



Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless
Quarterly Meeting – May 20, 2014

Chair, appointed by the Office of the Governor: Mike Doyle

Members present:

Department of State Health Services (DSHS): Anna Sonenthal by phone
Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA): Sharon Gamble, Brooke Boston
Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS): Donna Wilder (representing Steve Ashman)
Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD): Karen Lashbrook by phone
Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS): Greg Anderson (representing Beth Engelking)
Texas Veterans Commission (TVC): Pam Macercklein
Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ): Giovanna Nava by phone (representing Erin McGann)
Texas Workforce Commission (TWC): George McEntyre

Advisory Members present: Judy Telge, Coastal Bend Center of Independent Living (CBCIL) by phone; David Long, Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC); Ken Martin, Texas Homeless Network (THN); Eric Samuels, THN.

Others: Carissa Dougherty (DSHS); Jennifer Paulson (THN); Mary Dodson (THN); Suzette Chapman (THN); Mindy Taylor (TSAHC); Charlie Leal (TSAHC); Carissa Dougherty (DSHS); Eve Thibaudeau (Coalition of the Homeless Houston/Harris County); Marilyn Brown (Coalition of the Homeless Houston/Harris County); Camille Castillo, El Paso Coalition for the Homeless (EPCH); James Allen (City of Amarillo); Charles Gulley (Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance); Sandra Hoelscher, Bryan/College Station/Brazos Valley Continuum of Care (CoC); Donna Piper (Homeward Bound Homeless Coalition); Niki Paul, Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO); Ann Howard (ECHO); Teri Holtking (City of Waco CoC); Jennifer Caballero (City of Waco CoC); Tyronna McKenzie (Southeast Texas Coalition for the Homeless); Elizabeth Yevich (TDHCA); Monita Johnson-Henley (TDHCA); Michael DeYoung (TDHCA).

Administrative support: Cate Taylor (TDHCA, representing Naomi Trejo)

I. Welcome and Introductions

Mike Doyle called the meeting to order at 3:07pm. All TICH members and guests present in person and by phone introduced themselves. A quorum of voting members was established.

II. Remarks from Chair

As the Texas Homeless Network's Housing Summit Conference was meeting in the same location, many Conference attendees joined the TICH meeting. **Mike Doyle** welcomed these attendees.

III. Former Health and Human Services Commission Member: Remembering Deborah Ballard

Directing attendees to the handout Remembering Deborah (Debi) Ballard, **Mike Doyle** said a few words in remembrance of Debi. Debi provided oversight for the statewide program, the Texas Community Resource Coordination Groups (CRCGs) of Texas and the Texas Nonprofit Council. She had a diverse background in various other programs and initiatives in her many years within the health and human service field. In her spare time, Debi loved to do pottery and she was also a steadfast volunteer and team leader at the annual Austin Empty Bowl Project.

Following the remembrance, **Mike Doyle** invited **Elizabeth Yevich** to give an overview of the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan. Consultations for the plan development are going on now until the plan goes to TDHCA's Board on September 4th. As part of the consultations, an online discussion forum will be held in early July. Notifications will be sent out through TDHCA's listserv announcing when exactly forums will be open. The July 22nd TICH meeting will have Con Plan topics including ESG on the agenda for further consultation. After September 4th, there will be a public comment period with several hearings, all of which will be announced by listserv email. **Donna Piper** asked if the Plan will be tied in with Housing Authorities. **Elizabeth Yevich** responded that the plan is coordinated effort between state agencies that receive HUD funding, and is not tied in with Housing Authorities.

IV. New Members

Mike Doyle recognized the new members, as follows:

- Texas Veterans Commission Member, Pam Maercklein (Julie Puzan stepped down)
- Health and Human Services Commission Member, Leon Whitely (Interim)
- Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, TBA (Amy Kantoff stepped down)

V. Approval of draft minutes from TICH Quarterly Meeting on January 21, 2014 (Voting item)

Sharon Gamble moved to accept the draft minutes and **Brooke Boston** seconded. The motion passed.

VI. Update on Pilot Program with Tarrant County Continuum of Care* – Mike Doyle (TICH)

Sharon Gamble provided an update on the pilot program testing an allocation of TDHCA Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds budgeted for a CoC jurisdiction with the Tarrant County Homeless Coalition (TCHC). Following the pilot program, in future program years, TDHCA intends to allocate ESG funds directly to CoCs.

Sharon Gamble then shared an update from Ms. Cindy Crain, Executive Director (TCHC), submitted by email.

