



Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless
Quarterly Meeting – October 19, 2021
Meeting Minutes

A transcript from the electronic recording of the meeting may be found here:
<http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/tich/meetings.htm>

Members present:

#	Member Agency	Representative	Attendance (Yes/No)
1	Office of the Governor appointee, Cornerstone Network (TICH Chair)	Mike Doyle	Yes
2	Office of the Lt. Governor	<i>vacant</i>	n/a
3	Office of the Speaker of the House	<i>vacant</i>	n/a
4	Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)	Carissa Dougherty	Yes
5	HHSC	Suzie Brady	Yes
6	HHSC	Claire Irwin	Yes
7	Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ)	Sherri Cogbill	Yes
8	Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)	Valinda Bolton	No
9	Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA), Housing Finance representative	Brooke Boston	No
10	TDHCA, Community Affairs representative	Naomi Cantu	Yes
11	Texas Education Agency (TEA)	Cal Lopez	No
12	Texas Department of Juvenile Justice (TJJD)	Marqus Butler	No
13	Texas Veterans Commission (TVC)	Blake Harris	Yes
14	Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)	Deborah Arellano	Yes

<There are currently 12 filled seats so quorum is 7>

Advisory Members present:

#	Advisory Member Organization	Representative	Attendance (Yes/No)
1	Texas Network of Youth Services (TNOYS)	Fedora Galasso	Yes
2	TNOYS	Ann-Charlotte Proffitt	No
3	Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute	Darilynn Cardona-Beiler	No
4			
5	Texas Homeless Network (THN)	Eric Samuels	Yes
6	Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC)	Mike Wilt	Yes
7	Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC)	David Long	Yes
8	Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV)	Molly Voyles	No

Administrative support: Elizabeth Yevich (TDHCA), Jeremy Stremmler (TDHCA)

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Mike Doyle called the meeting to order at via GoToWebinar 1:35 pm, confirmed a quorum was present.

II. Remarks from the Chair

Mike Doyle began the meeting having no opening remarks.

III. Approval of draft minutes from the July 27, 2021 TICH Meeting

Mike Doyle then called for a motion to approve the July 27 minutes. Blake Harris made a motion to approve the minutes, Naomi Cantu seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with no comments.

IV. Updates from Member Agencies

(a) Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA)

- i. Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Annual Funds and ESG through the CARES Act**

Naomi Cantu presented first on the \$97 million which TDHCA received under the Emergency Solutions Grant through the CARES Act stating \$33 million has been expended to date remarking this is a good expenditure rate compared to other states. She relayed that about 10,000 people had been served through street outreach, shelter at 28,000 and 16,000 people served with rental assistance services through rapid rehousing and homeless prevention. She concluded this update saying program staff look forward to continuing to assist people and being able to stem tides of homelessness throughout the state. She clarified that this funding was received under two rounds, ESG I and ESG II with ESG I being \$33 million and ESG II around \$60 million. ESG II contracts may be extended in order to maintain the continued high expenditure rate.

Chairman Doyle asked how the funds were distributed, did cities apply? Naomi replied that more than 90% of the contracts were with nonprofits and that some cities/counties received

ESG CARES directly from the Federal Government or HUD.

ii. **Homeless Individual Camping, HB1925 Update**

Elizabeth Yevich provided an update stating that since the July meeting the draft rule was written, went out for 30-day public comment and though some comment was received and taken into consideration the final rule as presented was not too much different from the version which went out for comment. She indicated the entire process was undertaken with quick turnaround indicated the rule comment period closed mid/late August and the final rule went before and passed at the September 2 TDHCA Governing Board meeting. At that point Ms. Yevich turned the second portion of this presentation over to Jeremy Stremmer who shared the Homeless Individual Camping (HIC) Plan page portion now available off TDHCA's website. This HIC page includes a plan template, email address, citation to the legislation and FAQ's section which is in-process currently under Executive review. She concluded that to date no plans have been submitted.

Ms. Yevich also gave an update on the status of the Housing Resource Center (HRC) staffing position that was expected to be advertised in August and be in place in September that would work on updating the TICH Pathways Home document. The position was posted but then pulled back due to internal changes within TDHCA which resulted in a change of scope. The result is that a new position called Homeless Policy Advisor has been created and will soon be posted. This position will still work on Pathways Home as well as serving as Administrative Support for the TICH and overseeing any HIC plans that might arrive but the timeline for Pathways Home has now been shifted.

Chairman Doyle had a question about requirements a political subdivision might face when developing a plan. In response, Ms. Yevich asked Mr. Stremmer to share again the HIC portion of TDHCA's website which showed in more detail the HIC Plan template stating that the template paired completely with the legislation. It was reiterated that all of the points addressed in the template stem from the rule which was written directly from the legislation.

iii. **HOME-American Rescue Plan (ARP)**

Naomi Cantu next presented a detailed overview of HOME-ARP reminding the membership this was the new hybrid program that was a lot like HOME but also similar in some respects to ESG yet in other respects like neither of these programs.

TDHCA will received \$132.9 million but no action could be taken until HUD guidance was released which happened in mid-September. Rather than a plan amendment to a previously submitted One-Year Action Plan an entirely new, separate plan will be required. Step 1 is to do a series of about ten consultations of which this TICH meeting today serves as a HOME-ARP consultation as noted on the agenda. TDHCA is consulting with agencies and service providers whose clients include HOME-ARP qualifying populations. At the conclusion of the consultations, a draft plan will be developed and taken to TDHCA's board for approval and then out for public comment. Following the conclusion of that process a final plan will go back to the board for approval and then be submitted to HUD. The expectation would be that not long after that a NOFA will be released. Ms. Cantu then discussed in detail the qualifying populations and eligible activities. She concluded by saying that the submission deadline for receipt is 9/30/2025 with the expenditure deadline being 9/30/2030.

