

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

TEXAS INTERAGENCY COUNCIL
FOR THE
HOMELESS

Health & Human Services Commission
Room PHR 164
909 West 45th Street
Austin, Texas

January 30, 2018
10:07 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

MICHAEL DOYLE, Chair
D. J. BINGLER
VALINDA BOLTON
NAOMI CANTU
SHERRI COGBILL
CARISSA DOUGHERTY
JESSICA HISSAM
CAL LOPEZ
TODD NOVAK (via telephone)
SARAH PHILLIPS (via telephone)
JOYCE POHLMAN
CODY ROTHSCHILD

ADVISORY MEMBERS PRESENT:

CHRISTINE GENDRON
DAVID LONG
MONA MURO (via telephone)
ERIC SAMUELS
DENNIS M. SCHOLL (via telephone)
JEANNE STAMP
MICHAEL WILT

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT:

CATE TRACZ (TDHCA)
MEGAN SYLVESTER (TDHCA)

ON THE RECORD REPORTING
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P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 MR. DOYLE: Welcome to the January annual
3 meeting to the Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless.

4 I want to officially call the meeting to order and
5 welcome you all for being here.

6 I don't have any remarks; it's too early in the
7 year to even think about remarks. Let something happen
8 first and then remark on it, but I do want to recognize
9 some of our outgoing members who have served the council
10 well, and I just wanted to publicly recognize them.

11 Robert Dole and Emily Sasser-Bray from HHSC are
12 rolling off, Francis Gattis with TDCJ is rolling off,
13 Kelly Kravitz from TEA is stepping down, and Pam
14 Maercklein from TVC is stepping down. And taking Robert's
15 place from HHSC are three permanent members and two
16 alternates: Veronica Neville, Jessica Hissam -- Jessica,
17 you're here, aren't you?

18 MS. HISSAM: Yes.

19 MR. DOYLE: Cody Rothschild, welcome, and then
20 I think Joyce Pohlman and Carissa Dougherty are
21 alternates. Is that correct?

22 MS. TRACZ: That's correct.

23 MR. DOYLE: Thank you for joining us. We look
24 forward to you serving on the council.

25 And also, Sherri Cogbill with TDCJ -- is Sherri

1 here? -- there she is -- she's taking Francis's place, and
2 I talked to April about that yesterday. So welcome, we
3 appreciate you being here.

4 And then Cal Lopez is here, there's Cal, and
5 she's taking Kelly's place, and she has an interest and
6 she's going to talk more about this in a minute, but she
7 has a committee within TEA that's working on housing
8 issues, so Michael or David, you might want to touch base
9 with her. She's looking for a referral to help her on a
10 task force that they're looking at at TEA.

11 And then taking Pam's place is Sarah Phillips.

12 MS. TRACZ: Sarah is on the telephone, but we
13 have another TVC representative.

14 MS. MOTEN: Yolanda Moten. I'm the Veterans
15 Employment Services operations manager.

16 MR. DOYLE: Welcome, welcome.

17 And, Sarah, are you on the phone?

18 MS. PHILLIPS: I am.

19 MR. DOYLE: Welcome. We appreciate your
20 service.

21 And so on item number IV, you had a chance to
22 look over the minutes from the October meeting, and I
23 would entertain a motion to approve those.

24 MS. CANTU: Move to approve.

25 MR. DOYLE: Naomi moves to approve. Is there a

1 second? Without this we can't have a meeting. Another
2 voting member to approve them.

3 MS. BINGLER: Second.

4 MR. DOYLE: Thank you, D.J.

5 Any corrections or anything need to be made?

6 (No response.)

7 MR. DOYLE: All in favor say aye.

8 (A chorus of ayes.)

9 MR. DOYLE: All opposed say no.

10 (No response.)

11 MR. DOYLE: We're kind of slow this morning.

12 That does pass. That was not a difficult issue.

13 (General laughter.)

14 MR. DOYLE: We're going to get an update now
15 from Naomi on the Emergency Solutions Grants Program
16 rewrite and the Ending Homelessness Fund, which is quite
17 exciting.

18 MS. CANTU: Yes. Thank you.

19 So my name is Naomi Cantu. I'm the coordinator
20 for Homelessness Programs and Policy at the Texas
21 Department of Housing and Community Affairs, and we have
22 three items, really, on the agenda: one is a rule rewrite
23 but for two programs, so we have the Homeless Housing and
24 Services Program rule rewrite, and we also have the
25 Emergency Solutions Grants Program rewrite, which is all

1 coming up this coming year.

2 For the Homeless Housing and Services Program,
3 what we can't take out, it's a smaller rewrite than the
4 Emergency Solutions Grants, it's going to work more on
5 cleaning up the program activities, but we are also
6 looking to open the allocation formula for comment and
7 working on different models for the public's input. So
8 that will focus on the Homeless Housing and Services
9 Program.

