**Memorandum**

To: Iowa Council on Homelessness

From: Iowa Finance Authority staff

Date: December 5, 2018

Re: Proposed updates to web posting administrative support to Council

The purpose of this memo is to summarize proposed changes to the web posting administrative support provided by the Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) to the Iowa Council on Homelessness (Council).

**Background & Current Practice**:

As part of its administrative support to the Council, IFA posts Council documents to a number of pages, linked to this main Council page: <http://www.iowafinanceauthority.gov/Public/Pages/PC46LN13>. One purpose of web postings is to help fulfill the requirements of Iowa’s Open Meetings laws at Iowa Code Chapter 21: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/ico/chapter/21.pdf>.

Most web postings are in support of various meetings of the Council’s seven committees or the Council meetings themselves. Significant additional posting requests come from the annual Iowa Balance of State Continuum of Care Program application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Other postings are in support of general Council member information, special projects and events, the development of service regions, and more. Posting requests are most often made by Council leadership, committee chairs, or occasionally other Council members. In addition to many documents being posted online in support of committee meetings and other purposes, most documents are also circulated via email, from Council and committee chairs directly to members and other stakeholders.

**Proposed Updates**:

IFA is proposing some changes to the Council’s committee documents that are posted to the IFA website. There are several reasons for the suggested changes:

* Low use: IFA staff pulled recent statistics on a sampling of committee documents and a large majority of them have **zero views.**
* Efficiency: Posting documents for all of the committees can add up in staff time (homelessness and communications teams). It’s hard for IFA to rationalize the continuation of this if the documents are never accessed.
* Timing: IFA is in the process of designing a new web site. We’re taking an inventory of all documents and analyzing users’ experiences. We would like to start fresh on the new site with only documents that are getting used.

**Proposed Posting Changes:**

**Post meeting dates, agendas, and minutes only for full Council meetings and three formal committees:**

* Executive Committee
* Nominating Committee
* Continuum of Care (CoC) Committee

**Discontinue all postings for informal working groups:**

* Coordinated Entry Committee (may need different designation as structure has evolved)
* Policy & Planning Committee
* Public Awareness Committee
* Research & Analysis Committee
* Special Projects

In lieu having the documents posted to the web, committee Chairs may email materials directly to committee members.

**Document Types:**

*Agendas:* Our understanding of Iowa Open Meetings laws is that they require the public posting of agendas in advance for public boards and formally-created committees of those boards. The Executive Committee and Nominating Committee were both formally created in the Council’s Administrative Rules, and thus follow Iowa Open Meetings laws. The CoC Committee wasn’t formally created in the same way as these two committees above, but because of its role in the annual competition for federal CoC Program funding, the Council treats this committee as a formally-created committee, and therefore also posts meeting agendas in advance for public notice. The other committees of the Council are considered informal working groups, and therefore are not bound to the same requirements for public postings of agendas. For these working groups, Chairs may email agendas in advance directly to participants.

*Meeting Minutes:* Open Records laws also require minutes to be recorded and retained for Council meetings and formal committee meetings. They do not have the same posting requirements as agendas. However, to facilitate the review of minutes by committee members and other stakeholders, we anticipate continuing to post minutes of the three formal committees. For the informal working groups, minutes are not required, but Chairs may email minutes, notes, or other materials directly to participants.

*Other Materials*: Most other materials may be emailed directly from Chairs to meeting participants.

**Other Considerations:**

The past couple of years of the annual Iowa Balance of State CoC Project Competition for funding from HUD, the Council has required applicants to provide information on their level of participation in Council/CoC and committee initiatives. One way this has been scored is by how many meetings are attended by applicant agencies’ staff. Tracking and verifying this has sometimes included reviewing posted meeting minutes of various committees. As part of the proposed changes, IFA proposes that the Council revise its approach to scoring CoC participation. Minutes could still be reviewed for the actual Council meetings and formal committee meetings, but would not be as readily or consistently available for other committees (since informal working groups aren’t required to keep minutes, these records haven’t always been available in the past either). Moreover, many committee meetings take place solely or in part by phone, and simply checking in as being present on the phone doesn’t necessarily indicate a high level of engagement.

