

CITY OF NEW HAVEN HOMELESS ADVISORY COMMISSION

June 13, 2019

Minutes

Attendance:

Members Present: J. Huettner, N. Hogan, C. Gormley, C. Phillips Jr., E. Sabin

Ex-Officio: V. George

Staff: V. George

Guests: B. Huang, R. Thoreson, J. A. Torres, R. Tung, T. Clark, J. D. Cervero

Members Excused Absent: - V. Wilson, A. Roth,

Members Absent: - E. Robinson, J. Hardy, D. Ecton, N. Torres,

0.0 J. Huettner called the meeting to order and continued with introductions.

1.0 May 9, 2019 Meeting Minutes were approved with one abstention.

2.0 J. Huettner requested a moment of silence for the passing of Sheila Bell, former Community Service Administrator who was instrumental in the development of the Homeless 10 Year Plan and very strong supporter of homeless initiatives.

3.0 J. Huettner also share a June 2, 2019 article from the Connecticut Post which sited homeless encampment issues in Milford, CT.

4.0 J. Huettner notified the group that as follow up, he will be submitting a letter of support to Zoning for the Y2Y shelter on behalf of the Commission (who voted on June 14, 2018 to support the Y2Y Youth Shelter).

NEW BUSINESS

5.0 J. Huettner gave a summary of the Homeless Bill Rights (HBR) process and content. He outlined the steps that were taken to ensure that the HBR was a comprehensive document and that there was an inclusive process that included feedback from homeless clients, service providers, activists, city officials, and elected officials. He shared his dismay with the slow to non-existent response from some city officials. He expressed his satisfaction with the content of the HBR- stating that it was a comprehensive document. Since the commission spent the May meeting dissecting and revising the HBR, J. Huettner invited commissioners to discuss any outstanding document feedback. V. George reminded the group that Connecticut is NOT a right to shelter state and an ordinance could have serious fiscal implications. She also stated that this administration is committed to serving the homeless as evidenced in the \$1.4 M General Funds allocation.

The Commissioners spent the remainder of the meeting discussing how to re-submit the HBR document to the BOA- Social Service Committee.

There were three options on the table:

- To submit the HBR as a Resolution
- To submit the HBR as an Ordinance
- Or to submit the HBR and allow the Board of Alders to decide

The group openly discussed the pros and cons of each option

ORDINANCE

RESOLUTION

PROS Ordinance creates stronger protection for the homeless
Ordinance is a binding document that's easier to enforce.
Gives the homeless legal options

A resolution is a policy statement that would reflect the City's commitment to serving the homeless.

A resolution protects the rights of the homeless without financial burden to the City.

A Resolution would not affect the fact that Connecticut is NOT a Right to Shelter State. More likely to get BOA support

CONS Connecticut is NOT a Right to Shelter State.
This ordinance as it reads would require City to provide shelter for everyone that needs shelter .
This would create financial hardship for the City. The Harp Administration does not support an Ordinance.

A Resolution is nonbinding on the City. It has less enforcement power.

Since several Commissioners were absent, N. Hogan recommended the group vote by email to capture everyone's vote. The group agreed. V. George would send out ballots by email, and all ballot would be due on 6/24/19.

6.0 V. George reported that the number of men in shelter was up as compared to the same time period last year. The number of single women and families remained relatively constant.

7.0 T. Clark gave a Greater New Haven CAN update. Between April 1 and May 31, 211 received 2,299 requests for shelter; of the 2299 callers, only 343 showed up for a CAN assessment. Of the 343, 38 were enrolled into shelter, 78 were diverted, 141 were placed on shelter waitlists, 9 refused shelter and 77 were not appropriate. On the exit side of CAN 148 received Rapid Rehousing (short term rental assistance with case management).

8.0 Meeting adjourned.