10 For Emergency Solutions Grants, that's going to
11 be the bigger rewrite. We're going to be working more on
12 incorporating the scoring criteria for our competition
13 into our rules, and we did a two-year award cycle in 2017
14 so that's the 2017-2018 funding, so the Emergency
15 Solutions Grants will be for 2019 so for next year, so we
16 have a bit longer for that process. There will be
17 roundtables, online forum and many opportunities for
18 public comment. So the announcement there. We will be
19 sending out email listservs and also different ways for
20 you to get in touch with us.

21 Any questions about that?

22 MR. DOYLE: Can you kind of give us just a
23 rough what you're thinking is on that, on the ESGP
24 rewrites and the housing rewrites. Is there a purpose
25 that you're just cleaning it up because Megan got onto

1 you?

2 (General laughter.)

3 MS. SYLVESTER: For those of you who don't know
4 me, I'm our federal compliance counsel and I work closely
5 with the federal programs on the rules and things.

6 MR. DOYLE: Or is there something you're trying
7 to accomplish, more rural dollars, less rural dollars,
8 anything like that?

9 MS. CANTU: I think that will be more fleshed
10 out during the public comment process. Where HHSP is more
11 limited but we are opening up the allocation formula based
12 on previous public input, so we're going to have different
13 models for that. For ESG it's more going to be a
14 formalized process for an application formula, for our
15 competition. So right now everything in a competition is
16 in the notice of funding availability which is open for
17 comment, but this is going to be more formal process of
18 having the competition in rule, so that is that process.

19 For the Ending Homelessness Fund, so this is as
20 a result of House Bill 4102. It's a new fund that's
21 created because when you register a vehicle at the DMV,
22 Department of Motor Vehicles, you can choose to
23 voluntarily contribute to this fund. It's a fund held
24 outside the treasury by the comptroller, and TDHCA is in
25 charge of creating rules for this fund. Similar funds

1 with voluntary donations in the first year have gained
2 about \$85,000 and the range for the funds -- because this
3 will be the fifth, I believe, fund that can be donated to
4 when you register a vehicle -- the range of funds in 2015
5 was about \$100,000 to \$700,000 per fund, so it really is a
6 very big swing on how much we could expect and is unknown
7 when we will be starting to see the funds coming in.

8 But we are looking to see what we want to do
9 with those funds will be the initial step in the rules
10 process for this fund, and we're having a roundtable today
11 at 2:00 p.m., and there is a call-in option if you need
12 that. If anyone needs more information please see me
13 after the meeting, I have more information about that.
14 It's going to be at the Hobby Building downtown, as well,
15 in person. So we're looking at different options on the
16 Ending Homelessness Fund, and we're looking to get those
17 rules in place by December 1 of this year.

18 MR. DOYLE: Will you be administering the
19 funds, be the fiduciary, or the Governor's Office, or who
20 would be doing that?

21 MS. CANTU: We would be developing the fund's
22 rules and also providing the grants and being the
23 contracting agent.

24 Any questions about the Ending Homelessness
25 Fund?

1 MR. SAMUELS: I will say that we have seen some
2 reports of people contributing already.

3 MS. CANTU: Great.

4 MR. SAMUELS: For example, Cindy Crain sent me
5 a picture of her contribution and said, If you want to,
6 publicize this. So we're trying to get the word out about
7 it.

8 MR. DOYLE: Is the statement on the
9 registration something like do you want to contribute to
10 one of these funds and you check the fund?

11 MR. SAMUELS: It is but only electronically.
12 The paper form is the one that, I guess, most people
13 contribute to. There are, I think, two options on the
14 paper form?

15 MS. CANTU: I think it's on the back.

16 MR. SAMUELS: I was told it wouldn't be.

17 MS. YEVICH: My understanding, the last I heard
18 which was a while ago, I believe you flip it and it's on
19 the back.

20 MR. SAMUELS: Oh, that's great.

21 MR. DOYLE: Is it the same place as the other
22 two funds on the paper form?

23 MR. SAMUELS: Well, I guess it would be on the
24 back.

25 MS. YEVICH: It would be in the same grouping,

1 you would just have to flip the paper.

2 MS. CANTU: So I think there's two on the front
3 and four on the back, three or four.

4 MS. MOORE: Does it suggest an amount or do you
5 just enter an amount?

6 MS. HISSAM: I had to register my car and you
7 can enter whatever amount you'd like.

8 MR. DOYLE: So do you pay extra or is it taken
9 out of the fee?

10 MS. HISSAM: It's extra on top, so you go and c
11 check out for your registration and then it says what
12 would you like to donate to and you just type the number
13 and it's on top of your bill, so you do it all at once,
14 it's very simple, it's very clear.

