



## JACKSONVILLE CITY COUNCIL

### **Critical Quality of Life Issues Special Committee: Homelessness Working Group Meeting Minutes**

**October 13, 2022**

**9:00 a.m.**

**Lynwood Roberts Room  
First Floor, City Hall  
117 W. Duval Street**

**Topic:** Critical Quality of Life Issues Special Committee: Homelessness Working Group

**Attendance:** Council President Freeman; Council Members Boylan and Salem; Noel Comeaux, Northeast Florida Regional Council; Colleen Hampsey, Council Research Division

Subject Matter Experts: Dawn Gilman, CEO Changing Homelessness; Harrison Conyers, Military and Veterans Affairs Operations Manager; K.O. Campbell, Program Lead for Breakthrough Results on Community Solutions' Built for Zero

**Convened:** 9:01 am

Council Member Boylan welcomed the group and called for introductions. He lauded the group's progress thus far, reviewed the upcoming schedule and said that the end goal is to make policy recommendations for council.

Dawn Gilman, CEO Changing Homelessness, spoke about the group's focus, specifically about what in the system of care needs to change, what can change, and what is the roadmap to better outcomes.

K.O. Campbell, Community Solutions, gave a presentation about the Built for Zero movement, which involves more than 100 cities and counties that have committed to measurably ending homelessness for entire populations. Built for Zero relies upon using quality data to affect change in how local homeless response systems work and the impact they can achieve. Ms. Campbell emphasized that homelessness is solvable, and that good data can show service gaps and where to direct resources. She explained the concept of functional zero, which is an ongoing state where homelessness is continuously rare and brief. Functional zero is measured by the counting when fewer people are experiencing homelessness than are routinely exiting homelessness. Ms. Campbell talked about targeting populations, veteran homelessness programs, and collecting accurate data about inflow and outflow. She spoke about the wraparound services provided to the veteran homeless population, such as VA and HUD benefit assistance, legal

services, medical referrals, job training and childcare. Ms. Campbell described by-name lists, which are comprehensive lists of every person in a community experiencing homelessness, updated in real time using information collected and shared with consent. Each person on the list has a file that includes their name, homeless history, health, and housing needs. She noted the effect of the Covid pandemic and housing crisis on housing placement, which has increased the time to placement threefold.

Carnell Oliver asked about state and federal funds related to homelessness and how much money comes to Jacksonville. He asked how to get more state/federal funding. He also asked about universal housing vouchers. Ms. Gilman said that one could reach out to members of Congress who sit on HUD appropriations committees (Rep. Rutherford), and she also said that relevant state funds are minimal. Ms. Gilman said that the city will receive \$6.8 million in homelessness related federal renewal grants this year, which helps with 262 housing units. She also talked about Section 8 vouchers, and how the demand greatly outweighs the supply due to a lack of funding. She mentioned that it is difficult to get deeply affordable housing built because of the small or nonexistent profit margin for developers.

Dawn Gilman, Changing Homelessness, reviewed the programs discussed in the previous meeting, Philly Cares, Housing First 100, Moore Place in Charlotte, and the permanent supportive housing initiative in Evansville, Indiana. She explained what categorizes one as chronically homeless, defined as an individual over the age of 55, with a diagnosed disability, homeless for more than a year and least likely to ever be fully employed. Ms. Gilman said that Jacksonville has 191 chronically homeless individuals on the by-name list, and she explained what the cost would be to get them all housed within 2 years and keep them housed for 3 years, and what the cost would be to do nothing at all. The estimate to get them housed within 2 years and keep them housed for 3 years would be \$13.5 million, and the taxpayer's cost (hospital visits, criminal justice etc.) to do nothing to house this group is an estimated \$25.9 million.

CVP Salem asked about the homeless geography, and whether that population is centered downtown. Ms. Gilman said the majority is located downtown, with some concentrated at the beaches and ICW. CVP Salem asked about nonprofit (Sulzbacher etc.) capacity and Ms. Gilman said they are operating at or above capacity. CVP Salem spoke about getting the business community involved in funding. Shannon Nazworth, Ability Housing, talked about high retention rates for housing placements, a limited supply of landlords and the overlap between this group's work with the affordable housing group. CP Freeman spoke about the slow pace of governmental actions and asked about the contribution Florida receives as compared to other states.

Harrison Conyers, Military and Veterans Affairs Operations Manager, gave a presentation of his department's services. The MVA department is a special department at City Hall to assist veterans, widows and surviving children, with 18 employees (15 of whom are veterans themselves) and the goal is to make Jacksonville the most military and veteran-friendly city in the world. The department has 3 main functions, veteran services, social services and outreach/advocacy. MVA holds annual civic and veteran-related events, the Veteran's Day parade, donated goods and services to Vets in needs, and has a Military Spouse Night Out as an appreciation event just for military spouses. Mr. Conyers talked about the homeless veteran's reintegration program, which assists veterans who "at risk" of being homeless within 60 days, with at-risk meaning low income, facing eviction, referred from a shelter, welfare or public assistance recipients as well as those who are "recently housed" veterans within the past 14 days, and those veterans recently incarcerated. Veterans in this program cannot have a bad conduct discharge. Mr.

Conyers spoke about other services his department provides, such as job placement, legal assistance, aid with benefit sign up, resume writing and tax preparation. He mentioned a project in Asheville, wherein a nonprofit purchased an old hotel to use for veteran housing.

### Discussion

Pastor Barlow talked about the City's responsibility to help the homeless, corporate welfare and about requiring a 5 percent contribution to homeless programs from any entity receiving economic incentives from the City.

CVP Salem said that there may be a chance to use funds from the City's opioid settlement to help with homeless substance abuse treatment.

Dawn Gilman emphasized the need to increase service provider's capacity, especially for permanent housing options.

Paul Stasi, City Rescue Mission, said there are beds available in the shelters, and he said that substance addiction often goes hand in hand with homelessness.

### Public Comment

Pastor Barlow talked about a success story from a gentleman he helped to get back on his feet after dealing with substance abuse and homelessness, and he spoke about the importance of dignity.

CM Howland wrapped up the meeting (via Zoom). The next meeting for this group will be October 27<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am to discuss best practices and programs in other cities like Miami, Atlanta and Minneapolis.

**Adjourned:** 10:49 am

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

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