulfil. Tim stated that this is not something that the council can create but that another entity could. They discussed the possibility of a membership or securing someone willing to fund the council. Tim reported that they plan to have discussions with existing organizations to discuss any potential to align on ending homelessness in Iowa.

- Executive Director Olivet's letter
 - Tim reported that he received a letter from USICH, addressed to the Governor, praising the council and stating how important it is. The letter can be found on IFA's website.
- Nominating Committee:
 - Status of recommendation of Maria Torres
 - Ben reported that there are no current updates on the status of new member recommendations.
 - Highlights of discussion on engaging those with lived experience
 - Ben stated that the committee met three weeks ago to discuss part of the strategic plan to engage those with lived experience. He reported that it is important for the council to be able to build an advisory board of people with lived experience. Ben stated that until the council needs to find a way to make it worth their time before an advisory board can be created. He stated that the recommendation would have been to create a committee for those with lived experience to help the council start to engage with creating better practices and policies across the state.
- **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Updates, Institute for Community Alliances (ICA)**
 - Plans and trainings for January 2024 Point in Time Count
 - Suzie reported that the PIT for Polk County and the Balance of State is scheduled for 1/24/24. She reported that trainings will be provided by ICA in late December or early January. ICA is also going to have additional training for those completing the street count to conduct surveys in a safe and respectful manner. They are currently in the process of updating forms and surveys for the count.

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- **Continuum of Care (CoC) Updates, as available**
 - Iowa Balance of State CoC (96 counties)
 - Courtney reported that they are also conducting the PIT on 1/24/24. She stated that they released their annual report for the BoS CoC earlier this week and can be found on their website. The Balance of State is in the process of rolling out some diversity and equity inclusion training. The first session on 11/29 is full but there are still spots open in the December training. They are still waiting on contracts for the rural project funded through the NOFO last year but are hopeful they will be completed in early 2024.
 - Homeward (Polk County)
 - Jim reported that Family Promise notified the public that they are ceasing operations immediately. They plan to close all 14 beds. He stated that Homeward has engaged a consultant to assist with completing a gap analysis in the Des Moines and Polk County CoC to see who is being served by which types of projects. Jim stated that when he looked at the data compared to other agencies, there was a gap in shelter beds of 76 units. He also completed an evaluation on how Coordinated Entry works and compared the assessment tool to the VI-SPDAT. Jim will present the final results the second week of December and issue a final report at the end of December. Kared asked how the families being served at Family Promise will be referred to other places when the shelter is closed. Jim responded that they are only sheltering one family and they will either refer them back to Coordinated Intake or will have them placed in permanent housing.
 - Siouxland Coalition to End Homelessness (Woodbury County)
 - Clara stated that the Siouxland Sleep Out took place on November 3rd. She reported that over 200 people were in attendance and they are still waiting on all donations to come in. They are expected to surpass \$50k in funds. They are beginning the preparation for the 2024 PIT count on 1/24/24. The CoC committee has started meeting and working on getting donations for those who will be interviewed. Lastly, they successfully uploaded their first Longitudinal Systems Analysis.
 - Metro Area Continuum of Care for the Homeless (Pottawattamie County)
 - Not present
- **State Agency Representative Updates**
 - Department of Health & Human Services (*Eugenia Kendall, James Pender, Karen Hyatt*)
 - Not present
 - Office of the Attorney General (*Lori Miller*)
 - Not present
 - Department of Corrections (*Katrina Carter*)
 - Not present

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- Department of Education (*Vacant*)
 - Not present
- Finance Authority (*Terri Rosonke*)
 - Terri reported that IFA is working on their annual report and would like more testimonials from service providers. If you have a story to share, contact Ashley Jared or Terri Rosonke. IFA continues to implement and administer pilot programs including the launch of the re-entry pilot program in partnership with Community Solutions of Eastern Iowa and Fountains of Youth in Dubuque. She reports that she is working on the PSH outcomes analysis with Wilder Research. The Iowa Rapid Rehousing Project, ERA2, continues to operate with more than 30% of allocated funds expended. Terri reported that overall, the project seems to be going well and has allowed for greater flexibility for RRH and HP providers. She stated that the calls from Iowa homeowners faced with foreclosure seems to be on the rise. There have been a lot of calls from individuals that have not made a mortgage payment since the pandemic. The Iowa Homeowners Assistance Fund remains available for those facing foreclosure. Those seeking assistance can apply through the online portal.
- Department of Human Services (*Karen Hyatt*)
 - Karen reminded the council that there is informational brochures and pamphlets for flu season on the DHHS website. Karen stated they are working on creating a statewide behavioral health disaster plan which will address how to support homeless communities across the state when there are disasters.
- Department on Public Health (*James Pender*)
 - Not present
- Department of Veterans Affairs (*John Ralls*)
 - John stated that he has been working with the county offices to provide outreach to veterans to get them the benefits and services they have earned. He reported that the Veterans Trust Fund remains available for those who have had damage to their home or have medical needs.
- Workforce Development (*William Berning*)
 - Not present
- **Old Business**
 - Update on meetings in view of apparent future elimination of the ICH
 - None
- **New Business**
 - Day on the Hill set for January 9, 2023
 - Courtney reports that a save the date has gone out for the Day on the Hill. They are in the early stages of planning, but a registration link has been created. Those interested in being a part of the planning committee should reach out to Courtney.

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- Tim stated that there has been a change in federal policy regarding Medicaid and Medicare. Up to this point, service providers have been unable to bill for services they are providing in encampments. That policy has recently changed. Tim reports he has reached out to a couple of clinics but reports there has not been a ton of discussion surrounding this. Terri reported that she forwarded the information to Director Matney and others and Iowa HHS offices but has not heard back.
- **Next Meeting:** Friday, January 19, 10:00 a.m.
 - The council discussed possibly moving the meeting to January 9. IFA will update the calendar invite.
- **Adjourn**
 - Motion: Ben
 - Second: David
 - Unanimously approved; meeting adjourned at 10:57 am

Meeting minutes submitted by Mollie Brees