"TDHCA has completed the review/authorship process of the "Guidance and Requirements for A Texas Regional Homeless Services Coordination Plan Submission to TDHCA for the Emergency Solutions Grant" document, with feedback from TCHC, that will serve as the "RFQ" from a Continuum of Care to determine capacity to facilitate the decision making on allocation of TDHCA ESG funds budgeted for a CoC jurisdiction.

The majority of the components of the Regional Homeless Services Coordination Plan may mirror components of a CoC's eSNAPS application for CoC funds to HUD. Aspects that must be very clear and provided in policy and procedure documents (for which TCHC has had to prepare additional policies, and is doing in advance of the June CoC Board of Directors Meeting) are:

- *Detailed process on how the public accesses ESG assistance from TDHCA inclusive of [the] Coordinated Assessment System utilization.*
- *Adoption of TDHCA-approved sub-recipient ESG Grant Agreement (TDHCA provides this template)*
- *Specific "Waste Fraud and Abuse" policy within the CoC/Lead Agency/ESG Administrator Financial Policies*
- *Detailed process for decision making on allocation - TCHC will adopt the same model with additional ESG Conflict of Interest requirements in its "Community Project Review Committee" process of appointing a committee to make allocation decisions in a local competition.*

[For the pilot project], TDHCA agreed on a 4% Grant Administration rate. This is an austere amount (\$16K for the TX601 allocation of \$418K) given that administration (pass through) of TDHCA ESG funds would put TCHC into the over \$500K annual federal grant receipt level shifting the agency to a Single Audit requirement status that will increase those cost by 8-9K per year. So, austere, but doable, the cost of local determination of ESG use, and deemed worth it. TCHC, as part of grant administration, anticipates that it will also contract out ESG subrecipient monthly reimbursement requests preparations to have an additional level of fiscal review for programmatic compliance and financial/grant cost allocation accuracy. Grant Performance and Monitoring (example ESG quarterly and annual performance) will be done through existing CoC Planning staff funded by the HUD CoC Planning grant.

Projected Timeline is:

- *May/June: TCHC Submits completed "Regional Homeless Services Coordination Plan" to TDHCA*
- *July: TDHCA Approves Plan and enters into Grant Agreement preparation with TCHC*
- *July: TCHC RFP for ESG funds/CoC Board Appoints ESG Project Review and Allocations Committee assignment*
- *Aug: Local ESG competition*
- *Aug/Sept: Local Grant Agreements between TCHC and ESG Recipients*
- *Sept: Local ESG Grantee Joint Meeting with Coordinated Assessment System Staff (Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Arlington, TCHC:TDHCA)*
- *Oct. 1: ESG Programs Begin*
- *Jan 15: First ESG Quarterly Performance Report."*

Attendees had many questions on the pilot program, particularly on administrative funding levels and monitoring activities. **Sharon Gamble** noted that, while the administrative funding level is set at 4% for the pilot program, there may be varying or tiered administrative funding levels in the future, depending on the funded organizations' capacity and resources. **Sharon Gamble** clarified for the group that, once the CoC-funded ESG program starts, TDHCA will still monitor for program compliance just as they do now. Recipients of the ESG funds may choose to perform their own monitoring of the organizations they subcontract with, but TDHCA will continue to monitor all levels of program activities. **Brooke Boston** clarified for the group that TDHCA monitors based on a risk assessment. CoC members present voiced concern that the lead entity, being contractually responsible, would be the party subject to recapture and possible repayment of funds. **Sharon Gamble** indicated this was correct and the lead needed to be cautious in their selection of members.

Questions then arose from the CoC members present on the role of TDHCA in the appeals process with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and ESG recipients, subrecipients and/or subcontractors. **Brooke Boston** responded that TDHCA may be an additional player in the HUD appeals process, as TDHCA currently has an appeals process in place. However, HUD will remain the ultimate decision maker on appeals issues.

VII. Conversation with Continuum of Care Representatives – Sharon Gamble (TDHCA)

Following the update on the ESG pilot program, **Sharon Gamble** fielded questions from many of the CoC representatives present, as noted in item VI. These questions opened up into a broader conversation on the importance of CoC's seeking greater local agency and community involvement. To assist in coordination efforts, **Ken Martin** reported that THN has received an extension on the Training and Technical Assistance grant program from TDHCA to assist CoCs. This discussion will be included in the Consolidated Plan Consultation process.

