

Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH)
Zoom Virtual Teleconference
Recording:
Monday, July 13, 2020
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Council Attendees:

Mr. Scott Morishige	Chair
Ms. Daisy Lynn Hartsfield for	Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS)
Mr. Harold Brackeen III	Administrator of the Homeless Programs Office of DHS
Ms. Yara Sutton for	Director of the Department of Health (DOH)
Ms. Shari Kimoto for	Director of the Department of Public Safety (PSD)
Mr. Dean Minakami for	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. Kamaile Maldonado for	Chairperson of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Ms. Melissa Lewis for	Attorney General
Ms. Maigee Chang for	Hawaii State Senate
Rep. Cedric Gates	Hawaii State House of Representatives
Mr. Ben Park for	Executive Director of the Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Mr. Marc Alexander for	Mayor of the City & County of Honolulu
Ms. Sharon Hirota for	Mayor of the County of Hawaii
Ms. Lori Tshako for	Mayor of the County of Maui
Mr. Adam Roversi for	Mayor of the County of Kauai
Ms. Laura Thielen	Continuum of Care for the County of Honolulu
Ms. Brandee Menino	Continuum of Care for the County of Hawaii
Ms. Makana Kamibayashi	Continuum of Care for the County of Kauai
Ms. Maude Cumming	Continuum of Care for the County of Maui
Mr. Andy Taylor	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Mr. Mark Chandler	U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), Office of Community Planning & Development
Pastor Daniel Kaneshiro	Faith-Based Representative

Absent:

Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR); Department of Education; 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. Xan Avendaño, Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation and COVID-19 Philanthropic Response Hui.

- I. **Call to Order. Taking of the Roll.** Roll taken and there was a quorum established with 20 out of 27 members. The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by the Chair.

Chair Morishige welcomed everyone and thanked the Council and staff for their patience and flexibility. The Chair reviewed several general housekeeping items related to the virtual teleconference platform. Attendees were asked to keep their device on 'mute' unless speaking, and members were asked to notify staff when leaving the meeting. The Chair explained that voting will be conducted via roll call unless otherwise specified, and members should vote verbally or using the chat feature.

The Chair acknowledged late Senator Breen Harimoto, an alternate member to the Council, for

his lifelong commitment to affordable housing and homeless services. The Chair recognized Senator Harimoto's career-long advocacy for vulnerable populations.

The Council observed a moment of silence in memory of Senator Harimoto.

- II. **Overview and Approval of Agenda.** The Chair presented the agenda for review. Ms. Hartsfield moved and Pastor. Kaneshiro seconded to approve the agenda as presented.

Votes were counted via roll call, with all members of the Council voting Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

- III. **Approval of Minutes.** The Chair reminded members that the December 16, 2019, meeting minutes were available electronically. The Chair provided time for members to review the minutes and asked if there were any additions/corrections. The Chair received confirmation from Ms. Young that the meeting agenda may be approved by a general voice vote.

Ms. Hartsfield moved and Pastor Kaneshiro second to approve the minutes as presented. Seeing no additions or corrections at this time, the Chair called the question. The motion passed unanimously.

- IV. **Public Testimony.** Chair Morishige opened the floor to public testimony. No members of the public elected to provide testimony.

Mr. Chandler's attendance was recognized as 10:19 a.m.

Mr. Malate's attendance was recognized at 10:19 a.m.

Mr. Dean Minakami's attendance was recognized at 10:19 a.m.

Quorum was amended to reflect 23 out of 27 members present.

- V. **New Business**
a. **Discussion and possible action regarding HICH recommendations regarding strategies to address homelessness in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. (Vote)**

Presentation by the COVID-19 Philanthropic Response Hui.

The Chair introduced special guest Mr. Xan Avendano, representing the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation and the COVID-19 Philanthropic Response Hui, to share information about the group's efforts to align private sector programs with government funding for COVID-19 relief and assistance programs.

Mr. Avendano introduced himself on behalf of the COVID-19 Philanthropic Reponse Hui and thanked the Chair for the opportunity to collaborate with the Council. Mr. Avendano explained that the group's goal is to identify opportunities for private funders to target their funding in alignment with existing government efforts, and have met with State and County representatives to discuss alignment of new assistance programs funded using additional ESG-CV and CDBG-CV federal funds.

Discussion and Questions.

The Chair opened the floor to questions from the Council. Hearing no questions, the Chair thanked Mr. Avendano and encouraged interested parties to connect with the COVID-19 Philanthropic Response Hui or the Chair directly.

Overview of Stimulus Response Core Technical Assistance.

