

Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH)

MS Teams Virtual Meeting and Teleconference

Monday, December 20, 2021

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Council Attendees:

Mr. Scott Morishige	Chair
Ms. Lila King 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. Allicyn Tasaka for	Director of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)
Mr. Max Otani for	Director of the Department of Public Safety (PSD)
Mr. Francis Keeno for	Director of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT)
Ms. Cynthia Rezendes for	Chair of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)
Brig. Gen. Bruce Oliveira for	Department of Defense (DOD)
Ms. Toby Portner for	Director of the Department of Education (DOE)
Ms. Melissa Lewis for	Department of the Attorney General (AG)
Sen. Joy San Buenaventura for	Hawaii State Senate
Ms. Lori Tshako for	Mayor of the County of Maui
Mr. Anton Krucky for	Mayor of the City & County of Honolulu
Ms. Ashton Varner for	Mayor of the County of Kauai
Ms. Sharon Hirota for	Mayor of the County of Hawaii
Mr. Brian Johnson	U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) Office of Community Planning & Development
Mr. Arthur Minor	Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Ms. Brandee Menino	Continuum of Care for the County of Hawaii
Ms. Laura Thielen	Continuum of Care for the County of Honolulu
Ms. Melody Lopez	Continuum of Care for the County of Kauai
Ms. Maude Cumming	Continuum of Care for the County of Maui

Absent:

Hawaii State House of Representatives, Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA), Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), Business Community Representative, Faith Based 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. Cheryl Bellisario, Homelessness Administrative Assistant; Ms. Erin Yamashiro, Deputy Attorney General

Special Guests:

Ms. Nani Medeiros (HomeAid Hawaii); Ms. Kimberley Cook (United States Veterans Initiative); Mr. Gregory Williams (United States Veterans Initiative)

- I. **Call to Order. Taking of the Roll.** Roll was taken and there was a quorum established with 21 out of 27 members. The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by the Chair.

Chair Morishige welcomed everyone and 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 a general voice vote unless otherwise specified, and members should vote verbally or using the chat feature. The Chair reminded attendees that the meeting will be recorded and will be available at <http://homelessness.hawaii.gov>.

The Chair reminded members that they will be required to have their camera 'on' for the duration of the meeting, should virtual meetings continue into 2022.

The Chair also recognized the City & County of Honolulu and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands for their federally-recognized efforts in the COVID-19 response, as well as Partners in Care for the success of their Oahu Housing Now ESG-CV program and receiving federal recognition from HUD for their effective use of Housing Fairs to enroll clients for the program. The Chair praised the agencies for their hard work and creativity in getting housing assistance to people in need.

National Homeless Persons Memorial Day is tomorrow, December 21st, and is a time to recognize people who have passed away while experiencing homelessness. The average age of those who passed away was 54 years of age, which is approximately 30 years younger than the average age of housed individuals who pass away. A moment of silence was observed for the over 130 individuals who passed away in 2021.

Director Krucky joined the meeting at 10:11 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 22 of 27 members present.

- II. **Overview and Approval of Agenda.** The Chair presented the agenda for review and requested a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Menino moved and Ms. Tshako seconded to approve the agenda as presented.

The Chair called the question. The motion passed unanimously.

- III. **Approval of Minutes.** The Chair reminded members that the September 20, 2021, meeting minutes were available electronically. The Chair provided time for members to review the minutes and asked if there were any additions or corrections.

Ms. Thielen moved and Mr. Johnson seconded 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. There was none.

- V. **New Business.**

- a. **Discussion regarding construction of low-income rental housing that utilizes communal dining and hygiene facilities to reduce construction cost, such as the Kamaoku Kauhale program in Kalaeloa, Oahu.**

Presentation by Ms. Kimberley Cook (United States Veterans Initiative).

Ms. Cook provided a brief overview of the United States Veterans Initiative (U.S. VETS) organization, which provides homeless and behavioral health services to both veterans and non-veterans at 32 sites across the country. U.S. VETS is the operator of the Kamaoku Kauhale project, a tiny home village designed to provide communal permanent housing to homeless individuals. Additional partners include Lt. Governor Josh Green, the Hawaii Public Housing Authority, HomeAid Hawaii and its affiliates, the State of Hawaii Department of Human Services and the Office of the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness, the City & County of Honolulu Department of Community Services, the Weinberg Foundation, and the Hawaii Community Foundation.

Kamaoku is modeled after the Community First! village in Austin, TX, and construction and contracting began in early 2020. The vision for Kamaoku was to provide a safe, dignified space for people to live, including intentional design elements that promote a sense of community and

shared space. There are 36 residential units and a communal building with bathrooms, showers, laundry, and kitchen space. On-site food service, social services, gardening, and workforce services are available.

