

Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH)
Honolulu International Airport Conference Rooms 3 & 4
Monday, September 16, 2019
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Council Attendees:

Mr. Scott Morishige	Chair
Ms. Daisy Lynn Hartsfield for Mr. Harold Brackeen III	Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS) Administrator of the Homeless Programs Office of DHS
Mr. Eddie Mersereau for Mr. Leonard Hoshijo for	Director of the Department of Health (DOH) Director of the Department of Labor & Industrial Relations
Ms. Jodie Maesaka-Hirata for Mr. Craig Hirai for	Director of the Department of Public Safety (PSD) Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT)
Ms. Cynthia Rezendes for	Director of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)
Mr. Bruce Oliveira for	Adjutant General of the Department of Defense (DOD)
Ms. Carla Hostetter for Ms. Melissa Lewis for Ms. Toby Portner for Ms. Maigee Chang for Mr. Ben Park for Mr. Marc Alexander for Ms. Sharon Hirota for Ms. Lori Tshako for Ms. Laura Thielen Ms. Brandee Menino Ms. Makana Kamibayashi Ms. Maude Cumming Mr. Andy Taylor Mr. Mark Chandler	Chairperson of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs Attorney General Superintendent of Department of Education (DOE) Hawaii State Senate Executive Director of the Hawaii Public Housing Authority Mayor of the City & County of Honolulu Mayor of the County of Hawaii Mayor of the County of Maui Continuum of Care for the County of Honolulu Continuum of Care for the County of Hawaii Continuum of Care for the County of Kauai Continuum of Care for the County of Maui U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), Office of Community Planning & Development Faith-Based Representative
Mr. Daniel Kaneshiro	

Absent:

Representative from the Hawaii House of Representatives;
Representative for the Mayor of the County of Kauai; and
Business Community Representative.

Staff:

Mr. Justin Limasa, Homelessness Assistant; Mr. Jason
Kasamoto, Homelessness Special Assistant and Public Affairs;
Ms. Emma Grochowsky, Homelessness Community
Development Specialist; Ms. Lily Young, Deputy Attorney
General

Special Guests:

Mr. John Vedder, State Procurement Office; Mr. Christopher
Amandi, State Procurement Office

- i. **Call to Order. Taking of the Roll.** Roll taken and there was a quorum established with 22 out of 27 members. The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by the Chair.

Chair Morishige welcomed everyone and noted that all material was sent out electronically. Council members were asked to sign up at the registration desk if they did not receive handouts in advance of the meeting. Members of the public were also asked to request a copy of materials from staff and were advised that a sign-up list was available to receive a copy of the meeting packet and handouts by e-mail. The Chair requested members of the public to present their questions and comments on agenda items during the designated time

for public testimony, as presenters would only be able to answer questions from Council members during their presentations.

- II. **Overview and Approval of Agenda.** The Chair presented the agenda for review and recommended a revision to the order of presentations to accommodate the presenters' schedules. The Chair recommended to move item VI(a)(ii), followed by the remaining items in section VI, ahead of item V. The Chair asked for a motion to approve the revised agenda.

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Ms. Menino and seconded by Ms. Tsuhako. The Chair opened the floor for discussion, and seeing none, the Chair called the question. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Taylor arrived at 10:07 a.m. Quorum was revised to reflect 23 out of 27 members present.

- III. **Approval of Minutes.** The Chair reminded members that the June 17, 2019, meeting minutes were included in the members' packets. The Chair provided time for members to review the minutes and asked if there were any additions/corrections. Mr. Chandler elected to share updates regarding one of the outstanding questions at the end of the meeting.

Seeing no additions or corrections at this time, the Chair asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 17, 2019, Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness meeting.

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Portner and seconded by Ms. Maesaka-Hirata. The Chair called the question. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Kaneshiro arrived at 10:10 a.m. Quorum was revised to reflect 24 out of 27 members present.

- IV. **Public Testimony.** Chair Morishige opened the floor to public testimony. The public was asked to keep testimony limited to no more than one minute.

a. **Mr. David Cannell**

Mr. Cannell recounted his and his family's lived experiences of homelessness, and noted a distinct rise in the number of people experiencing homelessness since the 1950s and 1960s. Mr. Cannell attributed this to the rise of capitalism and monopolization of wealth in the United States.

Chair Morishige thanked Mr. Cannell for his testimony.

V. **Continuing Business**

- a. **Hawaii State Framework to Address Homelessness and ten-year strategic plan to address homelessness, including specific strategies, tactics, and metrics and examining the intersection between local initiatives and federal initiatives to address homelessness.**

Chair Morishige provided the Council a brief overview of the history of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) in Hawaii, describing how the current HMIS system transitioned to each Continuum of Care maintaining their own HMIS lead agency. The Chair also reviewed each CoC's responses to the Council's previous request for resource needs, noting the following:

- Management and operation budgets vary greatly between the two CoCs.

