

Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH)

Joint In-Person and MS Teams Virtual Meeting and Teleconference

1390 Miller St. Conference Room 1 Honolulu, HI 96813

Monday, November 21, 2022

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
Mr. Francis Keeno for	Director of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT)
Ms. Cynthia Rezentes for	Chair of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)
Brig. Gen. Bruce Oliveira for	Adjutant General of the Department of Defense (DOD)
Ms. Melissa Lewis for	Attorney General (AG)
Ms. Toby Portner for	Superintendent, Department of Education (DOE)
Mr. Benjamin Park for	Executive Director, Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA)
Director Lori Tshukako for	Mayor of the County of Maui
Ms. Ailina Laborte 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. Mark Chandler	U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD)
	Office of Community Planning & Development
Sen. Joy San Buenaventura	Hawaii State Senate
Mr. Art Minor for	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Ms. Brandee Menino	Continuum of Care for the County of Hawaii
Ms. Makana Kamibayashi	Continuum of Care for the County of Kauai
Ms. Laura Thielen	Continuum of Care for the County of Honolulu

Absent:

Director or designee for Department of Health (DOH); Director or designee for Department of Labor & Industrial Relations (DLIR); Director or designee for Department of Public Safety (PSD); Representative from the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA); Representative from the Hawaii State House of Representatives; Representative from the Continuum of Care for the County of Maui; Faith-based Community Representative; Business Community Representative

Staff:

Mr. Justin Limasa, Homelessness Assistant; Ms. Emma Grochowsky, Homelessness Special Assistant; Ms. Cheryl Bellisario, Homelessness Administrative Assistant; Ms. Erin Lau, Deputy Attorney General

Special Guests:

Mr. Bob Wardlaw (Oahu Continuum of Care); Ms. Kenna StormoGipson (Hawaii Housing Affordability Coalition); Ms. Aura Reyes (Hawaii Housing Affordability Coalition); Mr. Aedward Los Banos (City & County of Honolulu)

- I. **Call to Order. Taking of the Roll [0:00].** Roll was taken and there was a quorum established with 18 out of 27 members. The meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m. by the Chair.

[7:35] Chair Morishige thanked all members of the Council and staff for their continued service over the years. The Chair reviewed several general housekeeping items related to the joint in-person and 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 reminded speakers to announce themselves before speaking and to use the "raise hand" feature as appropriate. The Chair reminded members that they will be required to have

their cameras 'on' for the duration of the meeting. Members and attendees were informed of the in-person meeting location located at 1390 Miller St., Conference Room 1. The Chair reminded attendees that the meeting will be recorded and will be available at <http://homelessness.hawaii.gov>.

- II. **Overview and Approval of Agenda [10:21]**. The Chair presented the agenda for review and requested a motion to approve the agenda. The Chair requested to move item (V)(a)(ii) to the end of the agenda, following 'Continuing Business,' due to a scheduling conflict for the presenter.

[11:14] Ms. Tsuhako moved and [11:23] Ms. Laborte seconded to approve the agenda as presented. [11:26] Seeing no additions or corrections at this time, the Chair called the question. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes [11:30]. The Chair reminded members that the November 19, 2022, meeting minutes were available electronically. The Chair provided time for members to review the minutes and asked if there were any additions or corrections.

[12:42] The Chair recognized Brig. Gen. Oliveira's attendance at 10:11 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 19 of 27 members present.

[13:46] Ms. Tsuhako moved and [13:48] Ms. Menino seconded to approve the minutes as presented. [13:56] Seeing no additions or corrections at this time, the Chair called the question. The motion passed unanimously.

- III. **Public Testimony [14:11]**. Chair Morishige opened the floor to public testimony on any agenda item and reminded attendees that public testimony will also be accepted after each agenda item under 'New Business' and 'Continuing Business.' There was none.

- IV. **New Business [15:08]**.

- a. **Discussion regarding Housing First and Community First approaches to ending homelessness, including lessons learned from other communities and from evaluation of local efforts. [15:13]**

[15:30] The scheduled presenter was not present during this agenda item. The Chair provided a brief summary of several trips made by stakeholders to the Community First! village outside of Austin, TX to learn more about their implementation of a communal village housing model. The Chair elected to move to the next agenda item and return to this item later.

[17:26] The Chair reminded members that item V(a)(ii) has been moved toward the end of the agenda due to the presenter's availability.

Summary of intended presentation by Dr. Anna Pruitt provided by Chair Morishige [18:25].