The Chair presented a breakdown of the various federal funds available to the State of Hawaii and the individual counties, including ESG-CV, CDBG-CV, and CARES Act funds. Technical assistance from HUD is being provided to the State of Hawaii and the City & County of Honolulu, and this technical assistance includes guidance related to leveraging other sources of federal funds, including the Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) through the U.S. Treasury.

The State and County technical assistance providers have held several meetings over the past month with various stakeholders, including other State agencies and philanthropic groups who are administering COVID-19 assistance programs. Guidance from HUD regarding potential waivers and exemptions for programs funded by Round 2 of ESG-CV and CDBG-CV funding will be released shortly in the *Federal Register*.

The Chair reviewed the general focus areas of the State's technical assistance, including:

1. Integrated street outreach and encampment outreach
2. Specialized shelter models
3. Targeted prevention and diversion
4. Rapid rehousing, including landlord engagement, risk mitigation, and property acquisition
5. Strengthening administrative capacity

Discussion and Questions.

The Chair opened the floor to questions from the Council.

Mr. Andy Taylor joined the meeting at 10:46 a.m.

Ms. Brandee Menino joined the meeting at 10:46 a.m.

Quorum was revised to reflect 25 out of 27 members present.

Mr. Alexander informed the Council that the City & County of Honolulu has been gathering input from various stakeholders and is focusing on aligning funding efforts with national guidance from the NAEH and USICH. To the greatest extent possible, the City & County of Honolulu will prioritize the use of ESG-CV and CDBG-CV funds to assist people who are currently experiencing homelessness. Mr. Alexander was grateful for the technical assistance providers' expertise in disaster recovery planning and thanked the Continuum of Care for its collaboration.

Ms. Hirota asked for a timetable from HUD regarding ESG-CV Round 2 waivers, and asked if separate meetings could be arranged with the BTG Administrative Board to discuss plans for the neighbor islands.

- Mr. Chandler responded that the ESG-CV program came with certain established waivers, and the national HUD office has not yet authorized additional waivers. Any additional waivers will be published in the upcoming *Federal Register*. Under the current waivers, the ESG-CV program currently cannot be used for property acquisition.
- The Chair responded that additional meetings between the technical assistance providers and the BTG Administrative Board can be scheduled.

Mr. Alexander added that it will be important to hear from the U.S. Treasury regarding property acquisition using CRF funds.

Mr. Alexander left the meeting at 10:52 a.m. Quorum was amended to reflect 24 out of 27 members present.

Review of Efforts to Develop Community-Centered Housing.

The Chair revisited the memo provided by HUD in May 2020, which outlined the minimum habitability standards for communal housing, including tiny homes, to be considered “permanent housing” under HUD guidelines. These standards included:

- Electricity/illumination in the unit available 24/7
- Plumbing/water reasonably accessible
- Heating, ventilation, and/or HVAC system
- Walls on all sides
- Smoke detector within each living space/unit
- Compliance with local building code
- For CoC PSH – program participation cannot be time-limited
- For other PH – must be long-term, but must not be considered RRH or PSH

The Chair highlighted several key determinations that may impact the development of tiny home structures for people experiencing homelessness:

- Tiny homes without self-contained kitchen and bathroom facilities do not meet HUD’s Housing Quality Standards (HQS)
- Tiny homes that do not meet HUD’s HQS will not be eligible for CoC rental assistance funds or TBRA under HOME or Section 8

Mr. Chandler added that HQS compliance is the key determining factor for HUD, and that this guidance is supported by HUD Headquarters.

Ms. Thielen left the meeting at 11:01 a.m. Quorum was revised to reflect 23 out of 27 members present.

Discussion and Questions.

The Chair opened the floor to questions from the Council.

Mr. Roversi asked whether HUD’s required Environmental Assessments can be expedited and if other counties have had any success with this.

- Mr. Chandler explained that HUD has expedited some processes for projects using CV funds, although Environmental Assessments must still be met. Mr. Chandler also reminded recipients of the timelines for expending HUD CV funds.

Mr. Roversi wondered whether the Environmental Assessment timelines applied to projects funded with CARES Act funds. The County of Kauai was considering allocating up to \$2M for a tiny home project, but realized that the timeline might not be feasible.

- The Chair noted that CARES funds must be expended by December 30th and that any waivers to environmental or other safety regulations could have more serious implications.
- Ms. Tsuhako added that the County of Maui chose not to use HUD or Treasury funds for their tiny home project.

Ms. Hirota left the meeting at 11:11 a.m. Quorum was revised to reflect 22 out of 27 members present.

Ms. Hirota rejoined the meeting at 11:16 a.m. Quorum was revised to reflect 23 out of 27 members present.