15 MR. DOYLE: Good.

16 MR. SAMUELS: It was introduced by Senator
17 Royce West and Cindy actually drove down from Dallas and
18 she and I testified and it didn't make it out of that
19 committee, so maybe we had something to do with it not
20 making it out. We were worried about that, but then it
21 got picked up in the House and it passed, so we were very
22 happy about that.

23 MR. DOYLE: Any other thoughts, questions?
24 Roundtable today at 2:00.

25 MS. CANTU: Yes.

1 MR. DOYLE: Will there be other roundtables?

2 MS. CANTU: There will be; this is just the
3 initial kickoff.

4 MS. TRACZ: And just an administrative note,
5 there is a call-in number for that meeting. It's the same
6 call-in number from this meeting so you can just take your
7 agenda and call in at 2:00 p.m. if you wanted to listen
8 in.

9 MR. DOYLE: Any thoughts from you on that, or
10 are you just still waiting for public comment?

11 MS. CANTU: We're going to wait for public
12 comment on it. Actually, I should amend briefly. We did
13 take a report item to the Board on one possible use of the
14 funds, but we are asking on comment on that possible use
15 as well.

16 MR. DOYLE: And as the Interagency Council, we
17 certainly should form some opinions or suggestions on how
18 we think that fund should be used, so feel free to get in
19 touch with Cate or Naomi or me about what you think should
20 be included in that Ending Homelessness Fund, and
21 hopefully it's something that is harder to get from the
22 Continuum of Care funds so that we can use them as a fit
23 into the entire process. So just some thoughts for you
24 guys to think about.

25 What else, Naomi?

1 MS. CANTU: That's my update.

2 MR. DOYLE: Okay. Eric, or is Meghan Moore
3 going to give us an update on the VISTA project.

4 MS. MOORE: Hi, everyone. So to cover a little
5 bit of what we've already completed. We surveyed five
6 CoCs and interviewed three CoCs to determine the level of
7 coordination between the local workforce board and the
8 Continuum of Care. From that we selected Austin-Travis
9 County and Tarrant County to host VISTAs to improve those
10 relationships and create better experiences for people
11 experiencing homelessness looking to develop their career.

12 So we have signed their MOUs. These members
13 will primarily be responsible for creating or joining a
14 committee at the CoC that includes a workforce
15 representative, all about developing these programs for
16 people experiencing homelessness and their career,
17 creating policies and procedures so that coordination
18 between the two entities. They're also looking to create
19 and strengthen local employee connections and employer
20 connections so that hopefully people with the jobs will be
21 more willing to hire people who are living outside or in a
22 shelter. And lastly, they will develop an employment
23 resource list so that people experiencing homelessness are
24 better trained and more prepared for having a job.

25 So right now we are recruiting, it went a

1 little bit slowly, more slowly than expected because we
2 hoped to have someone in January. Right now we have one
3 person selected who will be starting in April in Tarrant
4 County and we are hoping to find someone for ECHO by April
5 as well. I know April sounds really far out but we have
6 to work on the VISTA time schedule and so that's the next
7 start date that we can shoot for.

8 And just to give you an overview of our VISTA
9 program at THN, you can see currently we have six members
10 at five different sites. In February, actually next
11 Monday, we will be adding three new members at two
12 different sites, and as I said, we have one member
13 recruited for Tarrant County and hoping for a couple more.

14 That's our update. Does anyone have any
15 questions? I know I talk really fast. I'm sorry.

16 MR. SAMUELS: I should add this work is
17 building upon the work from a few years ago that THN
18 conducted with a VISTA member and working with a workforce
19 board in Beaumont, and also building upon the work that
20 Houston does with their Income Now program. So these
21 programs may not be exactly like Houston's Income Now
22 program but if they can incorporate some of the components
23 of that, then I think it will be successful.

24 I should say that one of these VISTAs that will
25 be starting in February is going to be working directly

1 with me on things that are statewide initiatives, so that
2 would include work with the Interagency Council, so I'm
3 excited to get some help for that.

4 MR. DOYLE: And I just want to remind you
5 members that for years we pushed you to push your agencies
6 to chip in some funds to help do some of this work, and
7 the reason this VISTA is focused on workforce things is
8 because TWC has given us \$10,000 for three years now to do
9 a VISTA program and it really helps this agency -- which
10 is a non-funded mandate, except for TDHCA is kind enough
11 to provide support -- to do this work. So if you can go
12 back and explain to your agencies that the small amount of
13 money, \$10,000, that they could invest would help us do
14 more projects like that, and to find jobs for the homeless
15 is a real boon to be able to do that.

16 TDCJ, April should be looking at that too,
17 because we're so active in Tarrant County around reentry
18 initiatives, it would really help us to be able to move
19 forward. But when Brad was there, Brad said, I don't want
20 to be asked for any more money. It was during budget time
21 so I didn't, I didn't even ask him, but we might make a
22 run since Brian is there now and see, but your support in
23 that would be very, very helpful. We don't want to put
24 you under the gun right off the bat but they're nice
25 projects.