[18:25] The Chair informed members that Dr. Pruitt was unavailable to attend the meeting due to illness. The Chair summarized key indicators from the City & County of Honolulu's Housing First IV project, which utilizes Ohana Zone funds to pay for rental subsidies and supportive services. The report evaluated four subprograms, including 20 site-based vouchers at Kumuwai for seniors, 20 site-based vouchers at Hale Maluhia for survivors of domestic violence, 10 scattered-site vouchers for young adults through Hale Kipa, and 10 scattered-site vouchers for chronically homeless adults (with a focus on LGBTQ+) through Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center.

The Housing First IV program maintained high retention rates overall, serving 152 individuals (95 adults and 57 children) since March 2020. About one-third of clients have exited, mostly to other permanent housing. The program's housing retention rate is 97%, which is above the national permanent supportive housing average of 85%. The program maintains a small ratio of clients served, particularly in the scattered-site models, which may contribute to higher retention rates.

Dr. Pruitt's report acknowledged that the site-based programs generally had quicker lease-up times and transitions to other permanent housing, but this difference may be attributed to the specific subpopulations. The scattered-site subprograms sometimes struggled to find eligible clients right away. In general, the clients served reflected the demographics of their specific subpopulation.

Dr. Pruitt's report also captured some emergency and homeless service utilization data for clients at the start of their program participation. The report notes that there is a potential for substantial cost savings over the next few years as participants may be using fewer emergency services.

Finally, the report's recommendations include: expanding Ohana Zone funds to fund kauhale-style housing; expanding the Kumuwai model for seniors to provide more kupuna housing; preserving small-scale scattered-site programs; conducting a needs assessment with different subpopulations served. As a note, the recommendation to support kauhale-style housing is already being implemented with the Kamaoku project, though the evaluation was not a part of this year's report.

The Chair will share any questions about the evaluation with Dr. Pruitt. The full Housing First IV evaluation report is available on the City & County of Honolulu's website at: https://www.honolulu.gov/rep/site/dcs/dcs_docs/Housing_First_IV_Evaluation_Report_2022_Final_with_appendices.pdf.

b. Discussion regarding advocacy priorities for the 2023 State legislative session and advocacy at the County Council level for calendar year 2023. (Vote) [28:05]

Presentation by Ms. Cheryl Bellisario (Office on Homelessness & Housing Solutions) and Mr. Bob Wardlaw (Oahu Continuum of Care) [28:36].

[28:52] Ms. Bellisario introduced herself and Mr. Wardlaw, and noted that Ms. Alice would not be able to join the meeting.

[29:50] Mr. Wardlaw and Ms. Bellisario provided information about the 2023 State legislative session timeline and key priorities for the upcoming year. These main priority buckets include:

1. Increase housing stock, including supportive housing and non-traditional housing such as kauhale for people experiencing homelessness.
2. Keep people housed and sustain existing services, including maintaining funding for core homeless services. This is especially important for programs funded using the American Rescue Plan Act funds.
3. Provide quality services for individuals, especially those with the most urgent needs, by scaling services, increasing access to programs for higher needs populations, and paying workers a living wage.

[36:04] Mr. Wardlaw encouraged members to consider signing on to the advocacy letter entitled "[Support for Homelessness & Housing Programs in 2023 and Beyond.](#)"

[36:27] Ms. Bellisario added a link to the sign-on advocacy letter to the MS Teams chat and reminded members of OHHS's recent policy brief regarding the impact of ARPA funds on core homeless services.

[37:09] The Chair thanked Ms. Bellisario and Mr. Wardlaw and reminded members that there have been ongoing advocacy meetings to develop these priorities. The Chair noted that the Council has adopted legislative priorities in previous years for State-level advocacy, and shared that this year's intent is to extend the priorities to Council-level advocacy.

[38:33] The Chair asked for any questions from the Council regarding these items before asking for a motion to adopt these priorities. There were no questions.

[39:16] Ms. Menino moved and [39:24] Ms. Tshako seconded. The Chair called the question. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Menino temporarily disconnected from the meeting at 10:35 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 18 of 27 members present. Ms. Menino reconnected to the meeting at 10:40 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 19 of 27 members present.

[39:52] The Chair introduced Ms. Thielen and Ms. Menino to provide an update on the 2023 Point in Time (PIT) Count planning process.

Presentation by Ms. Laura Thielen (Partners in Care) and Ms. Brandee Menino (Bridging the Gap) [40:24].

[40:30] Ms. Thielen stated that the Oahu Continuum of Care will be conducting a full Point in Time (PIT) Count in January 2023. The PIT Count will ask people experiencing homelessness where they slept on the night of January 22, 2023. A majority of the PIT Count will be conducted by providers.

