

**City of New Haven
Homeless Advisory Commission
November 09, 2023**

Attendance:

Members Present: L. Hardy, U. Muley, J. Huettner

Ex- Officio: V. George-James, N. Torres,

Staff: S. James

Guest: B. Bromage, Carl F., A. Smoyer, W. Harris, K. D'Angelo, A. Terry, S. Morrison

CAN- M. Lefever

YHHAP- J. Simmons

Members Absent: C. Spears, C. Mendez,

Excused Absent: T. Ficklin, S. Bass,

The meeting was called to order by V. George at 6:03pm.

Minutes: The group reviewed October's minutes.

Motion made by U. Muley, seconded by L. Hardy. Minutes were voted on and accepted unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS: V. George informed the committee that there was a new Community Service Administrator – Eliza Halsey. V. George shared that she was unable to attend tonight's meeting due to a competing Board of Alder's meeting. Perhaps she may attend the December meeting.

Power in the Shower:

V. George introduced W. Harris-President for Power in A Shower (PIAS). V. George shared that PIAS provides mobile shower service to the unhoused population within the city. V. George shared that PIAS partnered with the city right after the pandemic when the need for showers was in high demand.

W. Harris shared that he and his staff work to provide a service that brings dignity to the unhoused population with one shower at a time. This is accomplished by providing clean and well disinfected shower stalls, clean clothes, and a toiletry bag to each guest. Shower stalls are cleaned after every use. PIAS even provides attire for job interviews. There are 3 shower location Downtown Green, Dixwell Ave, and Grand Ave Fair Haven that includes 4 stops weekly (3 daytime stops and 1 evening stop). Additional evenings hours were added to accommodate working individuals. PIAS was able to increase staffing by employing a guest that frequented the service. During the first year, there were 600 calls for service. During the second year - 1200 calls for service. W. Harris shared that he was proud to be a part of this initiative that not only offers showers but provides health care, outreach services, and harm reduction services to unhoused individuals. He shared that several of his guest secure housing and employment. PIAS is on tap to surpass the previous years' calls for service numbers. W. Harris credits the program's success to the trust that he and his staff have developed with the guest that frequents his mobile shower. Currently they need donations of adult diapers and female products.

SCSU Psycho-Social Research:

V. George introduced Professors A. Smoyer and K. D'Angelo and their team from the Southern Connecticut University School of Social Work. V. George shared that Professor Smoyer and her team conducted psych-social research on the Power In A Shower operation and logistics and are here to present the findings to the commission. S. Morrison, a social work student, shared the background of the project and the methodology. The goal of this research was two-fold: first to provide PIAS with feedback around program design and operations. And secondly to capture participants' experiences with the PIAS program.

There were 58 Staff Administered Surveys conducted by SCSU social work faculty and trained student research assistants. They used Convenience Sampling: People waiting to use the shower were asked if they would be willing to complete a survey. Staff administered survey. Responses recorded with paper & pen. Each survey lasted 5-20 minutes. Participants received gift bag (\$5 value)

The SCSU social work faculty conducted 20 Open-Ended Interviews. The Key Informants were people who used the shower on numerous occasions and were referred to the interviews by Power in a Shower staff. These interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed-interviews lasted 30– 40 minutes. Participants received \$20 for their time. 58 Participants 70% were Male; 30% were Female, 30% Black; 30% Latinx; 30% White.

The following are some of the findings presented:

- ✚ 58% sleep at warming centers funded by the City of New Haven
- ✚ 42% sleeps outside with the knowledge of warming center operations
- ✚ 10% not having access to showers where they sleep.
- ✚ 4.8 out of 5 were very satisfied with PIAS service
- ✚ 4.9 out of 5 were satisfied with cleanliness.
- ✚ 4.9 out of 5 were satisfied with safety.
- ✚ 4.9 out of 5 were satisfied with staff interaction and respect to clients.

The following are some of the recommendations presented: To build on this success.

- ✚ Expansion of service especially during weekend hours and year round
- ✚ Adding an onsite bathroom
- ✚ Create additional shower locations around the city.
- ✚ V. George shared additional shower locations were located at Fellowship Place, Columbus House, and Liberty Services.
A. Smoyer shared that her team had a great experience and commended the work that is being done in New Haven with regards to the unhoused population.

Updates: V. George shared that the hotel has a target date to open in December. V. George shared that the hotel would open in phases until it reaches full capacity. This will be the first non-congregate shelter in the region. V. George shared that cold weather would begin December 1st and there will be 6 warming centers operating in this region: in Shelton, Hamden, Milford, and 3 in New Haven with locations at Varick Church, The 180 Center, and Upon This Rock at 130 Orchard St. All New Haven warming centers will operate from 7pm-7am seven days a week. V. George also shared that there will be a family triage space at 209 Terminal Lane. The GNH CAN will be administering the Department of Housing funding for all the warming centers and family triage in New Haven. In addition, the city will provide some emergency funding to hotel families. V. George shared that efforts are being made to open a youth warming center for youths ages 18-24.

CAN Update: M. Lefever

M. Lefever shared that there are 154 individuals currently on the CAN (Coordinated Access Network). 117 are males and 37 are females. She also shared that there are 24 families on the stabilization list. M. LeFever shared that the CAN appointment with family occurs within same day – and within 1 day for individuals. M. Lefever shared that the average wait time on shelter wait list for families is 30 days, for single females 30-40 days and 51 days for single men. M. Lefever shared that there is a total of 633 household on the BNL including 86 families.

YHHAP Update: J. Simmons

Currently have 10 active projects going on: Community Healthcare Van, Kitchen to Kitchen, Clothing Closet, Yale Community Kitchen, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, Elm City Echo, YHHAP Fast, No Closed Doors, Restaurant Rescue Project

- ✚ Data will be provided during next meeting.
- ✚ Students will collect and distribute funds at the end of hunger and homeless week.
- ✚ Speaker panel event which V. George will be one of the panelists.
- ✚ Day of Action/Day of Service event at Downtown Soup Kitchen-**DESK**
- ✚ YHHAP fast- Students donate dinner points which goes to different organization.

Announcements: V. George informed the committee that on Tuesday November 14, the Office of Housing & Homeless Services will be going before the Human Service Commission of the Board of Alders. V. George encouraged commissioners to come out and support this office.

Mother's and Others for Justice will be hosting a round table talk regarding affordable housing on Saturday November 11, 2023, from 9am-3:00pm at Albertus Magnus college, childcare and lunch will be provided.

Adjourn– 7:30pm