1 MS. MOORE: And just to add to that, if you're
2 ever interested in talking about what a VISTA can do, so
3 if you want to go back to your superior and say like if we
4 give them this money, a VISTA can do this, this and this,
5 I'm open to having that conversation. And I have cards
6 with me, I think, so if you want to come by, grab a card
7 and we can chat about all the wonderful things that VISTA
8 can do, I'd be happy to do that.

9 MR. SAMUELS: We have had VISTAs work with
10 state agencies before.

11 MR. DOYLE: We have a VISTA Right Pathways Home
12 now.

13 Anything else?

14 MS. MOORE: No, sir.

15 MR. DOYLE: Eric, you are then going to give us
16 an update on the Continuum of Care awards.

17 MR. SAMUELS: Right. So I think some of you
18 are already in the room whenever I put this on the table,
19 so if you were, then this is over on the table. This pie
20 chart shows you the results of the 2017 Continuum of Care
21 awards.

22 MR. DOYLE: Is there anybody new or on the
23 phone who doesn't understand the Continuum of Care or know
24 what it is.

25 DR. SCHOLL: Mike, this is Dennis. I'm going

1 to contact the department folks to get closer to the CoC
2 for San Antonio, Bexar County and the south. I've got
3 some understanding, been hanging around for a couple of
4 years, but I could stand some better education, but I'll
5 call them later.

6 MR. DOYLE: So will you give us an overview,
7 Eric, of what that is?

8 MR. SAMUELS: Sure. So real quickly, a
9 Continuum of Care, whenever I try to define it to someone
10 who does not know anything about it, I explain it actually
11 has three different definitions, and Kenda has helped me
12 kind of devise this set of definitions. So Continuum of
13 Care, number one, is a plan that a community comes up with
14 to develop strategies to end homelessness, so I like to
15 think that that's the purest sense of what a Continuum of
16 Care is.

17 Number two, a Continuum of Care is a geographic
18 region that is identified where this work will be
19 conducted. So in Austin the Continuum of Care is led by
20 ECHO and that is just within Austin and Travis County.
21 The Continuum of Care for the Texas Balance of State,
22 which my agency is the lead for, operates in 215 counties.

23 So the geographic area can be quite different depending
24 on the Continuum of Care.

25 And then the third definition of a Continuum of

1 Care, and this is the one that is very important but
2 sometimes I think people get too hung up on, is the
3 Continuum of Care homeless assistance grants. So that is
4 what we're talking about here and these are grants that go
5 to communities to develop projects, implement projects,
6 maintain projects that are ending homelessness, and HUD
7 has primarily moved in the direction of funding projects
8 that are housing.

9 MR. DOYLE: And, Dennis, we're all looking at
10 charts here. For example, San Antonio shows 10.4 percent
11 of the total Continuum of Care, where Fort Worth had 13.9,
12 Dallas 18.4, Houston 37.5 percent of all the money which
13 was \$88 million in Texas. So those charts are online.

14 MS. TRACZ: Right. They're on the meetings
15 page where all the meeting materials were posted today,
16 so the folks joining us on the phone can view them as
17 well.

18 DR. SCHOLL: I'll look them up. Thanks.

19 MR. SAMUELS: And I can send them to you, as
20 well, later. I guess Cate has them so she can send them
21 out.

22 So overall the State of Texas did well this
23 year, almost a \$2 million increase, which is great. We
24 did add a few CoCs that had at least initially lost money
25 but we're hoping that once all the scoring is done that

1 these CoCs will actually make up some of that difference.

2 One of our big winners this year was San Antonio. They
3 actually had quite a bit of new funding. Unfortunately,
4 we had a few CoCs, Houston, El Paso and Bryan-College
5 Station, or Brazos Valley, that lost a little money. We
6 do hope that when it all shakes out they will get some
7 funding for those projects that have initially not be
8 chosen for funding.

9 But overall Texas continues to get more money
10 and that's good because as you see on the back, surprise,
11 surprise, as funding increases, homelessness decreases, so
12 that's what it shows year to year. We have still been
13 steadily going down. Last year we had a little bit of a
14 tick up in homelessness, we're going to see very soon what
15 2018 shows, hopefully it will be a tick down. I am a
16 little worried -- I mean, I would love it to be more than
17 a tick down, but I'm a little worried that with Hurricane
18 Harvey there may not be much a decline, if any. And that
19 is something we're actually trying to track. We're
20 working with the Continuums of Care to gather data on
21 evacuees, people who have become homeless because of
22 Harvey, and we're in the middle of getting our data
23 sharing agreements signed and returned for that. So far
24 we have six of the CoCs onboard and we hope to get all
25 eleven, by the end of today actually, so we'll see.

1 MS. CANTU: Eric, how are you going to track
2 that, through the Homeless Management Information System
3 or point-in-time counts?

