Hawai‘i Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH)

Meeting

September 9, 2014

9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Minutes

Council Attendees:

Colin Kippen Chair

R. Malia Taum-Deenik DHS

Lori Tsuhako DHS Homeless Programs Office

Lynn Fallin DOH

Max Otani DPS

Janice Takahashi DBEDT

Lila King Dep. Attorney General

Cassandra Bennett DOE

Jo Jordan House of Representatives

Suzanne Chun Oakland Senate

Jun Yang for Mayor of City and County of Honolulu

Kaloa Robinson for Mayor of Hawaii County

Jan Shishido for Mayor of Maui County

Greg Payton PIC

Maude Cummings BTG

Andrew Dahlburg DVA

Mark Chandler HUD

Sheri Rolf for Dave Rolf Business Representative

Absent: Representatives from DLIR, DHHL, DOD, OHA, HPHA, Kauai County, and Faith Community

Guests: Suzanne Wagner and Andrea White of Housing Innovations

1. 9:35 a.m. The Chair Called the Roll and established Quorum.
2. 9:37 a.m. Meeting was called to order by HICH Chair Colin Kippen, who gave brief welcoming remarks. The Chair announced that there are two action items on the Agenda: Approval of the Agenda, and Adjournment. The Chair also recognized Senator Brickwood Galuteria, Representative Karl Rhoads, Representative Romy Cachola and Council Person Breene Harimoto were in attendance.
3. 9:42 a.m. First Order of Business: Action on Agenda. Motion to Approve the Agenda was made by Representative Jo Jordan and Seconded by Andy Dahlburg. The Chair opened the floor for discussion seeing none the Chair Called the Question. The Motion passed unanimously. (see attached copy of agenda)
4. 9:44 a.m. Chair Kippen opened the floor to Public Testimony. 7 individuals spoke
   1. David Cannell testified regarding the current Homelessness Industrial Complex and the need for affordable housing. He spoke in favor of retrofitted shipping containers for housing. He also commented on the City and County of Honolulu’s plan to use Sand Island for temporary housing first.
   2. Kathryn Xian, E.D. of The Pacific Alliance to Stop Slavery, testified in opposition to the City and County of Honolulu’s Sit and Lie Ordinances and the Criminalization of Homelessness, especially if the ordinance’s jurisdiction is Island-wide, as morally reprehensible and in direct conflict with the 1st, 5th, 8th and 14th amendments to the U.S. Constitution. She went on to testify concerning the City and County’s plan to use Sand Island to fast track individuals into temporary “pre-housing first”. Ms. Xian stated that in practice this will be a de-facto internment situation in an area that has environmental issues as declared by the EPA requiring toxic remediation and an EIS. She referred to the Act 105 Report to the Legislature which was opposed to such “tent” cities.
   3. Barbara Hudman testified that unsheltered individuals in Hawaii will not freeze nor starve. She suggested that farm land in Waianae be used to form housing and employment opportunities for homeless to encourage those who are capable to be responsible.
   4. Cynthia Rezentes, former Leeward Housing Coalition coordinator and member of Kealahou West Oahu Board, testified about the National Environmental Justice Council and how the City and County’s plan to use Sand Island is an example of how a protected class of homeless individuals will be relocated to a shoreline area subject to high surf which is also a brownfield in a geographically undesirable location and how this action will burden and make the living situation worse for those who relocate there. She mentioned that Next Step Shelter is also at risk from an environmental justice POV. She cautioned the community against burdening or making a situation worse for a certain class/group through actions that will impact the resilience of the community.
   5. Rebecca Young, MSW student at UH who works as a transitional program coordinator at the YWCA, testified that she is angry, sad, disgusted and nauseous as a result of the City and County’s plan to criminalize homelessness. She stated that sending someone to prison/jail doesn’t help the individual or society. She supports Housing First and believes in the positive impact of having a roof over your head.
   6. Charles Strewy testified that as a single male in his 60’s who is bipolar and has lived in Hawaii for 40 years he represents the homeless population demographic. He stated that there is a health crisis going on and that there are health effects of being on the street.
   7. Representative Cachola interjected that he worked on bills in the 1980’s and 90’s and passed a bill in 1992 that facilitated a private sector response to homelessness.
   8. Don Creseimanno, homeless individual and advocate, testified that he has lived on Sand Island and he is opposed to the City and County’s plan to use this isolated place that has no public transportation service to create a ghetto of homeless to keep them out of sight.
5. 10:10 a.m. Chair Kippen stated that over the past 18 months he has been taking a strategic approach to develop relationships with the USICH, HUD and the VA and reaching out to national experts to bring folks to town to facilitate 4 trainings here on the island. He informed the council that Housing First training is being done this week for all service providers as a mechanism to improve the way we do business.
6. 10:14 a.m. Andy Dahlburg, Director of Homeless Programs for the Department of Veterans Affairs in Hawaii, introduced Suzanne Wagner and Andrea White of Housing Innovations. (handout attached) Suzanne and Andrea are national technical assistance providers who trained the local VA in September 2013 and who participated in the VA/USICH/HUD sponsored 25 Cities Initiative that 9 local leaders attended in D.C. in late March 2014. They are helping us with our Copernican Revolution to learn how to create a systemic response, to share resources, implement the use of a common assessment tool with the goal of bringing everyone to the table.