- Bridging the Gap's annual HMIS budget from revenues collected is around \$246,000.
- Partners in Care currently receives \$124,000 from HUD to maintain the HMIS, and is applying for an additional \$75,000 in HUD CoC funding to expand HMIS capacity.
- BTG and PIC maintain separate Coordinated Entry Systems.
 - BTG contracts Ka Mana O Na Helu to provide both HMIS and CES administration services.
 - PIC currently has 1.5 FTE dedicated to HMIS training and administration, and maintains a contract with a third-party consultant for additional technical support. PIC has 3 FTE dedicated to CES administration, and receives \$300,000 from HUD CoC funds to support CES operations.
- BTG and PIC have identified different resource needs for their HMIS and CES systems.
 - BTG does not foresee a need for additional financial or staffing resources at this time.
 - PIC anticipates the need for an additional \$80,000 - \$90,000 in funding from user fees or other outside sources, in addition to the requested \$200,000 in CoC funding.

The Chair reminded the Council that this information was initially requested to better inform the Council's ability to support the needs of both CoCs. Since the time of the request, PIC had voted to separate its HMIS database from the existing database shared with BTG. The abrupt nature of the decision to split from the joint database has many implications for providers who operate in both CoCs, as well as for the collection and analysis of statewide data trends. The Chair was also concerned that State agencies who contribute data into the HMIS were not involved in discussions regarding the split or any potential requests for the use of State general funds to support HMIS operations.

Discussion and Questions.

Chair Morishige asked Ms. Menino and Ms. Thielen if their CoCs had any comments in addition to those submitted in their written reports.

- Ms. Menino added that BTG also has County partners who convene the CES processes for their respective counties at no cost to the CoC, which contributes to overall cost savings.
- Ms. Thielen stated that PIC has been experiencing ongoing difficulties with updating or modifying the HMIS database to meet the needs of partner agencies. These difficulties have been due to numerous delays and inaction on behalf of outside parties, and as a result, the entire CoC elected to move toward a separate HMIS system.

The Chair asked Ms. Thielen to clarify the statement regarding a unanimous vote across the CoC, citing communication from multiple providers to voice their concerns and confusion about the timelines for the split.

- Ms. Thielen clarified that, although the PIC Board voted unanimously to approve the separation, PIC membership has been aware of these ongoing challenges and has been abreast of the desire to separate from BTG for the past year.

The Chair asked Ms. Hartsfield and Mr. Mersereau for their comments on PIC's decision to move forward with a separate HMIS database.

- Ms. Hartsfield stated that Deputy Director Betts had met with Ms. Thielen, but the department did not become aware of PIC's decision until the written materials for the

HICH meeting were distributed. Ms. Hartsfield stated the department is concerned about the impacts on State-funded providers and is seeing legal guidance regarding potential impacts to existing contract requirements.

- Mr. Mersereau added that the Department of Health had not been aware of discussions to move toward a separate database, and voiced his concerns over synergy with the department's long-term data-integration goals.
- Ms. Thielen responded that she met with Mr. Brackeen in June to request more coordination with the HMIS lead agency for BTG, as there had been multiple allegations of tampering with the system. However, Mr. Brackeen declined to include other PIC stakeholders in potential meetings to discuss the HMIS, and noted that BTG's HMIS lead agency also refused offers to meet.
- Ms. Menino stated she was unaware that the HMIS lead agency had refused any meeting offers, noting that she had always been responsive to communication with PIC. Ms. Menino and Ms. Cumming remarked that they had come to Oahu to meet with PIC the previous week, and were surprised to learn that PIC had already made a decision to create a separate HMIS database.
- Mr. Chandler reiterated that the decision to split remains a choice between the two CoCs. HUD has invested several years of technical assistance regarding this issue, and feels that the situation has become too much of a distraction from the work of ending homelessness. In response to concerns regarding the availability of statewide data, Mr. Chandler added that the State can request data for its programs in the same manner used by HUD.

The Chair asked for a clarification of the timeline for the separation of HMIS databases.

- Mr. Chandler explained that the HMIS software vendor, Caseworthy, cannot proceed with creating a duplicate copy of the database for PIC without getting authorization from BTG. PIC intended to have the database cloned by the time of the HICH meeting, but is now hoping to have a mechanism in place to accomplish this by Wednesday, September 18th.
- Ms. Lewis expressed concern with the apparent lack of planning, noting that it will be difficult for the State to support service providers if there is no plan in place. In addition to addressing the legal issues regarding client data ownership, Ms. Lewis was concerned for the continuity of services for clients who move between counties.

The Chair asked representatives from other government agencies to share comments and questions on behalf of their departments.