VIII. Update on Community Service Block Grant Discretionary Funds – Sharon Gamble (TDHCA)

Sharon Gamble reported that, on May 9, 2014, TDHCA released a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2014 Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) State Discretionary Funds. Within the NOFA, TDHCA makes available \$600,000 of FFY 2014 CSBG funds to utilize for discretionary projects. The three eligible categories have the following funds available:

- \$100,000 for Texas Interagency Council on the Homeless Support Activities;
- \$200,000 for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker or Native American Education, and/or Employment Assistance and Services Project; and
- \$300,000 for Statewide Homeless Initiative.

Sharon Gamble reminded the group that, after the FFY2014 funding cycle, TDHCA will shift away from the Statewide Homeless Initiative focus, and towards another population in the next biennium. Application deadline in response to the NOFA is May 30, 2014. This discussion will be included in the Consolidated Plan Consultation process.

IX. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Grant: *Cooperative Agreements to Benefit Homeless Individuals (CABHI - State)* – Carissa Dougherty (DSHS)

Carissa Dougherty reported that DSHS is interested in pursuing the next funding award stream for the cooperative agreement to benefit homeless individuals at the state level through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Texas is one of seventeen states identified as eligible to apply. Applications for the first round of funding were due on May 14, 2014. DSHS did not have enough time to develop a comprehensive application for the first round of funding but, with public and stakeholder input and support, DSHS is planning to apply for the second round. DSHS is planning to take the next year to fully develop a strong proposal.

The SAMHSA grant funding is split between planning and service delivery. For planning, 15 percent (\$180,000) is dedicated to building and enhancing state infrastructure related to serving the chronically homeless population, and that includes veterans and non-veterans with disabilities, mental health, substance abuse or co-occurring disorders. The remaining 85 percent is dedicated to service delivery and will be awarded through a local mental health authority. SAMHSA is looking at a permanent supportive housing model and pairing services to enhance behavioral health with wraparound services, including integrated, medical, peer-support services to help someone move directly into housing and stay stabilized. The target population will likely be those who are not already eligible for existing services, for example, veterans who do not qualify for Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) subsidies, ultimately targeting the population of chronically homeless individuals.

Carissa Dougherty noted that, according to the SAMHSA Request for Applications (RFA), DSHS is the only eligible entity in Texas able to submit an application for this funding opportunity. However, a statewide planning effort through an interagency council on the homeless is required and a planning document must be produced. **Ken Martin** proposed forming a subgroup of TICH members to assist in the statewide planning. **Brooke Boston** raised the question of coordinating responsibilities between agencies and TICH and that this will need to be evaluated by TDHCA as the administrative provider to TICH. All agreed that this topic should be further discussed at the July TICH meeting.

X. Status of Funding Request from TICH Participating Agencies – Mike Doyle (TICH)

Mike Doyle reported that no response was received from the original letter, dated March 24, 2014, requesting funding support from Participating State Agencies, so a round of follow-up phone calls was placed to each agency. **Mike Doyle** indicated that he may seek help from TICH members representing State agencies in approaching their respective agency leadership. **George McEntyre** reported that both the Chairman and Executive Director of the TWC indicated that TWC may provide funding support but the two TWC commissioners must agree to the commitment first.

XI. TICH Committees and Status of 2013 Annual Report Update

(a) Homelessness Prevention -- *Chair: Beth Engelking*

Reported out by Greg Anderson on Beth Engelking's behalf. No new information to report.

(b) Housing and Supportive Services -- *Chair: Mindy Taylor*

Mindy Taylor reported that the Housing and Supportive Services Committee had a conference call a few weeks ago and decided to hold off on their survey project, pending the possible release of the CSBG-D NOFA. A portion of funds available in the NOFA may be used to support this effort. **Mindy Taylor** then announced that this would be her last TICH meeting. **David Long** will replace **Mindy Taylor** as interim Chair of the Housing and Supportive Services. **Charlie Leal**, also present at this meeting will also attend TICH meetings on behalf of TSAHC going forward. **Mike Doyle** thanked **Mindy Taylor** for her service.

(c) Data, Research, and Analysis -- *Chair: Eric Samuels*

Eris Samuels reported that the data collection for Point in Time (PIT) Count continues. The Data, Research, and Analysis Committee will have a full report at the next TICH meeting. Next, the Committee will reach out to CoC leads for a more detailed description of their PIT process. Preliminarily, homelessness statewide is seeing a slight decrease (about 1,500 individuals).

(d) State Infrastructure -- *Chair: Ken Martin*

Ken Martin reported that the committee still needs to gather information from state agencies and will continue to coordinate on the agency surveys. **Ken Martin** made a call for new committee members.

XII. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on July 28, 2014

XIII. Public Comment

None.

XIV. Closing Comments

None.

XV. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned by **Mike Doyle** at 4:42pm.