4 MR. SAMUELS: So the Continuums of Care, they
5 gather their data through several different ways. Most
6 use HMIS as one of their methods for collecting this data,
7 many use mobile applications. I think we had a lot of
8 people that participated in the Austin count early
9 Saturday morning, and what they did is they went out with
10 their phones, they had the questions on their phones, they
11 asked questions of people that were sleeping outdoors or
12 in shelters -- I think maybe just sleeping outdoors for
13 the mobile apps -- but they would go through and check off
14 the answers and they would go into a virtual database.
15 And then we have some that use the paper surveys still.

16 So what we're asking each CoC to do is to
17 collect that data, and we're just asking for aggregated
18 data just for the evacuees, and we have a couple of
19 options for them to submit that data in a way that we're
20 trying to make it as easy as possible on them. So we've
21 seen some of the data coming in, I don't want to give
22 numbers right now, but it doesn't look like we have an
23 enormous number, which we're very happy about, but we will
24 see in the end what the number is and then hopefully some
25 of the demographics of those folks that became homeless

1 because of Harvey.

2 MR. DOYLE: Have all of the Continuum of Care
3 areas completed their homeless counts, their point-in-time
4 counts?

5 MR. SAMUELS: I think Austin was the last, so
6 yes, I believe so. Most did it on the 25th, Austin did it
7 on Saturday which was the 27th. I think everyone has done
8 it.

9 MR. DOYLE: Good.

10 MR. SAMUELS: And they said it all went well so
11 we'll see what the results show.

12 And so any questions about the funding?

13 MS. HOWARD: Hey, this is Ann Howard. Can I
14 just add something real quick?

15 MR. DOYLE: Certainly, Ann. Who would tell you
16 no?

17 MS. HOWARD: Hi, everybody. I'm sitting here
18 with Nicky Paul, our chief program officer, and we're just
19 really proud to let you guys know that I think late last
20 week we published the RFP around our youth grant. As you
21 know, about a year ago HUD chose Austin as one of ten
22 communities to implement new strategies through a
23 demonstration program to help end youth homelessness, and
24 so they required a whole bunch of planning and we've
25 completed that process and now we're looking for proposals

1 from the community to help us implement strategies to end
2 youth homelessness.

3 And this was a \$5 million grant and I thought
4 it was timely to mention it just because all that money
5 that's coming down to Texas, the 80-some-odd million, if
6 you'll notice Austin-Travis County, we only get \$5.6- or
7 \$5.9 million which is very little, and this youth grant
8 was \$5.2 million, so it about doubled our CoC funding in
9 that one grant opportunity. That poses its own sort of
10 governance issues, but we're real excited about how the
11 community is coming together, and we sort of created a
12 mini Interagency Council to do this youth grant in that
13 we've got folks from juvenile probation and the Texas
14 Education office and our local Austin Independent School
15 District and health care and CPS.

16 And so there's a lot of focus on this grant
17 because it's one of ten in the country, five rural and
18 five urban, and it's just sort of a big deal for Texas and
19 so we'll keep you posted about who actually becomes the
20 service providers and how it goes.

21 MR. DOYLE: Okay. I don't know if you were
22 there earlier on, Ann, but we have a new member from TEA,
23 Cal Lopez, who is working a project that involves some
24 housing. She's taken Kelly's place on the council, so if
25 you touch base with her and make sure she gets information

1 on that.

2 MS. HOWARD: That's great. Maybe Naomi or Eric
3 could give my contact information. I see the name here on
4 the agenda but I don't think we've ever met.

5 MR. DOYLE: Okay. Good.

6 MR. SAMUELS: We'll make sure to do that.

7 MS. CANTU: Ann, thank you for bringing that
8 up. This is Naomi. And I'm wondering if either Eric or
9 Ann know of anyone in Texas applying for the new youth
10 grant.

11 MR. SAMUELS: I was wondering if Ann was going
12 to ask about that.

13 MS. GENDRON: I know.

14 MS. CANTU: You do?

15 MS. GENDRON: Yes. Dallas is applying and I
16 think Houston is probably applying.

17 MS. CANTU: Dallas and Houston?

18 MS. GENDRON: I know Dallas and I'm guessing
19 Houston.

20 MS. CANTU: Thanks, Christine.

21 MR. SAMUELS: I think Houston applied last year
22 as well.

23 MS. HOWARD: There are a number of people who
24 have called and asked for a copy of our application and
25 our plan. There are lots of applicants.

1 MR. SAMUELS: I know a lot of people are very
2 interested. I think with some CoCs they have to determine
3 whether or not it's realistic for them to be able to
4 accomplish this. I know, Ann, you all had a lot of hard
5 work applying for this and then throughout the
6 implementation process, so I think you'll be a good
7 resource for anyone who's thinking about applying.