Oahu will be using the same survey tools and methodology of this past year, which includes the ArcGIS mapping tool and observation tool. The full survey will ask people about the reasons why they became homeless and other questions.

The reason for conducting the PIT Count is to satisfy the funding requirements from HUD and to help monitor the CoC's activities on Oahu and the neighbor islands. The PIT Count also helps to provide awareness updates to local legislators and stakeholders. Ms. Thielen described the criteria to count people for the official PIT Count, which only counts people who are unsheltered or living in emergency shelters, transitional shelters, domestic violence shelters, safe havens, or hotels/motels paid for by an organization. PIC will be working with some hospitals, colleges, and other institutions to get a better sense of people who are not literally homeless according to HUD. These additional numbers will not be included in the official report to HUD, but will be used to improve services for people who are on the verge of homelessness.

[47:14] Seeing no questions, the Chair introduced Ms. Menino to present on behalf of Bridging the Gap.

[47:35] Ms. Menino stated that BTG is planning the PIT Count for the same day. Each chapter will have a designated point of contact:

- Kauai: Makana Kamibayashi, makana@flickauai.org
- Maui: Maude Cumming, maude@flcmaui.org
- Hawaii: Carrie Hoopii, choopii@hopeserviceshawaii.org

In addition, Hawaii Island is in the process of modifying their customized questions, which include those who have been displaced by previous disasters in the community. The final report is

typically available in April. Hawaii Island will be recruiting volunteers and encourages government agencies to participate.

[49:48] The Chair clarified that BTG will be conducting surveys over a 7-day period to better account for fewer surveyors and a more rural region. Surveys will be unduplicated before the final tally. PIC will be conducting surveys over a shorter period of time. The Chair reminded members that the PIT Count numbers are not intended to be representative of every person experiencing homelessness, but are intended to provide a general trend over time. While the HMIS and program service utilization data captures people who participate in programs, some individuals surveyed during the PIT Count may not be engaged in services.

Mr. Brackeen III temporarily disconnected from the meeting at 10:45 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 18 of 27 members present. Mr. Brackeen III reconnected to the meeting at 10:49 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 19 of 27 members present.

[50:06] The Chair returned to item V(a)(i). Noting that the original presenter was still unavailable, The Chair asked other members and attendees who also participated in the recent trip to the Community First! village to share their perspectives.

[54:09] Mr. Los Banos remarked that the Community First! program has strong leadership and added that their tiny home models are eligible for other funding sources. There is community buy-in to fund the model, which encourages government to support the program. On the other hand, sometimes government seeks to fund certain programs that the community does not seem as interested in. Mr. Los Banos noted that the HONU program now operated by the City's Department of Community Services has experienced similar opportunities to engage the community, such as local churches and groups that come together to provide additional meals.

[57:16] The Chair asked Ms. Hirota if she would like to share her perspectives from the trip.

[57:29] Ms. Hirota stated that the trip to Austin provided opportunities to connect with other parts of the State on shared visions. Ms. Hirota noted that Community First! is one piece of the overall solution to ending homelessness in Texas, not the only solution. There have also been large investments in infrastructure using ARPA and other funds, which may lessen the costs for developers as they step in to build new housing projects.

[1:00:26] The Chair thanked Mr. Los Banos and Ms. Hirota for providing their perspectives. The Chair noted that the counties have been implementing similar infrastructure investments to support the creation of housing, and the State has partnered to overlay some of the funding for services. The Chair highlighted how the Community First! village and other similar efforts require partnerships with different levels of government and support from the private sector working together with people with lived experience.

Mr. Minor left the meeting at 10:59 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 18 of 27 members present.

V. **Continuing Business [1:01:40].**

- 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. [1:02:08]**

The Chair reminded the Council of the revisions to the Ten-Year Strategic Plan to incorporate the three basic levers of change, including focusing on competencies among frontline providers, building leadership capacity, and focusing on organizational drivers. The Plan is less

programmatical and more structural, emphasizing the framework needed to support the State's goals. The Chair noted that that Plan is subject to change with the incoming Administration.

The Chair also noted that the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) is expected to formally release their updated federal strategic plan by January 2023. There will likely be an emphasis on equity, homelessness prevention, and engaging other sectors to be a part of the solution.

In addition, Maui County has solicited bids for their strategic plan and is in the process of selecting a vendor. Kauai County is in discussions to update their local level plan, and the County of Hawaii recently convened a group to work on a strategic road map for their homelessness and affordable housing plan.