All residents must be homeless, below 60% AMI, and have a VI-SPDAT score of 8+. Additional background screening applies. U.S. VETS is accepting applications, which are posted online and are available in-person. For applications or other questions, please contact U.S. VETS at (808) 282-0554 or infohi@usvets.org.

Presentation by Ms. Nani Medeiros (HomeAid Hawaii).

Ms. Medeiros shared several documents in advance of the meeting, which have been included in the meeting packet. HomeAid Hawaii emphasized the vision of creating a new model of housing that provides a sense of community at a site-based location. Kamaoku is one example of the kauhale, which brought in an operator to oversee the project. Other kauhale models may include building a project around an existing community and building a project with an existing group in mind and helping them to develop a stronger sense of community.

Ms. Medeiros shared information from their visit to the Community First! community on which Kamaoku was based. Kamaoku was a part of the Governor's Homelessness Emergency Proclamation, which provided specific exemptions that allowed the project to proceed. Ms. Medeiros stressed the importance of these types of waivers.

Question and Answer

Senator San Buenaventura asked in the chat how the project was able to get around permit requirements, which are often the stumbling block for other tiny home projects.

- The question was answered by Ms. Medeiros in her presentation. Kamaoku utilized the Governor's Homelessness Emergency Proclamation, which expired on February 14th, 2020.

Ms. Cumming asked in the chat whether these units are Section 8 approved.

- Ms. Cook stated that these units are not approved for Section 8, but U.S. VETS's partnership with the City & County of Honolulu is providing project-based funding with State funds.
- The Chair reviewed some of the earlier guidance from HUD, which requires projects to meet HUD'S Housing Quality Standards (HQS) if HUD subsidies will be used. However, projects need only meet local building code standards to be considered 'permanent housing' for the purposes of the CoC's Housing Inventory Count.
- HomeAid Hawaii is currently working with the City & County of Honolulu's Department of Planning and Permitting to suggest a template for similar types of construction. Director Krucky added that the City is supportive of being flexible with permitting, and encouraged lawmakers to consider State-level changes that would encourage this type of construction.

The Chair summarized the lessons learned from the development of the Kamaoku Kauhale project, emphasizing the importance of developing long-term solutions to address permitting challenges. In addition, the Chair reviewed information from a May 26, 2020 memo shared by the HUD Honolulu Field Office clarifying the factors considered in determining whether tiny home projects can be included in the CoC's Housing Inventory Count (HIC) or be eligible for CoC rental assistance and Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher funding.

At 10:32 a.m., Mr. Johnson was temporarily disconnected from the meeting, and quorum was revised to reflect 21 members present.

At 10:35 a.m., Mr. Johnson rejoined the meeting, and quorum was revised to reflect 22 members present.

- b. **Discussion regarding updates from the Continua of Care (CoC) regarding the 2022 Point in Time count for unsheltered homeless individuals and advocacy priorities for the 2022 legislative session. This item will include the adoption of 2022 legislative advocacy priorities. (Vote)**

Presentation by Ms. Maude Cumming (Bridging the Gap).

Ms. Cumming reviewed HUD's Point in Time count requirements, including who should be counted, the time frame for the count, and how data must be reported. The count occurs during the last ten days of January each year.

Ms. Cumming explained that Bridging the Gap will be using a census approach to improve accuracy and reliability. Participants will be asked where they slept on the night of January 23rd, 2022, but the survey period will be for the six-day period following that night to allow outreach staff to conduct surveys at varying times of the day. Most surveys are conducted by experienced staff who are familiar with the geographic area and the individuals living there. BTG has used this methodology consistently since 2009 and has counted approximately 95 percent of all individuals enrolled in the HMIS.

Ms. Cumming reviewed survey procedures and the process of data quality review and noted that BTG's rates of duplication are low. Surveys are kept as brief as possible to avoid overwhelming those who are surveyed.

Presentation by Ms. Laura Thielen (Partners in Care).

Ms. Thielen stated that Partners in Care is closely monitoring any new guidance from HUD regarding the unsheltered count, given the nationwide surge in COVID-19 cases. The Oahu CoC will be conducting a one-day count for the night of January 26th, 2022.

Beginning with the 2020 count, the Oahu CoC has used a digital app to complete both the full survey tool and an observation tool for those who are unable to be surveyed. The observation tool tracks race, approximate age, and sex, if known. The digital format has allowed for easier survey completion, especially for questions that apply only to certain populations. Another feature of the Oahu count is the central hub where PIC and other agency staff monitor the status of surveys. During the 2020 count, staff from the VA were able to track veteran status in real-time and coordinate additional services to those who were encountered.

Ms. Thielen stated that PIC is still seeking volunteers and donation items, including gift cards, snacks, and feminine hygiene products. Regional outreach providers serve as the leads for each of the seven outreach regions.