8 MR. DOYLE: This is kind of a hard question to
9 ask or to answer, but do you see any correlation in a
10 Continuum of Care losing some money because they got the
11 youth grant?

12 MR. SAMUELS: Did I say they lost money? No,
13 Austin didn't lose money.

14 MR. DOYLE: Okay.

15 MS. CANTU: Houston lost money.

16 MR. DOYLE: Houston lost money.

17 MR. SAMUELS: And we think that there could be
18 some scoring issues involved with that. So we'll see,
19 hopefully some of that money is regained.

20 MS. CANTU: And I did have a question back to
21 the PIT and your infographics.

22 MR. SAMUELS: We haven't shown that yet.
23 You're talking about this, right? This is an infographic
24 from the 2017 point-in-time count which at this point
25 almost exactly one year ago.

1 MR. DOYLE: The one with the big arrow in it,
2 if you haven't located it.

3 MR. SAMUELS: We try to make it very simple, we
4 took this up to Capitol Hill and so we wanted to make it
5 very simple.

6 MR. DOYLE: Way too hard for them.

7 (General laughter.)

8 MR. SAMUELS: That's not a commentary on the
9 intelligence, just trying to get the point across.

10 But I know you have questions.

11 MS. CANTU: I'm sorry, I thought we had because
12 you were talking about the PIT.

13 MR. DOYLE: Can I ask one more question or
14 clarification? Would you feel comfortable saying that
15 there are just short of 24,000 homeless people in Texas?

16 MR. SAMUELS: Based on a point-in-time count,
17 the best that our communities can do, yes. So there are
18 some qualifications in there, but yes. I mean, point-in-
19 time counts, there are definitely inherent problems with
20 point-in-time counts. We have communities like Austin,
21 Dallas, Houston, and I believe in the Balance of State
22 they're doing a really, really good job of point-in-time
23 counts, so yes, I do feel comfortable with that.

24 MS. HOWARD: I think it's important to know --
25 this is Ann again -- if we think there's value in talking

1 about the numbers, to be able to say what the point-in-
2 time count is, but then also to say maybe another number
3 because we're all having to do this coordinated entry as
4 some kind of assessment and then there's a referral made.

5 And just for an example, in Austin we know that over the
6 course of the year in 2017 we encountered 7,400 people
7 experiencing homelessness, whereas, our point-in-time
8 count figure was about 2,000.

9 MR. DOYLE: So we're talking about the
10 difference in an annualized methodology and a point-in-
11 time methodology.

12 MS. HOWARD: Yes.

13 MR. DOYLE: Point-in-time is on that particular
14 day here's what we found and on an annualized methodology
15 how many people came into the system at any day during the
16 year is a little bit different. But you're right, Ann,
17 that's a good clarification. I said it because I heard
18 from a new legislator that said he thought that there were
19 100,000 homeless people in Tarrant County, and I said, No,
20 no, that's not right. But you know how us people in the
21 nonprofit world like to try to go after money and we can
22 make the need so great that we exaggerate it. So I just
23 want this council to understand that as the experts in
24 this, supposedly, in the State of Texas, around 24,000
25 point-in-time, annualized from the state, probably what,

1 110,000, 120,000?

2 MR. SAMUELS: I don't want to guess on the
3 annualized number for the entire state, but I think it is
4 important to get those numbers. And they're able to get
5 those numbers -- those are pretty much hard numbers, I'm
6 assuming, Ann, from HMIS records.

7 MS. HOWARD: Right.

8 MR. SAMUELS: There's other ways that you can
9 estimate it as well.

10 MS. HOWARD: And I just think it's important
11 for resource allocation. We always want the renumber to
12 be going down, but I can tell you my PIT count number is
13 probably up and my annual number is up, and it's not
14 because we're not working our buns off and doing a good
15 job but it's because the resources to address the issue
16 don't match the need, and Texas needs to deal with that.

17 MR. SAMUELS: That's a very good point.

18 MR. DOYLE: Okay. Good. I just wanted
19 clarity.

20 Naomi, back to the PIT chart.

21 MS. CANTU: Yes. So going back with your
22 infographics, you've highlighted a lot of successes and
23 some statistics. With the veteran homelessness and the
24 three cities that have effectively ended veteran
25 homelessness, but there was actually an uptick in veteran

1 homeless, a pretty significant percentage. So any
2 idea where that's coming from?

3 MR. SAMUELS: So I looked into this and I
4 didn't have to look far. Unfortunately, the majority of
5 that uptick came from the Texas Balance of State. We do
6 think it was a calculation error. In fact, unfortunately,
7 I think that there may have been one in 2016 as well, so
8 this year we believe that would be the baseline number,
9 that would be a good baseline number. It looks like it's
10 going to fall about in between those two numbers. So I
11 have to be honest, I think that's where the blame falls
12 for that uptick.