VI. **General Announcements [1:05:47].**

A. Chairperson and Staff Reports: October / November 2022 [1:05:47]

[1:05:52] The Chair stated that his term ends on December 5, 2022 and thanked the Council and members of the public for their continued support.

[1:16:16] The USICH Executive Director Jeff Olivet and Senior Regional Advisor Katy Miller visited Hawaii last week and were inspired by Hawaii's willingness to problem-solve and work together. USICH staff visited several programs and met with leaders including Governor-elect Green, Mayor Blangiardi, and other programs.

[1:07:41] The Supportive Housing Work Group concluded its final meeting and SOHHS staff are working on a case statement/final report to share with the Legislature and other stakeholders. The SOHHS also released a policy brief last month outlining the impact of ARPA funds on core homeless services, highlighting the need to sustain critical funding in FY24 and beyond.

[1:08:25] 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 2022). Green color codes beside these metrics indicate a positive change since the last period. Yellow color codes indicate no change since the last period. Red color codes indicate a negative change since the last period.

- **[1:08:34] PIT Count:** 5,973 people (2022 PIT Count)
 - The Chair congratulated members and stakeholders for reductions in the PIT Count, especially with family homelessness. Specifically, family homelessness declined 53% between 2016 and 2022.
- **[1:09:17] Housing Inventory Count:** 4,984 beds (2022 HIC inventory)
 - The Chair highlighted the positive impact of increasing bed capacity, especially with permanent housing.
- **[1:09:35] Permanent Housing Placements:** 33% exits to PH on Oahu and 45% exits to PH on the neighbor islands (January – September 2022)
 - The percentage of exits to permanent housing on both Oahu and the neighbor islands has declined to the percentages that they were around 2011-2012.
 - The declining percentage of exits to permanent housing likely reflects the maximum capacity of the Coordinated Entry System to make referrals to available programs. Additionally, people who do have housing vouchers are struggling due to limited housing inventory.
- **[1:11:30] Exits to Permanent Housing by Program Type and County** (January – September 2022)

- Overall, it has been challenging for programs of all types to exit people into permanent housing for many program types and counties.
- **[1:12:39] Emergency Shelter Length of Stay** (January – September 2022)
 - The Chair noted that the reported metrics focus on the average length of stay in a shelter program for those who have exited the program.
 - In discussions with both CoCs, the Chair learned that the average length of stay for those still in shelters is actually much longer.
 - The length of stay in shelter programs is a complex metric that requires looking at averages, medians, and other contextual data.
- **[1:14:26] Transitional Shelter Length of Stay** (January – September 2022)
 - The average length of stay in transitional shelters for those who are still sheltered is lower than the average length of stay for those who have exited.

[1:15:01] The Chair recognized the presence of Ms. StormoGipson and informed the members that the agenda will proceed with item V(a)(i) following the written updates from Council members.

B. Written Reports from Council Members [1:15:10].

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):

- *Department of Human Services (DHS) and Homeless Programs Office (HPO)*
- *Department of Health (DOH)*
- *Department of Labor & Industrial Relations (DLIR)*
- *Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT)*
- *Department of Public Safety*
- *Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)*
- *Department of Defense (DOD)*
- *Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA)*
- *Department of the Attorney General*
- *Department of Education*
- *Hawaii State House of Representatives*
- *Hawaii State Senate*
- *Hawaii Public Housing Authority*
- *City & County of Honolulu*
- *County of Kauai*
- *County of Maui*
- *County of Hawaii*
- *Continuum of Care for Hawaii Island*
- *Continuum of Care for Maui*
- *Continuum of Care for Kauai*
- *Continuum of Care for Oahu, Partners in Care*
- *U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development*
- *U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*
- *Faith-based community*
- *Business community*

Ms. Tsuhako temporarily left the meeting at 11:19 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 17 of 27 members present. Ms. Tsuhako returned to the meeting at 11:22 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 18 of 27 members present.

Ms. Hirota temporarily exited the meeting at 11:22 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 17 of 27 members present. Ms. Hirota returned to the meeting at 11:24 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 18 of 27 members present.

[1:22:35] The Chair stated that the agenda will reconvene to item V(a)(i).

Presentation by Ms. Kenna StormoGipson and Ms. Aura Reyes (HIHAC) [1:22:37].

[1:22:37] Ms. StormoGipson displayed a photo of the delegation to Finland, which included representation from three counties and four islands. Ms. StormoGipson asked Ms. Reyes to share some key takeaways from the trip.

