

**CITY OF NEW HAVEN  
HOMELESS ADVISORY COMMISSION**

January 13, 2022

Meeting Minutes

**Attendance:**

**Members Present:** D. Ecton, C. Spears, C. Mendez

**Ex-Officio:** Carlos Sosa-Lombardo, N. Torres,

**Staff:** V. George, S. James- Marquis, T. Jefferson

**Guest:** K. Fitzgerald

**Members Excused Absent:**

**Members Absent:**

Chair D. Ecton called the meeting to order at 6:05pm

**Minutes:** November meeting minutes were reviewed via zoom. The vote on the minutes was postponed due to lack of quorum.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

V. George introduced Carlos Sosa-Lombardo- Acting Dir. of Community Resilience Dept to the commissioners. The new department falls under the existing Community Services Administration Department (CSA). Carlos will work to collaborate and coordinate response to social issues ranging from homelessness to mental health disorders, drug addiction, prison reentry, the launching of a one- stop reentry center, and the implementation of a community crisis response team.

**Commission Target(s) for this year**

V. George began the discussion with a review of the Office of Housing & Homelessness 5-Year Housing Plan to End Homelessness in New Haven: This plan is designed to address the immediate and long-term needs of people experiencing homelessness in New Haven. It includes creating additional low-barrier service capacity (including shower / laundry facilities), Navigation Hubs, and expanded outreach services to the unsheltered. The long-term goal is to transform the way the City of New Haven invests in programs to address homelessness, while providing 550 safe and deeply affordable housing units throughout the Greater New Haven Region for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

**Phase 1. CARES ACT Funds – 200 housing units**

- ❖ The City of New Haven has allocated \$1.2 M to rapidly rehouse 190 household
- ❖ Collaborate to with Columbus House to purchase a hotel with 112 units to shelter up to 236 individuals. However, this plan fell through.
- ❖ Increase the number navigation hubs throughout the city where the unsheltered homeless could connect to services and address their ADL (activities of daily living) needs.
- ❖ Add mobile shower services

**Phase 2. American Rescue Plan – 350 housing units** Cultivate partnerships with surrounding towns to create deeply affordable housing options for people experiencing homelessness.

- ❖ Build multiple Tiny House Communities throughout the region - 50 units
- ❖ Repurpose 2- 3 decommissioned schools / apartment buildings to create:
  - o Permanent Supportive Housing with 24-hour staffing and wrap around services for acute clients – 100
  - o Create Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units with access to wrap around services -200 units.

V. George discussed the client’s difficulties with securing permanent housing even with rental subsidies. She went on to emphasize the need for deeply affordable housing options and the need for this office to make the shift towards funding the creation of these units. She also suggested that this commission focus on working with the New Haven Housing Authority to make

homelessness a priority population along with domestic violence. The group agreed and stated that they would like to focus on employment next.

**COLD WEATHER PROTOCOL:**

V. George shared that United Way and general funds gave DESK additional funding to operate a warming center during extreme cold temperatures. She informed the group that there were a total of 6 Homeless Navigation Hubs where people could go to get out of the elements 7days a week.

V. George also shared that Hamden was opening their warming center at the Keefe Center for the months of January and February.

**CARES ACT Updates**

V. George informed the commissioners that the CARES ACT funds will expire in September 2022. She shared that some agencies were not spending down their allocations as quickly as others - so there may be opportunity for funding reallocations.

This office distributed Covid test kits and PPE to multiple partner agencies- hubs, shelters and warming center.

**CAN:**

K Fitzgerald shared that there were 545 CAN appointments, 100 more than in November. There were 112 leases signed which included, 18 Young Adults, 24 Families and 70 Individuals. She shared that there were some COVID-19 related staff challenges which slowed down CAN appointments. K. Fitzgerald reported that in December there were 2 people at the isolation hotel. There was a huge spike in people needing to isolate in January - there were 35 people.

**YHHAP:** No representative this month.

Meeting adjourn at 7:08pm.