- Ms. Rezentes expressed concern for the DHS Homeless Programs Office, since the department will now be required to access two systems.
- Ms. Hostetter stated that OHA currently has a MOU in place with PIC for data sharing, but does not currently have one with BTG for the same purpose.
- Ms. Maesaka-Hirata stated that the Department of Public Safety does not have access to the HMIS database at this time, but had requested access in December 2018. Due to PSD's statewide services, a split in the HMIS database would be concerning.

- Ms. Portner asked if the decision to split should be considered final at this point, or if there was any room to mediate the differences between both sides.
- Mr. Oliveira deferred to Mr. Taylor to discuss potential impacts on services for veterans experiencing homelessness. Mr. Taylor stated that the local VA currently works with five CoCs, including CoCs in Guam and American Samoa. The VA has had ongoing concerns regarding the data quality in reports generated from the HMIS, as there are large variations in the numbers of homeless veterans reflected on multiple reports. Mr. Taylor is hopeful that the HMIS separation will allow the CoCs to address data quality and reliability issues.
- Mr. Brackeen III stressed the significance of the HMIS to evaluate contracted providers' performance metrics, as agreed upon with the providers. HPO currently collects this data directly from HMIS, but the department is unsure if this will continue to be possible with a change in databases.
- Mr. Alexander expressed interest in learning about how other states collect aggregate data and common metrics, and how other CoCs address data ownership concerns. Mr. Alexander observed that many providers, in addition to those required by HUD, enter data into the HMIS, and that providers and stakeholders have been working to improve data and report quality. Based on feedback from other communities, Mr. Alexander stated that a unified system appears to have several benefits.
- Ms. Thielen shared the concerns regarding data quality, and reiterated that PIC's new HMIS team has been working closely with providers to improve data entry, as well as clean up existing data.
- Ms. Tsuhako disclosed that she is a member of the Board of Directors for Ka Mana O Na Helu, the HMIS lead agency for BTG. However, in her role with the County of Maui, she noted that the County does make a small monetary contribution to HMIS operations and is worried about how the State will continue to administer its existing contracts that rely on the HMIS.
- Ms. Hirota expressed concern for service providers who may be required to enter data into multiple systems if the HMIS is not accessible to funders. Ms. Hirota was also concerned about a client's data being inaccessible to other providers if the client should relocate between CoCs.

The Chair emphasized the need to ensure the split in HMIS databases does not cause additional expenses or burdens, and that quality data will still be available. The Chair also stressed the importance of repairing fragmented relationships to the greatest extent possible.

The Chair introduced special guest Mr. John Vedder to present information regarding Act 162, SLH 2019, which establishes a training program on government procurement and other relevant procedures for nonprofit organizations that offer homeless outreach services or manage homeless housing programs in rural areas of the State.

Presentation by Mr. John Vedder.

Mr. Vedder introduced himself on behalf of the State Procurement Office, and provided a brief overview of the parameters of Act 162. SPO and HPO staff have been working closely together to develop a training curriculum that will increase the knowledge base and capacity for providers interested in homeless services, especially for providers in rural areas of the state.

While funds have not yet been released, the training plan is being developed to address common questions regarding submitting proposals/bids, government procurement systems, federal and state contracting requirements, and strategies for providers to influence the state's planning process. Training sessions are expected to begin in early January 2020, and outreach will be conducted to ensure maximum exposure to current and prospective providers. SPO will also be expanding online training available to providers, and remains committed to long-term engagement with community partners.

VI. **New Business**

a. **Discussion regarding new partnerships to address homeless subpopulations, including the recently awarded Youth Homeless Demonstration Project (YHDP) for the Honolulu Continuum of Care.**

Youth Homeless Demonstration Project (YHDP)

The Chair introduced Ms. Laura Thielen and Ms. Carla Houser, representing PIC, to share updates regarding the Youth Homeless Demonstration Project (YHDP).

Ms. Thielen described the collaborative process of applying for the YHDP grant and the important role that the Oahu Youth Advisory Board played. PIC was awarded \$3.8 million from HUD for youth-specific projects during this competition.

Ms. Thielen explained that PIC will use the first eight months to create a plan to utilize the funds, and will be hiring a manager to oversee this process. PIC will issue a RFP after the planning process.

Ms. Houser added that the letters of support received from both the City and the State, along with the active participation of the youth, strengthened PIC's proposal to HUD. The OYAB was also representative of different subpopulations of youth, including parenting youth, former foster care youth, youth who have been diagnosed with a mental illness, etc.

The OYAB selected four focus areas during the proposal process: affordable housing for youth, expanded services for pregnant and parenting youth, specialized services for youth subpopulations, and resources for unaccompanied minors.

The Chair thanked Ms. Thielen and Ms. Houser for their presentation.

Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD)

The Chair briefly summarized the State's current efforts to expand the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) pilot program to the neighbor islands, where services provided by DOH providers will be paired with shelter and stabilization beds for participants experiencing homelessness.