[1:24:25] Ms. Reyes added that one key takeaway from the trip was the need to find long-term solutions to work around the issues that people have, which helps them to have more power over their life choices. Ms. Reyes noted that this is about changing the narrative and creating spaces for people to come together.

[1:25:38] Ms. StormoGipson shared additional insights from the Finland trip regarding rental assistance, including the empowerment of tenants to have autonomy. One example is that rental assistance in Finland gets paid to the tenants and they are responsible for making the choice to pay their rent. Ms. StormoGipson and Ms. Reyes remarked on Finland's homelessness statistics since 1987 and noted that most of their approximately 4,000 people experiencing homelessness were not unsheltered.

[1:28:08] Ms. StormoGipson experienced connectivity issues, resulting in frequent interruptions.

[1:28:50] After some interrupted connectivity, Ms. StormoGipson shared the approximate government investment in housing over the past year and stated that Finland spends approximately 500 euros per person per year on housing. By rough estimates, Hawaii has exceeded that level of investment per person. Ms. StormoGipson added that Hawaii will need a significant amount of housing to be price restricted and to stay permanently affordable.

[1:31:54] Ms. StormoGipson experienced connectivity issues, resulting in brief interruptions. Ms. StormoGipson signaled for Ms. Reyes to continue presenting.

[1:32:31] Ms. Reyes explained that the City of Helsinki "regulates" the housing market by ensuring that a greater percentage (21%) of housing units are affordable and price restricted, compared to approximately 7% of housing in Hawaii. This helps to avoid perceived "low-income" housing parts of the city and reinforces that even those with lower incomes are expected to live at the same standard as higher income earners.

[1:34:07] Ms. StormoGipson stated that Finland began a national program in 2008 to close down their shelters and replace them with permanent housing. The increase in supported housing units was proportionate to the decrease in shelter beds.

[1:35:36] Ms. Reyes noted that Ms. StormoGipson's connection may be interrupted and summarized that most of Finland's focus has shifted to preventing homelessness and keeping people housed. Ms. Reyes continued to check whether Ms. StormoGipson's connection had been restored.

[1:37:36] Ms. StormoGipson continued to experience frequent connectivity interruptions.

[1:38:54] Ms. StormoGipson apologized for the connectivity issues and summarized that the next step will be collaboration between the State and counties. Ms. StormoGipson noted that Hawaii has a very collaborative spirit and asked if members had any questions.

[1:40:10] The Chair thanked Ms. StormoGipson and Ms. Reyes for their presentation. The Chair noted that Finland made these changes over time and stuck with its goal to reduce homelessness through creating affordable housing. At the same time, Finland did not resort to creating 100% socialized housing or 100% public housing to accomplish its goal. The Chair expressed hope for the future of scaling affordable housing statewide and credited the importance of partnerships, as stated by the presenters.

[1:41:58] Seeing that there were no questions for Ms. StormoGipson and Ms. Reyes, the Chair thanked both presenters for their leadership on affordable housing advocacy and for continuing to suggest system improvements.

Sen. San Buenaventura left the meeting at 11:27 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 17 of 27 members present.

Ms. Thielen temporarily left the meeting at 11:36 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 16 of 27 members present.

Ms. Portner and Ms. Varner temporarily left the meeting at 11:38 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 14 of 27 members present.

Ms. Thielen returned to the meeting at 11:40 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 15 of 27 members present.

Ms. Varner returned to the meeting at 11:42 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 16 of 27 members present.

VII. **Permitted Interaction Group.**
None.

VIII. **Topics for Upcoming Meetings [1:42:44]**

The Chair asked members to contact his office with additional suggestions for upcoming meetings. The future meeting schedule will be released by the incoming staff. The office can be reached at 586-0193 or by e-mail at gov.homelessness@hawaii.gov.

IX. **Executive Session [1:43:26]**

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. **Meeting Schedule [1:43:30]**

The Chair noted that the incoming Administration will set the calendar for the 2023 Council meetings.

Ms. Portner returned to the meeting at 11:45 a.m. Quorum was updated to reflect 17 of 27 members present.

XI. **Adjourn [1:43:45]**

Chair Morishige entertained a motion to adjourn.

[1:43:59] Motion was made by Ms. Laborte and [1:44:02] seconded by Ms. Tsuhako.

[1:44:06] The Chair called for the question. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m. and thanked the members.

MINUTES CERTIFICATION

Minutes prepared by:

Emma Grochowsky
Homelessness Special Assistant

Date

Approved by the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness at their Regular Meeting on _____.

[] As Presented [] As Amended

Scott S. Morishige, MSW
Chair

Date