13 MS. CANTU: So there was an undercount in
14 previous years?

15 MR. SAMUELS: I believe that in 2016 there was
16 an undercount and in 2017 there was an overcount. We did
17 have one community that got a little zealous with
18 indicating that there were veterans experiencing
19 homelessness. That's what we feel like, we weren't there
20 so we can't prove that for a fact, but that's what the
21 numbers look like.

22 MR. DOYLE: So can you tell everybody what the
23 '17 number and what the '16 number was just so if
24 something comes up with how many homeless veterans,
25 roughly, are there in Texas.

1 MR. SAMUELS: You mean overall '17 number?

2 MR. DOYLE: Yes.

3 MR. SAMUELS: Okay. Let me look at this. The
4 '17 is on the infographics 2,200, in 2016 it was nearly
5 1,800.

6 I mean, I think Ann's point about looking at
7 annualized numbers is very important because when you're
8 looking at point-in-time, things can change quite a bit
9 and it may not be a true indication of the successes that
10 communities are having in ending homelessness, but it's
11 good to point out the discrepancies.

12 And I know you had another question.
13 Households with children?

14 MS. CANTU: Because those went down.

15 MR. SAMUELS: Households with children went
16 down. And I want to say across the board most CoCs
17 actually showed a decrease in households with children.
18 We had a few that just by percentage did a really good
19 job. Bryan-College Station, Waco, Amarillo, and Dallas
20 had very high percentages of decreases from 2016 to 2017.

21 MR. DOYLE: Was it lack of housing vouchers or
22 was it --

23 MR. SAMUELS: You mean more housing vouchers
24 that got people in.

25 MR. DOYLE: Or even less. When you've got less

1 vouchers, you've got less people that you can call and
2 count how many homeless there are.

3 MR. SAMUELS: Well, I'm not sure what that was.
4 I'm hopeful that there were actually more vouchers so
5 more people could be put in subsidized housing. That's my
6 hope. Or they were just identified through a more
7 efficient coordinated entry process.

8 MS. POHLMAN: Eric, is there any way to combine
9 the HMIS data from across the state? I'm just curious
10 that annualized data would reflect a different composition
11 of the homeless. I'm just assuming that a point-in-time
12 count you're going to find the people who are living on
13 the streets. Homeless families with kids, they're going
14 to hide as fast as they can.

15 MR. SAMUELS: Yeah, and that's another inherent
16 problem with a point-in-time count. I think you're right,
17 annualized you may see those that are falling in and out
18 of homelessness more often.

19 But in answering is there a way to combine the
20 HMIS data, I think there is a way. I think it's going to
21 require a lot of hard work between the Continuums of Care
22 to develop the agreements to do that. We have resumed
23 that work, we want to be very purposeful about how we do
24 it and make sure we do it right and don't rush into it

25 MS. POHLMAN: A lot of sensitive data.

1 MR. SAMUELS: That data would be extremely
2 valuable if we could put all those numbers together. So
3 we're going to need to try, or at least I want to try
4 that. And I think the Continuums of Care, and we've
5 actually asked them, after Harvey hit we had weekly calls
6 for a while and then we got to the point where we were
7 looking at data sharing and we asked if they saw the value
8 in that, and they all overwhelmingly saw the value in
9 that. Now, how we share that data, that's another
10 question.

11 MR. DOYLE: And for those of us that aren't
12 that savvy when it comes to applications that share data
13 and all that kind of stuff, tell me the problems with
14 Tarrant County and Austin sharing data. Walk me through
15 that conversation.

16 MR. SAMUELS: So you're presuming that I am
17 savvy about that.

18 MR. DOYLE: Right.

19 MS. MOORE: I can interject a little.

20 MR. SAMUELS: Megan actually has good
21 experience with this.

22 MS. MOORE: So the main problem that you're
23 going to run into is first the data warehousing, deciding
24 where and how you're going to keep that data, so you have
25 to determine a data warehouse which is typically not

1 cheap, so there's the funding issue. And in addition to
2 that, typically, even though it might seem very similar,
3 from CoC to CoC we use different systems that categorize
4 everything in a little bit different way, and if we ask
5 the questions slightly differently, we have to figure out
6 how to like make sure that we're still getting similar
7 responses, and so making sure that it's one to one, so
8 apples to apples and not apples to oranges, which can get
9 really nuanced and really challenging.

10 So you'd kind of need like a programmer who is
11 an expert in analyzing what's going on in the code of each
12 data management software and then bringing that together.
13 De-duplicating, because I imagine it might not be a lot
14 but there is at least some people who are in Tarrant
15 County and then in Travis County, so we'd have to like
16 look at duplication so making sure that our data is really
17 clean at the same time, so data entry has to be really
18 solid and cleaning up the data before it goes back
19 together.

