

The Iowa Council on Homelessness

MINUTES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

December 16th, 2022

10:00 AM, Virtual meeting only

Voting members 2022: Ashley Schwalm (Chair), Tim Wilson, Ben Brustkern, Crissy Canganelli, Dennis Lauterbach, Gary Wickers

Resources (<https://www.iowafinance.com/homelessness/homeless-service-agencies/iowa-council-on-homelessness/>):

Tim Wilson opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. as acting chair in Ashley Schwalm's absence. A quorum of members (four) was achieved.

- I. Introductions
 - a. Voting members present:
 - i. Tim Wilson, Vice-Chair
 - ii. Gary Wickers
 - iii. Crissy Canganelli
 - iv. Dennis Lauterbach
 - b. Others present
 - i. Amber Lewis
 - ii. Mollie Brees
- II. Approval of Agenda – *Action Item*
 - a. Motion to approve: Gary
 - b. Second: Dennis
 - c. Unanimously approved
- III. Public Comments:
 - a. None
- IV. Nominating Committee Updates (*Tim Wilson*)
 - a. Tim provided the update that the committee and Council have full membership.
- V. Strategic Planning
 - a. Members noted the need to circle back around to the strategic planning done last year. Strategic planning items are posted here: [IOWA COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS Resources \(iowafinance.com\)](https://www.iowafinance.com/homelessness/homeless-service-agencies/iowa-council-on-homelessness/).
- VI. New Business:
 - a. Gary provided an update about some potential legislation regarding fentanyl, and the potential benefits of decriminalizing the possession of testing strips.
 - b. Also from Gary: ICA is working with the Department on Aging to better study and understand the scope of unsheltered homelessness among older Iowans.
 - c. Crissy asked Gary about some research at ICA regarding persons leaving incarceration. ICA is studying where individuals end up after leaving institutional

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settings, especially focused on Polk County currently. One complication is that people more frequently leave an institution and first go to a friend or family's home, but from there may go on to experience homelessness. This makes it more difficult to gather data on the actual connections. The data may also be undercounted due to the fact it is self-reported. There was also discussion of how best to connect with the Department of Connections for further information and research.

- d. Crissy discussed their commitment to a Housing First approach, and also that the work has become more complicated, due to more individuals with higher needs. Other service systems have not necessarily adapted to the higher needs, and frequently deny services to people with the highest needs, leaving only the homeless shelter system to be the providers of last resort. Covid funding is now mostly gone, and yet costs have increased, and demands on staff have increased. Crissy noted that homeless shelters are a critical component of crisis response systems, and yet are the only components that have to rely so heavily on private donations (bake sales, etc.), rather than consistent and sufficient public funding. Is there an appetite to look at what it would take to increase public sector funding for this work? Perhaps something to consider in 2023. One idea could be pulling together a survey of providers to gather input that could be used to make the case to public officials for the need for additional funding.
 - e. There was discussion of the need to get additional committees together, and the Strategic Plan can be a guide to what these should be.
- VII. Plan for next Iowa Council on Homelessness meeting: Friday, January 20th, 2023
- a. HMIS: Update regarding upcoming Point in Time Count
 - b. Discuss discharge policy issues/planning
 - c. Fentanyl testing strip discussion
 - d. New process: Need to develop consistent process to evaluate policies and statutes as directed by the Council statute
 - e. Revisit Strategic Plan (include again when sending out the agenda)
 - i. Ask for volunteers to serve on a Strategic Plan committee to review and report back in March
- VIII. Next Executive Committee meeting: Friday, February 17th, 2023
- IX. Adjourn
- a. Motion to adjourn: Dennis
 - b. Second: Crissy
 - c. Unanimously approved; meeting adjourned at 11:12am