The Chair thanked Ms. Cumming and Ms. Thielen for their presentations, and noted that there will be some differences in the methodologies between the City & County of Honolulu and the neighbor island counties. This is primarily driven by a difference in geographic needs and priorities. The Chair advised that these changes in methodology may result in variations to the numbers of individuals counted.

Presentation by Ms. Laura Thielen (Partners in Care) and Ms. Cheryl Bellisario (Office of the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness).

Ms. Thielen noted that the Oahu CoC has a new Advocacy Chair, Mr. Bob Wardlaw (Project Vision Hawaii). The Oahu CoC will be focusing on:

- Income discrimination
- After care
- Rental application fees
- Expansion of shallow subsidies
- Keiki Caucus priority – emergency shelter
- Mental health and substance use disorder services
- Ohana Zones

Ms. Thielen emphasized the importance of combating housing discrimination via source of income protection and rental application fees, as it has an extreme impact on people using housing subsidies. In addition, the Oahu CoC is seeking support for ongoing services, including behavioral health services, that can continue to assist people once they are stably housed, and expanding shallow subsidies to keep people housed. The Oahu CoC will be looking at recommendations from the Keiki Caucus regarding minor access to emergency shelter, which was exacerbated by recent severe weather, and continuing funding for Ohana Zone pilot programs.

Individuals interested in participating in PIC Advocacy Committee meetings may contact bob@projectvisionhawaii.org or laurat@partnersincareoahu.org.

The Chair noted that Act 23, SLH 2021 provides a three-year pilot for minors to access emergency shelter without the presence or consent of a parent or legal guardian.

At 11:23 a.m., Ms. Tasaka left the meeting and quorum was revised reflect 21 members present.

Ms. Bellisario provided an overview of statewide advocacy priorities, including:

- Promoting affordable rental housing
- Supporting policies and programs that address upfront barriers to accessing rental housing
- Supporting policies and programs that assist vulnerable subpopulations – youth, severely mentally ill, individuals with chronic substance use – to transition to stable, long-term settings

The Chair added that adopting broad statewide priorities allows the HICH to testify on a wide range of legislation that may arise during the upcoming legislative session. In addition to directly supporting housing development and access, the Chair stated that supporting wraparound support services and interventions is also critical.

The Chair requested a motion to adopt the statewide priorities. Ms. Tsuhako moved and Ms. Rezentés seconded.

The Chair called the question. The motion passed unanimously.

As a reminder, interested parties may attend the Joint PIC-BTG Advocacy Meetings, currently every other Friday at 12:00 p.m. Please contact Cheryl Bellisario at cheryl.a.bellisario@hawaii.gov or (808) 586-0009 to be added to the meeting invite.

VI. **Continuing Business.**

- a. **Discussion and possible action 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.**

Presentation by Ms. Emma Grochowsky (Office of the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness).

The FY22 Homeless Services Fiscal Map is now posted to the GCH website at <http://homelessness.hawaii.gov/data>. The fiscal map has been updated to reflect current government contracts for homeless services. While the list is not all-inclusive, it does represent much of the government funding for homeless programs.

The fiscal map has been compiled into a simple dashboard format which allows the viewer to view funding by county, funding source, and certain subpopulations. Viewers should be aware that the map does not reflect CARES/ARP Act funding, and that there may be additional funding sources that have not been reported.

The fiscal map shows that the statewide investment in permanent supportive housing and other permanent housing is significant, followed by emergency shelter programs. While the State's funding is allocated among a variety of homeless program types, a significant portion of State funds support shelter programs. Conversely, HUD funding plays a significant role in the funding of permanent supportive housing. In addition, much of the funding for these programs is specific to certain subpopulations, such as veterans and people fleeing domestic violence.

The Chair added that the fiscal mapping tool originated from the Homeless Funders Group, which has been meeting since 2019 to improve coordination and information sharing among funders. The Chair also noted that the fiscal map may also be able to support the Continua of Care in considering strategic funding decisions or plans, such as during the HUD CoC program competition. The Chair proposed that the HICH may consider voting at a future meeting to provide specific recommendations for funding priorities for the CoCs in future HUD CoC program competitions for federal funding.

Question and Answer

Ms. Tsuhako asked whether the intent is to have the HICH support specific program proposals during a program competition.

- The Chair stated that the intent is to inform the Continua of Care as they draft their funding recommendations, noting that the Oahu CoC recently voted to prioritize PSH projects in their most recent HUD CoC NOFO.
- The Chair suggested that the HICH could make their recommendations in writing to the appropriate CoC committees that oversee the funding competitions.

Ms. Thielen expressed support for this recommendation, adding that the pandemic may have disincentivized some providers from applying for CoC funding. It is important to encourage providers to participate in the CoC funding competition so that funding is not left on the table.

Ms. Cumming stated that BTG currently only accepts applications for RRH and PSH projects.

Presentation by Chair Morishige (Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness).