Chairman Doyle asked for a general sample scenario that would work under this new program. Naomi provided examples of both non-congregate housing and rental development. Follow-up discussion ensued.

iv. **Update on Pandemic Resources**

Naomi stepped in for Brooke Boston who was unable to attend providing updates on Texas Rent Relief (TRR), the CARES Act and American Rescue Plan (ARP). For the TRR program TDHCA received \$1.3 billion in the first round of funding and about \$1 billion in round two. To date, TRR is at around \$1 billion disbursed and has transitioned into payments from the second round, ERA II funding. A portion of ERA I was for administration and \$71 million is for Housing Stability Services contracts and legal services to the Texas Access to Justice Foundation with about 30 contracts that are going to local nonprofits to provide services. Separately and in addition to these funds a NOFA will be released from the second ERA II payment for about \$84 million.

Other CARES Act updates include the following: TDHCA received \$48.1 million in Community Services Block Grants (CSBG) to the Community Action Network and to date has expended more than 80 percent. The Department has also received \$94 million in Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program or LIHEAP and expended more than 60 percent to date. Through ARP we also got a second round of LIHEAP for \$134.4 million. For Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-CARES) funds there was an allocation of \$141.8 million which has been programmed into a variety of activities including rental assistance, mortgage assistance, food bank assistance, assistance to persons with disabilities and most recently a new community resilience NOFA which provides funds for smaller communities to invest in facilities.

TDHCA also received \$51.8 million for the Low income Housing Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) which is basically utility assistance modeled on the energy assistance program. Once there is plan approval the Department will contract with existing subrecipients. In addition there is the Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF) which provided Texas with \$842.2 million. It will assist homeowners with mortgage delinquencies, defaults, foreclosures and other associated costs. The HAF plan was submitted to Treasury on September 30; the Department is in process of contracting with a vendor for this program. And finally TDHCA received 798 Emergency Housing vouchers that the Department is processing to get these out to the community.

Following this presentation Ms. Yevich indicated several other TICH members has joined the meeting and read into record that TICH members Suzie Brady, Sherri Cogbill, Naomi Cantu, Blake Harris, Deborah Arellano, Claire Irwin and Carissa Dougherty were present. Advisory Members Michael Wilt and David Long were also in attendance.

A question from a participant Tanya Lavelle, Disability Rights Texas was then asked on whether there were plans to get funds for more emergency housing vouchers. Spencer Duran, Director of Section 811 was in attendance and fielded the response saying that the voucher allocation is determined by HUD so we got two awards. Following the initial award letter many of the PHA's around the state declined their allotted vouchers so TDHCA was automatically awarded those additional vouchers. There is no means to request more. The 800 received doubles the size the Department had indicating this is a large amount of vouchers to absorb and get committed.

(b) Other Agency Updates

Fedora Galasso, Executive Director with Texas Network of Youth Services (TNOYS) made several announcements with the first indicating that TNOYS was working in partnership with the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness to inform the Federal Strategic Plan on Homelessness. She also relayed TNOYS has an AmeriCorps program that is specifically for young people with lived experiences of homeless or exiting out of foster care. That program has a 10 host sites with plans to expand in the coming year. She asked the membership that if they knew of any host sites that are interested in that program and if so they would appreciate being connected.

V. Texas Homeless Network

Eric Samuels began by saying that THN was working closely with TDHCA on the Emergency Housing Vouchers. He then stated that THN had helped out 5,000 people through training and technical assistance, even during the pandemic. THN staff helped agencies submit 35 applications for the HUD Continuum of Care grant for nearly \$14 million. He informed the membership that though there was no THN annual conference this year the hope was to resume next year at the Omni South Park in Austin inviting the TICH to hold its fall quarterly meeting during next year's THN Conference. He added that THN has applied for Bezos Day One Families Fund for \$1.25 million and if awarded the hope would be to work together to target a few communities to use these funds efficiently and effectively. Mr. Samuels then responded to a question from member Blake Harris about this fund.

(a) VISTA Project

Nick Thompson presented saying currently there are five VISTA members in service, one leader, two coalition and coordinated entry VISTA members with one Data Sharing Network VISTA member and two communications and community outreach VISTAS. All are placed either in Austin or around the Balance of State. In addition they are planning to start a brand new project in late spring 2022 and looking for new sites and partners.

(b.) Texas Homeless Data Sharing Network

Eric introduced VISTA member Aubrey Fetzer who is working to implement the Data Sharing Network and hopefully find more money to keep the project going. Eric then walked the membership through various slides of a 19 slideshow presentation. He indicated they have moved from Phase 1 to Phase 2 of operations where they are still limiting access quite a bit and still only allowing a few representatives from each CoC to access individual client level data. He provided an example using Tarrant County indicating they are starting to use the data for care and case management. Next step is to make certain all data sharing agreements are up to date before proceeding. Currently seven of the eleven CoC's participate which covers 90 percent of the state. To date 621,000 client records are in the data warehouse covering the past 10 years, since 2012. After his presentation he concluded that there is funding until the end of calendar year 2021 so they are potentially seeking funding in the amount of \$250,000 to \$275,000 to continue the project. Eric concluded that if they have to pause the vendor will keep everything in line and still allow THN to run reports.

VI. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

VII. Closing Comments

Chairman Doyle closed by remarking about the amount of money “floating around out there!” stating that it was actually quite difficult to keep track of it all and to work through all these streams but that everyone was doing a great job at managing everything.

He then indicated that the date of the next meeting would be sent out within the next month and wished everyone a happy and safe Thanksgiving and Christmas.

VIII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:48 p.m.