

HOMELESS ADVISORY COMMISSION

December 12, 2019

AGENDA

0.0 Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions--J. Huettner

1.0 Approval Of November 14, 2019 Meeting Minutes

NEW BUSINESS

2.0 Proposed Homeless Bill of Rights Ordinance Update

2.1 BOA Status/Public Hearing

2.2 Public Loo Update

3.0 New Haven McKinney-Vento Update (BOE): Guest: Daniel Diaz

4.0 Shelter Census Update--V. George

5.0 H.A.C. Membership Update/Election

6.0 CAN Update

7.0 YHAPP Update

8.0 Announcements

9.0 Adjournment

City of New Haven Homeless Shelter Count Dashboard

November 2019

Youth: Under 18 / 18-24

Male: 2 / 7

Female: 0 / 11

Transfemales 0 / 2

Average Singles: 242

Male: 184

Female: 58

Couples 0

Families: 38

Adults: 42

Children: 74

Emergency Shelter Management Services

Average Count Males : 63

Highest Nightly Count: 50

Lowest Nightly Count: 74

Columbus House Inc.

Average Count: Males -66 Females - 29

18-24 Youth (females -2 males - 2)

Highest Nightly Count: 74

Lowest Nightly Count: 59

Over Flow Shelter Average: 55

New Reach

Life Haven

Families- 25 Adults- 26 Children - 47

Individual Female -

Martha's Place

Families - 3 Adults— 3 Children - 4

Individual Females - 27

Christian Community Action

Hillside Family Shelter – Davenport

Families – 3 Adults- 3 Children- 5

Hillside Family Shelter – Sylvan

Families – 7 Adult- 10 Children- 18

Youth Continuum Inc.

Under 18

Males - 2

Females -0

18 -24

Males - 5

Females- 9

Trans-females- 2

Warming Center CLOSED

Omega 7th Day Adventist Women (Cap – 25)

Average Nightly Count: 2

Highest Nightly Count: 3

Lowest Nightly Count: 0

CITY OF NEW HAVEN HOMELESS ADVISORY COMMISSION

November 14, 2019

Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Members Present: J. Huettner, E. Sabin, E. Robinson, D. Ecton, N. Hogan, V. Wilson,

Ex-Officio: V. George, N. Torres

Staff: V. George

Guests: M. Marichal

Members Excused Absent: - A. Roth,

Members Absent: - J. Hardy, C. Phillips Jr.,

Meeting called to order 6:06pm.

J. Huettner began the meeting with introductions.

October Minutes were reviewed and unanimously accepted.

Proposed Homeless Bill of Rights (HBR) Submission to BOA

J. Huettner shared that the final draft of the HBR with additional input from Alder A. Roth was ready for submission to the BOA. Commissioners were given a copy of the final draft. J. Huettner stated that any additional supplemental information can be presented at the BOA public hearing. He then entertained a motion by D. Ecton to submit the revised HBR Resolution to the BOA for consideration with public hearing, E. Robinson second the motion. The motion passed unanimously. V. George will submit resolution to Dr. Dakibu Muley, CSA for signature and forward to BOA liaison for submission to BOA.

Public Loo Discussion

V. George distributed copies of the public loo that A. Wolf and B. MacMullen designed. She shared that the design was intended to be consistent with that of the bus shelters. M. Marichal shared her discussion with B. MacMullen who stated that this loo will be built with local materials which would be cost effective and easier for replacement parts. V. George shared a second loo designed by ExeLoo Manufacturers – this was a prefabricated twin restroom, with a 5-stage auto wash system, and remote monitoring. To date there are three loo models for consideration. V. George will convene the loo committee in January to explore next steps.

Shelter Update

V. George shared that the Columbus House Overflow Shelter is scheduled to open November 18, 2019 with 75 beds for men. She is currently working out details to open an interim warming center for 25 women to open mid – November also.

Homelessness and the Elderly – tabled.

CAN Update

T. Clark shared that CAN is currently focused on diverting families from entering shelter, and rapidly housing families that are in shelter through the rapid rehousing program.

From 9/1/19 – 10/31/19, 211 received 2,248 calls for housing assistance. Of those calls, 698 attended their appointments – there were 914 no shows. Between 8/1/19 – 9/31/19, 192 households were enrolled in rapid rehousing, which is short term rental assistance with case management.

T. Clark also shared that the CAN received a CDBG Small Cities Grant to bring resources to the shoreline (Guilford), and the CAN's focus in the upcoming year is to integrate the Outreach & Engagement system statewide.