Review of Technical Assistance and Consultation Efforts.

The Chair apprised the Council of current Technical Assistance efforts being provided to the State, Counties, and Continua of Care related to homelessness. Areas covered by technical assistance providers include:

- Ohana Zone evaluation
- HUD Stimulus Response Core (COVID-19-related funds)
- Unsheltered homelessness (Oahu CoC)
- Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project
- HMIS
- Mayor's Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness
- National Council for Behavioral Health and Corporation for Supportive Housing (behavioral health intersection)
- LEAD National Support Bureau

In an effort to synthesize existing Technical Assistance efforts and recommendations, the Chair proposed establishing a framework for COVID-19 response on behalf of the Council. The proposed framework would emphasize the use of data, capacity building, efficient expenditure of funds, and ensuring programs have enough time to develop. The Chair also stressed the importance of considering lessons learned from previous economic recessions and the impact on both government and private sector staffing and capacity.

The Chair asked the Council to consider the following recommendations:

1. Focus on targeted outreach efforts
2. Establish and increase the availability of specialized shelters
3. Utilize and maximize RRH
4. Explore public lands, in addition to lands owned by DLNR, for community-based housing and PSH
5. Capacity building for both government and non-profit providers

Recommendations will be compiled and distributed to stakeholders who typically receive updates and reports from the Council, including the Governor, Mayors of the four counties, Senate President, and Speaker of the House.

Discussion and Questions.

The Chair opened the floor to questions from the Council.

Ms. Hartsfield asked for clarification of the types of specialized shelters being explored.

- The Chair explained that some of the specialized shelter models include medical respite, stabilization beds, and shelters to meet the needs of older individuals.

Ms. Tsuhako asked for clarification of the intent and purpose of the letter.

- The Chair stated that the purpose is to leverage the Council's role as an advisory body and to encourage decision-making alignment across multiple sectors.

Hearing no further questions or comments, the Chair entertained a motion to send a letter outlining the Council's priorities for COVID-19 response to stakeholders. Motion to approve was made by Ms. Tzuhako and seconded by Ms. Hartsfield. The Chair called for the question. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. **Continuing Business**

- a. **Discussion regarding revisions to the 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.**

This agenda item was addressed in earlier discussions.

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.**

The Permitted Interaction Group will focus on compiling the Council's COVID-19 recommendations for review at the meeting on September 21st, 2020.

- b. **Report and discussion of the permitted interaction group established pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes (H.R.S.) §92-2.5 to explore the intersection between homelessness and health, and make recommendations to the full council for action.**

This agenda item was addressed in earlier discussions.

VIII. **General Announcements**

A. Chairperson and Staff Reports: January / February / March / April / May / June / July 2020

The Chair shared the staff report for the period from January through July 2020 and noted that a copy of the report is included in the meeting packet. The Chair noted that the System Performance Report reflects a decrease in overall exits to permanent housing since July 2019. This may be partially due to the impacts of COVID-19 but warrants ongoing monitoring.

Ms. Rezendes reminded attendees about the DRAP funded by DHHL, and remarked that there may be a sharp increase in applications at the end of July due to the reduction of federal unemployment benefits. Ms. Rezendes suggested interested households apply early before their benefits are reduced.

Ms. Thielen rejoined the meeting at 11:29 a.m. Quorum was revised to reflect 24 out of 27 members present.

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 Public Safety*
- *Department of Defense*

- *Department of Education*
- *Department of Health, Adult Mental Health Division*
- *Hawaii Public Housing Authority*
- *County of Hawaii*
- *City & County of Honolulu*
- *County of Kauai*
- *Continuum of Care for Oahu, Partners in Care*
- *Continuum of Care for Balance of State, Bridging the Gap*
- *U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*
- *Faith-Based Community*

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.

Pastor Kaneshiro suggested that exploring land partnerships between government and faith-based providers be added to a future meeting agenda. The Chair acknowledged Pastor Kaneshiro's suggestion and will work with staff to put this on the September meeting agenda.

XI. **Meeting Schedule**

The following Council meetings are proposed for the 2020 calendar year:

- Monday, September 21, 2020, 10 a.m. to noon
- Monday, December 21, 2020, 10 a.m. to noon

XII. **Adjourn**

Chair Morishige entertained a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Ms. Menino and seconded by Ms. Sutton. The Chair called for the question. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

MINUTES CERTIFICATION

Minutes prepared by:

Emma Grochowsky
Homelessness Community Development Specialist

Date

Approved by the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness at their Regular Meeting on July 13, 2020.

As Presented As Amended

Scott S. Morishige, MSW
Chair

Date

DRAFT