

Central Florida Commission on Homelessness

Commission Meeting Minutes

April 6, 2011

Heart of Florida United Way
Dr. Nelson Ying Center, Orlando, FL

Members Present: Ed Timberlake, Mayor Buddy Dyer, Mayor Teresa Jacobs, Commissioner Brenda Carey, Ray Larsen, Robert H. Brown, Gary Earl, Dr. Paul Deci (for Timothy Liezert), Cathy Jackson, Mark Brewer, Meg Crofton, Dr. Joel Hunter, Senator Mel Martinez, Tracy Schmidt

I. Introductions/Announcements

Ed Timberlake

Mayor Teresa Jacobs, Dr. Joel Hunter and Robert Miles will be joining the CFCH Permanent Commission.

Mayor Jacobs was sworn into office as Orange County Mayor on January 4, 2011. Before becoming Mayor, she served as an Orange County Commissioner from 2000-2008.

Dr. Joel Hunter is a nationally recognized evangelical figure and Senior Pastor of Northland Church. Dr. Hunter has served on the President's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and is a spiritual advisor to President Barack Obama.

Robert Miles is Senior Vice President of Strategy, Innovation and Planning for Orlando Health. As senior executive, he is responsible for financial reporting, capital management, strategic planning and corporate oversight for the hospital system, which employs more than 14,000 people.

II. Ready, Willing and Able

**Robert Hess, The Doe Foundation
Phillip Mangano, The American
Roundtable to Abolish Homelessness**

Ready, Willing and Able is a residential, work and job skills program which helps homeless individuals in their effort to become self-sufficient.

The following is a brief summary of their PowerPoint presentation:

A Formula for Success

- 70 transitional beds
- 50 transitional jobs
- 55% move from homelessness to self-sufficiency (full-time employment self-supported housing, sobriety, payment of child support)
- 56% reduction in violent crime convictions and 60% reduction in felony convictions
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Element One: 70 Transitional Beds

Creates a culture of safety, sobriety, and success

- 30,000 square feet, including commercial kitchen, dining room, social service/training space

Element Two: 50 Transitional Jobs

Shapes participants into employees for the private and public sectors.

- 30 hours per week for six to nine months
- \$7.40 or more per hours)locality dependent

Some of the potential transitional jobs:

Cook or Food Handler
Pest Control Technician
Street Cleaning
Park Maintenance

Element Three: Operational Support

Total investment: \$1.2 million per year (\$240,000 (RWAA) + \$970,000 (Local)

Some of the funds program and staff that support participants:

Program services (58%)
Graduate services (5%)
Education and advanced occupational training (10%)
Mentoring services (3%)

Additional RWAA Support – RWAA will:

Work with local stakeholders to identify and develop paid work opportunities
Provide staffing assistance and training
Provide marketing and fundraising support and partner in our ongoing efforts with each municipality

Ready, Willing & Able restores self-worth, serves the community, and reduces societal costs.

III. Hard Lives, Mean Streets

Dr. James Wright

Jim Wright is Provost Distinguished Research Professor of Sociology at the University of Central Florida. Dr. Wright will share research he conducted in Florida studying the issue of violence and homeless women. A copy of Dr. Wright's book, *Hard Lives, Mean Streets: Violence in the Lives of Homeless Women* was distributed to the commission members.

The following is a brief summary of Dr. Wright's PowerPoint presentation (For detailed information, please refer to the PowerPoint presentation on the CFCH website):

Florida Four City Study

- Four sites: Orlando, Tampa, Jacksonville, Miami
- Covered demographics, homeless history, substance abuse, mental illness, violence, etc.

Who are respondents homeless with?

- 50 % alone
- 10% with partner
- 25% with children
- 10% with both

The Criminal Justice Response

- Most violence is never reported. Violence is a “taken for granted” aspect of being homeless.
- When it is reported, it is rarely taken seriously.
- Police behavior was often viewed as ineffectual, adversarial and punitive: “blaming the victim”

Policy Issues

- Best predictor of adult violence is childhood victimization.
- Homeless women rarely report victimization; when they do, they are rarely satisfied with response. Police need to take victims more seriously.
- 1 in 4 homeless women are homeless mainly due to her experiences with violence. Need prevention.