No YHAP Update.

Meeting adjourned.

NEW HAVEN REGISTER

New Haven proposes bill of rights for homeless people

By Mary E. O'Leary Dec. 4, 2019

NEW HAVEN — A year after it was the subject of rallies and public discussion, a proposed ordinance codifying a bill of rights for the homeless that would tackle interaction with police, the need for public bathrooms and the freedom to use public spaces has been released.

The conditions experienced by the homeless were addressed in a series of hearings, something that grew out a renewed focus on the need for affordable housing for city residents with the Homeless Advisory Committee proposing the bill of rights.

Eli Sabin, one of the members of the advisory group, said advocates for the homeless have “done a lot of work to reach out to city residents experiencing homelessness,” as well as to the police, city departments and businesses whom he said have reacted positively to it.

Sabin, who was recently elected alder from downtown’s Ward 1, said the police, in particular, “have been an important ally in development of the bill.”

He said the advocates have been working “to get this passed in order to improve the quality of life for the homeless.” He said the committee feels the areas that are addressed in the proposal are those where changes can be made.

John Huettner, the chairman of the advisory group, could not be reached for comment. Sabin said he has been working on the issue for years.

New Haven counted 503 people experiencing homelessness, with 98 of them children in January 2019, 26 fewer people than in 2018, according to the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness. Connecticut had an estimated 3,976 people experiencing homelessness on any given day, as reported by Continuums of Care to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in January 2018, according to the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness.

For the city’s proposed bill of rights, an assignment to an aldermanic committee where the proposal would get a hearing is not likely until early next year.

In the document, there is an emphasis on the homeless being able “to move freely in public spaces, including sitting, lying down, sleeping, or resting in public spaces, both individually and while assembling in groups, which shall include but not be limited to public sidewalks, public parks, public transportation,

and public buildings, in the same manner as any other person or groups and without discrimination on the basis of his or her housing status.”

The introduction to the proposed bill objects to the “criminalization of homelessness,” which refers to practices “such as issuing arrests, citations, warnings and requests to move along — that are used to enforce such laws.”

It asks that the homeless not be discriminated against by “public or private actors” when a homeless person seeks, obtains or wants to maintain employment, due to a lack of a permanent residence.

Another basic right, as stated in the proposal, is to have access to bathrooms and to clean water in public spaces in facilities “designated for this purpose ... free to all persons regardless of housing status.”

To the extent that they do not now exist, the proposal states that the city and community partners look for grant opportunities to put these facilities in place no later than a year after the ordinance goes into effect. Their adequacy would be reviewed each year by the Homeless Advisory Committee.

It also listed the right to medical care, “free from discrimination based on housing status” and the right to vote and receive documentation proving their identity in order to register to cast a ballot.

The ordinance refers to the protection of personal property and the right of the homeless “to privacy as related to personal property ... to the same extent as personal property in a permanent residence when that person is in the proximity of his or her property.”

It asks that city police develop a standard operating procedure for the safeguarding of personal property when a homeless person is detained, arrested or hospitalized. It states that the homeless be given no less than 48 hours notice if the city decides to remove a homeless encampment and make every effort to preserve and make accessible for retrieval official documents, particularly those showing personal identification, legal records or government benefits.

It would codify the right to personal safety and “effective law enforcement response” to violent incidents involving the homeless. It also states the right to temporary shelter during extreme hot or cold weather and the right of families to stay together.

There was testimony last year on all items covered by the proposed ordinance, including the lack of shelters for women and the separation of men from the rest of their family.

New Haven spends \$1 million a year on services for the homeless, something that is lacking in the surrounding towns.

The bill of rights would allow the homeless to sit, rest or sleep in temporary shelter, such a legally parked car or recreational vehicle or a tent “as permitted by law, for the purpose of immediate survival of persons, and their pets, without harassment by law enforcement officers or others.”

The bill also recognizes a right to give or accept food and shelter and to connect the homeless with social service organizations, medical care and substance abuse counseling. It asserts a right to panhandle in public spaces “provided that such activity does not constitute criminal conduct” under city ordinances or general statutes.

It codifies equal treatment by all municipal agencies, as well as access to housing. It also asks that the city continue to work with community partners and area governments to provide sufficient, safe and ADA compliant emergency shelter to those experiencing homelessness “because housing is a basic human right.”

Several alders on the Human Services Committee could not be reached for comment.

[PIT Summary New Haven](#) by [Helen Bennett](#) on Scribd

mary.oleary@hearstmediact.com; 203-641-2577