**Sampling of Document Stats (number of views or times the documents were opened) to Support the Proposed Changes:**

**Committee Agendas & Minutes**

Executive Committee

* Feb 3 2017 – Agenda 0 and Minutes 1
* June 16 2017 – Agenda 0 Draft ICH Violence-Free Policy 0 and Minutes 0
* July 21 2017  – Agenda 0 and minutes 0
* Oct. 16 2017 – Agenda 0 and Minutes 0
* Dec 15 2017 – Agenda 0 and Minutes 0
* Feb 16 2018 – Agenda 0 and Minutes 0
* April 20 2018 – Agenda CoC Annual Mtg Governance 0 Chart SWOT 0; Instructions for running the 2018 CoC Project Renewal Report 0 and Minutes 0
* Mat 4 2018 – Agenda 0; 2018 Final Proposed CoC Renewal Application for Review 5.4.18 0 and Minutes 0
* June 14 2018 – Agenda 0; Iowa CoC appeals process 0; Minutes 0
* July 26 2018 – Agenda 3, Recommended 2018 CoC Application Ranking & Reallocation Plan v2 3

Continuum of Care Committee

* Jan 10 2017 – Agenda 0; 2017 CoC Renewal Application 0 and Minutes 0
* Feb 14 2017 - Comments Received 2017 Draft Iowa CoC Renewal Application 0 and IA Balance of State 2016 CoC Application Score  0 and minutes 0
* May 9 2017 – Agenda 0
* May 30 2017 – Agenda 0
* June 27 2017 – Agenda 0; 2017 Renewal App Scoring Worksheet 0 and Minutes 0
* August 31 2017 – Agenda 0 and Minutes 0
* Dec. 12 2017 – Agenda 0 and Minutes 0
* Jan 9 2018 – Agenda 0; Instructions for running the Iowa Balance of State Monitoring Report 0  and Minutes 0
* March 6 2018 – Agenda 0 and Minutes 0
* Marc h27 2018 – Agenda 0; Conference Questions 2018-(8 Tabs) 0
* May 15 2018 – Agenda 0; 2018 CoC HMIS Renewal App (2) 0
* July 9 2018 – Agenda 0 and Minutes 2
* July 17 2018 – Agenda 2 and Minutes 4
* August 21 2018 – Agenda 13 ; 2018 CoC New Project Scoring Worksheet\_template before meeting 6

Coordinated Entry Committee

* Feb 21 2017 – Agenda 0 and Minutes 0
* May 16 2017 – Agenda 0 and Minutes 0
* Sept 19 2017 – Agenda 0 and Iowa BOS P&P Version 3\_ 0
* Jan 16 2018 – Agenda 0 and 1.16.18 Meeting Notes-Coord. Entry 0
* March 20 2018 – Agenda 0; ICH Members 2017 0 and Role of Coordinated Service Regions and Voting Members 0
* July 17 2018 – Agenda 2 and Meeting Notes 4

Policy & Planning Committee

* Jan 20 2017 -  Agenda 0, Proposal ESG/SAF Competition 0
* April 28 2017 – Agenda 0 and Minutes 0
* July 21 2017 – Agenda 3 and Minutes 4
* May 21 2018 – Agenda 0

Nominating Committee

* April 12 2017 – Agenda 0 and Minutes 0
* Oct 11 2017 – Agenda 0
* Feb 16 2018 – Agenda 0 , Attendance Procedure 0 and Minutes 0
* April 16 2018 – Agenda 0 and Minutes 0
* May 11 2018 – Agenda 0 and Minutes 0

Public Awareness Committee

* Jan 9 2017 – Agenda 0 and Meeting notes 1
* March 6 2017 – Agenda 0 and Meeting Notes 0
* July 10 2017 – Agenda 0
* Dec 4 2017 – Agenda 0
* Feb 12 2018 – Agenda 1

Research & Analysis Committee

* Feb 14 2017 – Agenda 0 and Meeting Notes 0
* April 10 2017 – Agenda 0 and Meeting Notes 0
* August 8 2017 – Agenda 0 and minutes 0
* Sep 12 2017 – Agenda 0; 2014 HUD PIT Methodology Guide 0, CoC data quality proposal 0
* Jan 9 12018 – Agenda 0
* April 27 2018 – Agenda 0, ACS Racial Data 2012-16 0 and 2018 BOS PIT 0
* Aug 24 2018 – Agenda 2

**Comments:**

IFA is interested in helping the Council to meet the requirements of Open Meetings and Open Records laws. IFA is also interested in utilizing its limited administrative capacity and time to serve the Council in the most productive ways possible. We welcome comments on these proposed changes. Please email any comments to amber.lewis@iowa.gov. We anticipate making changes to our posting policies in advance of the next Council meeting on January 18, 2019 (although policies may continue to evolve as needs arise), so comments in advance of this date will be most helpful.