



JACKSONVILLE CITY COUNCIL

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

October 27, 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 Members Howland, Boylan and Salem; Noel Comeaux, Northeast Florida Regional Council; Colleen Hampsey, Council Research Division

Subject Matter Experts: Dawn Gilman, CEO Changing Homelessness; Manny Sarria, Assistant Executive Director with Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust; David Hewitt, Director of Housing Stability, Hennepin County, Minnesota; Cathryn Vassell, CEO, Partners for HOME in Atlanta, Georgia

Convened: 9:01 am

Council Member Boylan welcomed the group and called for introductions. He praised the group's progress thus far and briefed the group on the discussion from the full CQLI meeting the previous week. CM Boylan explained the legislative process for any recommendations from this working group, wherein a council member will select what recommendation to proceed with drafting into legislation, and the bills would not be sponsored by the CQLI Committee as a body. Dawn Gilman, CEO Changing Homelessness, gave an overview of the group's work to date, and she explained the upcoming discussion with three individuals from other cities about their homelessness programs.

Manny Sarria, Assistant Executive Director with Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust, was in attendance remotely to speak about the efforts of his organization. The Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust serves as the lead agency for Miami-Dade County's homeless Continuum of Care responsible for program oversight, planning and operations. The Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust administers proceeds of a one-percent Food and Beverage Tax, a dedicated funding source for homelessness programs and assistance. Approved in 1992, the enabling legislation for the Homeless and Domestic Violence F&B Tax became the first dedicated source of funding for homelessness through a tax in the country. Eighty-five percent of funds go toward preventing and ending homelessness; 15 percent is allocated to the construction and operation of domestic violence centers. This tax is collected on all food and beverage

sales in restaurants that gross more than \$400,000 a year and are licensed by the State of Florida to sell alcoholic beverages for consumption on the premises, except for hotels and motels and with the exception of facilities in Miami Beach, Surfside and Bal Harbour. Currently, the Homeless Trust has more than 8,000 beds/units in its Housing Inventory Count dedicated to serving persons who are homeless and formerly homeless. Mr. Sarria said that the trust had roughly \$30 million in revenue last year. CM Howland asked about funding allocations, and Mr. Sarria said that the funds go to rental assistance for the most vulnerable individuals first. Mr. Sarria said that there has been a decrease in homelessness in Miami as related to their programming. He also said that in the early years, they focused more on creating shelter capacity but through lessons learned they now focus more upon aid with paying rent. When asked about pushback from neighbors. Mr. Sarria said that they do neighborhood outreach, but they deal mostly with private landlords and nonprofit developers who build affordable housing.

David Hewitt, Director of Housing Stability, Hennepin County, Minnesota, was in attendance remotely to speak about his organization's efforts to end homelessness. Mr. Hewitt said that Hennepin County grappled with homelessness and an increase in encampments during the pandemic. He mentioned the Minnesota right to shelter for families law, which places families with children in hotels if shelters are full. Mr. Hewitt said that the cornerstone of their program is case management. They have a staff of case managers who provide wraparound services for their clients and walk them through the housing placement process before and afterwards. When asked about funding, Mr. Hewitt said that they are funded currently through ARP monies, but they are looking at other options for when those funds are gone in 2024. CM Boylan asked about employment assistance/training. Mr. Hewitt said that they are in partnership with the county workforce development team in a pilot program that assists with training and job training.

Cathryn Vassell, CEO, Partners for HOME in Atlanta, Georgia spoke about how her organization has braided together funding streams to streamline the affordable housing development process. Ms. Vassell said that the City of Atlanta contributed \$25 million that was matched by \$25 million in private/philanthropic dollars to develop new housing units. Through new construction and rehabilitating older dwellings, they have increased affordable stock with mixed income projects where a percentage of units are set aside for subsidized rent. They have projects throughout the city and the structures are appealing and match the neighborhood. CM Boylan asked about NIMBYism and Ms. Vassell said that mixed income projects get less pushback and also decentralize poverty. She spoke about how having public money as skin in the game incentivizes others to invest. She said that they got commitments from council members running for election to permit the mixed income projects in their districts. When asked about proximity to transit, Ms. Vassell said that it is considered for each project. She explained the prohibition on building fully congregant housing (where all units are supportive units) with public funds, which is not allowed under state law due to Georgia's interpretation of a DOJ settlement decree related to deinstitutionalization.

Dawn Gilman, Changing Homelessness, talked about the results from the survey they conducted and from the SWOT analysis. The results indicate that a lack of multi-year funding is seen as a weakness, since one-year grants don't provide enough time to get programs up and running. She also mentioned the lack of deeply affordable housing stock.

Discussion

Cindy Funkhouser, Sulzbacher, said that a sustainable revenue source like they have in Miami is critical to affecting lasting change. She said that mixed income projects need to be all parts of Jacksonville. CM Boylan talked about changing the culture, for those who rail against affordable housing in their neighborhoods. Dawn Gilman talked about the intersection between economy, equity and environment as related to affordable housing. She also spoke about the importance of living near your job. Pastor Barlow talked about rental assistance and homeless prevention as a means to protect folks from dying on the streets.

Public Comment

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. He also said that policy recommendations should be supported by the CQLI committee as legislation and not rely on the whim of council members to take them up.

Ms. Funkhouser spoke about the Sulzbacher new social services bus that will be rolling out early next year and will travel to different neighborhoods to assist residents with a variety of needs.

CM Howland wrapped up the meeting and said that any of the program models they heard about could be replicated in Jacksonville. He requested a map of affordable housing units by council district from the Administration.

The next meeting for this working group will be November 7, 2022, at 9:00 am.

Adjourned: 10:38 am

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

CHampsey@coj.net 904.255.5151

Posted 10.31.22 5:00 pm