Chair Morishige provided a status update on the Ohana Zones pilot project. Since the establishment of Ohana Zones through Act 209, SLH 2018 and Act 128, SLH 2019, Ohana Zone projects have accomplished several key measures:

- 358 beds/units preserved
- 469 new beds/units created
- 5,510 individuals served
- 1,368 individuals placed into permanent housing

A current listing of Ohana Zone projects and status is online at: <http://homelessness.hawaii.gov/ohana-zones/>.

The Chair added that the Administration will be requesting an extension of the Ohana Zones program.

VII. **Permitted Interaction Group.**

None.

VIII. **General Announcements.**

A. Chairperson and Staff Reports: October / November / December 2021

The Chair noted that a full report is available in the membership packet, and highlighted several key focus areas in the past quarter:

- **COVID-19**
<http://homelessness.hawaii.gov/covid>
 - COVID-19 resources continue to be available on the GCH website.
 - GCH staff continue to assist with testing at sites including the HONU and encampments on DLNR properties.
- **Eviction Moratorium and Rental Assistance**
<http://homelessness.hawaii.gov/eviction-moratorium-resources>
 - GCH and partners continue to monitor eviction filings and potential impacts on the homeless service system.
 - A list of rental assistance and other resources are available on the GCH website.
- **Unaccompanied Minors**
<http://homelessness.hawaii.gov/main/minors-experiencing-homelessness-or-unstable-housing/>
 - In partnership with DOE and OYS, GCH staff and interns have developed new FAQs and resources related to emergency resources available for unaccompanied minors.
- **Landlord Engagement**
<http://homelessness.hawaii.gov/landlord-engagement>
 - GCH staff have compiled materials to support statewide landlord engagement and to encourage private landlords to consider renting to applicants with housing subsidies.
- **HDOT Broadband Access**
 - DHS is partnering with HDOT to include homeless shelters and housing programs into HDOT's broadband pilot areas.
- **Provider Meetings**
<http://homelessness.hawaii.gov/monthly-webinars/>
<http://homelessness.hawaii.gov/outreach-meetings>

- GCH continues to host monthly statewide webinars and bi-weekly Oahu outreach provider meetings to share information and discuss ongoing matters.
- Monthly webinar session recordings have been shared on public access television.

The Chair summarized the four performance benchmarks used to evaluate the implementation of the Hawaii State Framework to Address Homelessness for the current quarter (as of September 2021):

- **Count:** 6,458 people (2020 PIT Count), 1,398 people (2021 PIT Count – Sheltered Only)
 - There has been no change since last quarter.
 - Both CoCs have been working on 2022 PIT Count planning.
 - The Chair noted that DOE data indicates a significant number of families who are living in “doubled-up” situations, which are not captured in the regular PIT Count. Changes to this number may arise from the impacts of COVID-19.
- **Bed Capacity:** 3,964 beds (2021 HIC inventory)
 - A detailed breakdown of HIC trends is available in the membership packet.
- **Housing Placements:** 48% statewide (as of November 2021)
 - Between January to November 2021, the neighbor island PH exit rate is 57%, compared to the Oahu PH exit rate of 46%.
 - While the percentage of exits has gone down, the total number of individuals exiting to PH has increased.
 - The PH placement rate may be a factor of housing supply issues, particularly on Oahu, which impact providers’ abilities to find suitable placements for clients.
- **Length of Stay:** 194 days (as of November 2021)
 - As of November 2021, the average length of stay in emergency shelters was:
 - 127 days on Oahu
 - 158 days on Maui
 - 112 days on Kauai
 - 82 days on Hawaii island
 - As of November 2021, the average length of stay in transitional shelters:
 - 346 days on Oahu
 - N/A days on Maui
 - 166 days on Kauai
 - 367 days on Hawaii island
 - Length of stay may be impacted by limited housing inventory and housing resources. Unavailable data may be due to a limited number of exits per program.

The complete packet has been provided to members and will be available online at <http://homelessness.hawaii.gov>.

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 are included in the meeting packet and meeting slide deck):

- *Hawaii Public Housing Authority*
- *Department of Hawaiian Home Lands*
- *U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs*
- *City & County of Honolulu*
- *County of Kauai*
- *County of Maui*
- *County of Hawaii*

- *Continuum of Care for Oahu (Partners in Care)*

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 2022 calendar year:

- Monday, March 21, 2022, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- Monday, June 20, 2022, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- Monday, September 19, 2022, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- Monday, December 19, 2022, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

The Chair noted that future meetings may be held in person, in accordance with the end of the Governor's Emergency Proclamation.

XII. Adjourn

Chair Morishige entertained a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Ms. Tsuhako and seconded by Ms. Menino. The Chair called for the question. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:08 p.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 December 20, 2021.

[] As Presented [] As Amended

Scott S. Morishige, MSW
Chair

Date