7. 11:00 a.m. Chair Kippen introduced the next item on the agenda, Revisiting the HICH Plan to End Homelessness, which is divided into four sections. He introduced Department of Health Deputy Director Lynn Fallin, who is the chair of the HICH Committee to Improve Health and Stability.
8. 11:07 a.m. Deputy Director Fallin introduced Kia’i Lee, DOH Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division Hawaii Pathways Project Coordinator, who presented on the status of the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration/Cooperative Agreements to Benefit Homeless Individuals grants that were awarded to the DOH, ADAD, and sub-granted to Helping Hands Hawaii in collaboration with Catholic Charities Hawaii. (handout attached) He commented on the goal of linking the Hawaii Pathways Project with the Common Assessment and Coordinated Access work being done through Hale ‘O Malama.
9. 11:12 a.m. Deputy Director Fallin introduced Steve Balcom, DOH Adult Mental Health Division Crisis/Residential Treatment Services Coordinator, who explained that the DOH/AMHD awards Homeless Outreach contracts to service agencies across the state. He has been working closely with the HICH and Hale ‘O Malama (HOM) to align their outreach and case management with other programs that provide housing to offer the comprehensive level of service necessary to keep individuals and families permanently housed. He has also been working to assure that the service agencies are entering data into the Homeless Management Information System and using the VI-SPDAT to assess their consumers.
10. 11:19 a.m. Chair Kippen introduced Lorraine Lunow-Luke, Hawaii Pacific Health (HPH) Philanthropy & Government Affairs Representative. She presented an update on our collaboration under our MOU with HPH. The objective is to improve health care outcomes for the most vulnerable members of our community who frequent their Emergency Rooms. They are also exploring options for implementing the VI-SPDAT in their discharge planning and care coordination.
11. 11:22 a.m. Chair Kippen introduced Max Otani, Department of Public Safety Deputy Director of Corrections. DPS is working to improve data sharing related to their increasing population of homeless individuals who are eligible for parole and approaching discharge to improve the linkage to Homeless Services.
12. 11:25 a.m. Chair Kippen explained that through HICH we are working to create stronger relationships with emergency rooms, hospitals, jails…to better serve homeless individuals.
13. 11:26 a.m. Chair Kippen introduced Greg Payton, Executive Director of Mental Health Kokua and Chair of Partners in Care, and Scott Morishige, Executive Director of PHOCUSED, to present an update on the HICH Committee to Retool the Homeless Crisis Response System through Hale ‘O Malama. Greg Payton discussed the work Mental Health Kokua is doing in collaboration with The Institute for Human Services and River of Life Mission in Chinatown. He is excited by the positive response they are receiving from the Chinatown businesses and is encouraged by their enthusiasm to participate. (handout attached) 11:35 a.m. Scott Morishige updated the HICH on the data collection and progress made by Hale ‘O Malama. (handouts attached) He shared that the current challenges are getting individuals document ready (takes time and money) and engaging/educating landlords concerning the benefits they receive by participating (voucher money and supportive services).
14. 11:53 a.m. Lori Tsuhako, Department of Human Services Homeless Programs Administrator, presented an update on the State Housing First Contract and explained how it is in fidelity with the DOH CABHI grant. She announced that the contract was awarded to USVETS in collaboration with Kalihi Palama Health Center and Waikiki Health.
15. 11:57 a.m. Jun Yang, Executive Director, Office of Housing, City and County of Honolulu, presented a brief update on the City’s Housing First (HF) RFP, Sand Island plan, Housing First Outreach, and augmenting Rapid Re-housing (RRH) resources. The City and County of Honolulu will be finalizing their HF contract with the service provider in October. He explained that Sand Island is being considered for interim/bridge housing for individuals who want to temporarily relocate for the purpose of assessment and linkage to service.
16. 12:03 p.m. Chair Kippen introduced Janice Takahashi, Chief Planner  
    Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation, who is chair of the HICH committee to Increase Access to Stable and Affordable Housing. Chief Takahashi announced that Hawaii Community Development Corporation (HCDA) plans to post an RFP in October to pilot a micro unit development in Kakaako. She anticipates that HCDA will be discussing the issue at their October 1st B.O.D. meeting. The tentative RFP reply deadline may be in December with a selection of vendor anticipated in January or February 2015. She also thanked the legislature for increasing the funding for the Rental Housing trust Fund and explained that a shallow rent subsidy may be necessary to sustain housing for those who lack sufficient resources.
17. 12:07 p.m. Chair Kippen introduced Lori Young, DHS/BESSD Acting Financial Programs Administrator, who presented information concerning their financial and food assistance programs that Increase Economic Stability and Self Sufficiency for individuals and families who qualify. (handout attached) Suzanne Wagner, Housing Innovations, mentioned how TANF has been used for RRH.
18. 12:10 p.m. Second Order of Business: Adjournment. Motion to Adjourn was made by Lori Tsuhako and seconded by Jun Yang. The Chair opened the floor for discussion, seeing none he called the question. The motion passed unanimously.