The Chair added that Oahu and neighbor island LEAD staff, along with a staff member from the Office of the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness, are currently attending a training with the LEAD National Support Bureau in Seattle, WA. The training will help local providers and funders to better coordinate services with key stakeholders.

b. **Discussion and possible action regarding the formation of a working group, in accordance with House Concurrent Resolution 36, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019, to prioritize homeless efforts in the area surrounding the Hawaii Children's Discovery Center pursuant to HRS §92-2.5 (b)(2). (Vote)**

The Chair stated that this task force has been meeting regularly to discuss progress and challenges in the Kakaako area. The Chair highlighted the recent successes of the resource fair

coordinated by PIC and the members of the Ka Poe O Kakaako encampment. However, balancing the needs of enforcement and security with ongoing services continues to be a challenge.

- Mr. Alexander added that the City & County of Honolulu has been very clear in communicating its approach and future plans for the 42 acres of the Kakaako parks and surrounding areas that are in the process of being transferred to the City's jurisdiction. The City's concern is for the safety and well-being of all community members, and the long-term goal is to ensure the parks will be accessible to everyone.

The Chair concluded that the task force will be making recommendations to the State legislature emphasizing the need to balance services and enforcement, along with getting direct input from people experiencing homelessness.

- c. Discussion and possible action regarding the appointment of a member of the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness to serve on a working group established by Senate Bill 1494 CDI, Session Laws of Hawaii 2019, to evaluate current behavioral health care and related systems and identify steps that may be taken to promote effective integration to more effectively respond to and coordinate care for persons experiencing substance abuse, mental health conditions, and homelessness. (Vote)**

The Chair noted that the Council has already voted to include a member on this task force.

VII. Permitted Interaction Group

- a. Report and discussion of the permitted interaction group established pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes (H.R.S.) §92-2.5 to review and recommend potential revisions to the ten-year strategic plan to end homelessness, and the Hawaii State Framework to Address Homelessness.**

This agenda item was addressed in earlier discussions.

VIII. General Announcements

A. Chairperson and Staff Reports: July/August/September 2019

Chair Morishige shared the staff report for the period from July through September 2019 and noted that a copy of the report is included in the meeting packet.

Mr. Chandler provided his update regarding a question raised at the previous meeting on June 17, 2019. Mr. Chandler presented Hui Aloha's housing concept to the national HUD offices in Washington, D.C. for the purposes of clarifying whether this housing model would meet HUD's standards of permanent housing. The HUD national offices stated that if the housing units have sustained illumination (e.g. electricity or other source that could be turned on/off at any time, for any period of time), the units could be considered permanent housing. Mr. Chandler noted that a temporary illumination source, such as a solar electricity system that could not be operated during nighttime hours, would not meet HUD's requirements. The housing units, as described, would not be eligible for Section 8, but may qualify for CoC rental assistance funding if they meet the City's building code.

B. Written Reports from Council Members.

The following written updates are provided for the Council's consideration and review (the full write-ups for each representative will be provided):

- *Department of Human Services, Homeless Programs Office*

- *Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)*
- *County of Hawaii*
- *County of Maui*
- *City & County of Honolulu*
- *County of Kauai*

IX. **Executive session**

Pursuant to H.R.S. §92-7(a), the Council may, when deemed necessary, hold an Executive Session on any agenda item without the written public notice if the Executive Session was not anticipated in advance. Any such Executive Session shall be held pursuant to H.R.S. §92-4 and shall be limited to those items described in H.R.S. §92-5(a). Discussions held in Executive Session are closed to the public.

The Chair stated that an Executive Session is not necessary at this time.

X. **Topics for upcoming meetings.**

The Chair asked members to contact his office with additional suggestions for upcoming meetings. The office can be reached at 586-0193 or by e-mail at gov.homelessness@hawaii.gov.

XI. **Meeting schedule.**

The following Council meetings are proposed for the 2019 calendar year:

- December 16, 2019, 10 a.m. to noon

XII. **Adjourn.**

Chair Morishige entertained a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Ms. Tsuhako and seconded by Mr. Alexander. The Chair called the question. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

MINUTES CERTIFICATION

Minutes prepared by:

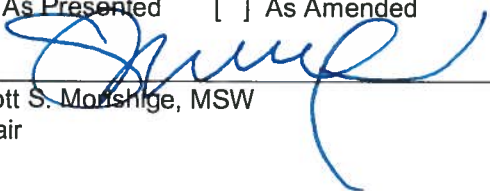


Emma Grochowsky
Homelessness Community Development Specialist

12/16/19
Date

Approved by the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness at their Regular Meeting on April 29, 2019:

As Presented As Amended



Scott S. Morishige, MSW
Chair

12/16/19
Date