Reasons for Not Reporting Victimization to Police

- Major: Fear of repercussions from perpetrator (e.g., death threats)
- Major: Embarrassment and shame.
- Had committed other offenses or used drugs.

IV. Homeless Children and Families Emergency Fund (HCFEF)

Robert H. “Bob” Brown

- The HCFEF was established due to the gap in services for families with minor children, who qualify for a transitional housing program but could not begin the program for 2-3 weeks. Many of these families would have to sleep in their cars during that waiting period. With start-up money from United Way, the Orlando Magic and the City of Orlando, \$125,000 was put together to start a fund for families with minor children that were in that gap, while waiting for their transitional housing to begin.
- As people were calling 2-1-1 regarding the HCFEF, many of those callers found out that they were, also, eligible for additional services. Out of the 20 calls received over the last 10 days, 9 of those callers were able to take advantage of the HPRP (long-term Rapid Re-Housing Program). Unfortunately, the funds for the HPRP program will be running out as of June 30th. If there is no long term solution, the problem will only get worse. Cuts to programs like these are of major concern.

V. Public Policy

Gary Earl

- Gary Earl has accepted an invitation to Chair a Public Policy Workgroup for the commission. Gary gave an update on the current session in Tallahassee and its impact on homelessness.

The following is a brief update on the PowerPoint presentation – Public Policy:

Steps Taken to Date

- CFCH is closely monitoring and supporting the public policy agenda of the Florida Coalition for the Homeless.
- A letter was sent to Governor Scott
- Letters were sent to all of our local delegation members within the tri-county area.

Proposed Budgets

- As of April 4th both the House and Senate budget subcommittees passed their recommended budgets including funding for homeless programs.

Included in Proposals

- Challenge Grant at \$2.3 million
- Emergency Shelter Grant at \$3.15
- Emergency Financial Assistance for Housing at \$0.90 million

Not Included in Proposals

- The recommended budgets do NOT include funding to restore nonrecurring funding for the following:
 - Homeless Housing Assistance Grant (\$30.0 million this year)
 - 50% of the Emergency Financial Assistance for Housing (\$900,000 this year)
 - The federal Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program

Items of Concern

- Affordable Housing, Housing Trust Funds, and Proposed structures of state government
- SB2145

Next Steps

- Beyond steps taken there is not a specific call to action yet.
- We will be contacting you to request your support in advocating on behalf of the CFCH.
- Make available your government relations person.
- We will monitor parallel issues and processes at the federal level and hope to call upon you as needed.

VI. Donation Station/Downtown Outreach

Joel Miller

Ray Larsen displayed a sample of the Downtown Donation meter. They are in the process of being fabricated. The meters will be installed throughout the downtown area in the next 6-8 weeks. There will be a map on the CFCH website to show the various locations. Proceeds from the donations, coming from the city, will go towards the Downtown Outreach program. Ray will give an update at the next CFCH quarterly meeting.

Joel Miller is the CFCH Outreach Specialist working in downtown Orlando with the unsheltered homeless. He has been with CFCH for about 6 weeks and will give a brief update of his activities. A video was created which will be on the CFCH website.

Joel covers roughly 5-8 miles a day, on foot, in the downtown area. Joel has interacted with at least 200 individuals and has completed around 90 intake forms. Intake forms record social security number, date of birth, and other questions to include the state where they first became homeless, substance abuse history, etc.

Joel shared some stories with the group. Some of the individuals that Joel has met have been accepted into various programs in the community. Many of the programs in Orlando are taking people in, however, there are always those people that become acclimated to the homeless lifestyle and do not take advantage of the programs offered.

Since Joel began working for CFCH, 4 people have been placed in a transitional program and 3 are pending, related to I.D. issues. Joel thanked IDignity for their services, and thanked the commission for their support.

Adjournment

Mr. Timberlake adjourned the CFCH meeting at 7:10 PM.