20 So it's quite a challenging process. I know
21 like it seems like I'm asking you your name and then
22 Travis County asks you your name and that should just go
23 together, but it's, unfortunately, really challenging.

24 MR. SAMUELS: But it's not undoable because we
25 know communities have done it. We know, for example, the

1 State of Massachusetts they're trying to implement that
2 right now, and maybe we'll learn from Mr. Polster.

3 MR. DOYLE: So the solution would be all the
4 Continuums asking the same question with the same software
5 where you can compile it very easily.

6 MR. SAMUELS: I don't think we'll get to the
7 point where everyone is using the same vendor, HMIS
8 vendor, I don't see that happening. We just have to
9 determine a way to share the data that is common between
10 the vendors.

11 MS. MOORE: And it is possible, and I would
12 say, just my opinion, that it's a worthy cause.

13 MR. SAMUELS: I think most people here, I
14 hope, would think that and the people that are operating
15 Continuums of Care think that as well. We want to see it
16 happen.

17 MR. DOYLE: Without accurate data from a state
18 level, we could be funding things that really aren't
19 needed or we could not funding things that really are
20 needed, but with proper data, whoever keeps it, whether
21 it's TDHCA or Texas Homeless Network, whoever keeps that
22 data should be really accurate about having to inform the
23 local Continuums what's going on.

24 MR. SAMUELS: And I would hope if we had
25 statewide data that would give us, I guess, the

1 justification for funding programs that may help people
2 that are exiting the state prison system to get them into
3 housing quickly so we save the state money. So that would
4 be my hope is that that would help us fund programs that
5 will save the state money.

6 MR. DOYLE: I will tell you in Tarrant County
7 we have something called the First Stop which is the
8 court's reentry, and TDCJ reentry specialists are saying
9 one of your first stops when you go back to Tarrant County
10 is the First Stop, and it's in partnership with the
11 workforce board and we are trying to gather that data.
12 But the county has given us 40 vouchers, housing vouchers
13 that if, in fact, somebody comes to them with a job they
14 can pay their first two months' rent, utilities and
15 deposits just for getting the job. Used to we had to be
16 on the job six months and then they'd consider doing it,
17 now they're doing it right the day they get employed. So
18 housing is a big issue all over, but it's a political
19 fireball to give somebody a voucher just because they came
20 out of prison. That's tough.

21 MR. SAMUELS: The folks that we work with think
22 it's the right thing to do, but there are others that can
23 see that it's the efficient thing to do and a thing to do
24 that saves money and that may be the reason to do it.

25 MR. DOYLE: I heard this from Dr. Clinton

1 Carpenter, who I asked him to verify it now twice because
2 it just seems impossible, but a one percent movement in
3 the recidivism needle saves the state \$17 million, a one
4 percent reduction in the needle.

5 MR. SAMUELS: That should get attention.

6 MR. DOYLE: And if the recidivism rate is as
7 they say it is, around 35 percent in the State of Texas
8 overall, one percent movement to 34 saves \$17 million, you
9 can see why the reentry division at the TDCJ is so
10 critical to the issue.

11 MR. SAMUELS: And then while we're focused on
12 this issue, I also want to thank -- I'm a part of the
13 state jail-holder committee -- I don't know exactly what
14 we're called, but I know that this is an issue that we had
15 a real big roundtable downtown about a month ago, that
16 getting to that data, being able to analyze that data and
17 find those folks so they don't return to the prison system
18 is a big issue for them and they have a great interest in
19 doing that.

20 MR. DOYLE: They being?

21 MR. SAMUELS: They being we had county judges
22 there, we had people from --

23 MR. DOYLE: So this committee?

24 MR. SAMUELS: Yes. The Texas Criminal Justice
25 Coalition convened the meeting.

1 MS. STAMP: So is anybody looking at tying
2 housing to recidivism? So in other words, if they have
3 housing that's one of the things that keeps from
4 returning.

5 MR. SAMUELS: That's my understanding and so I
6 think that's the basis for the program.

7 MR. DOYLE: Of the 40 vouchers that we gave
8 away last year that we got from the county, there was a
9 zero recidivism rate. It was just a one-year re-arrest
10 calculation, but there was a zero recidivism rate on those
11 40 housing vouchers last year.

12 MS. STAMP: So tracking that would have some
13 real value.

14 I did want to ask -- Chris, you kind of
15 answered it because it just sounds like there are
16 different methodologies that are being used for point-in-
17 time and so the one I'm really interested in is
18 unaccompanied youth point-in-time, and I know that Harris,
19 Montgomery and Fort Bend counties were using an app this
20 year and they did it over like a two-day period for the
21 unaccompanied homeless youth. Do you know if that was
22 something similar that happened throughout the state or
23 that was just their thing?

24 MR. SAMUELS: That happened in other places. I
25 think maybe Ann wants to say something about that. If you

1 don't, Ann, I'm sorry for putting you on the spot, but I
2 know there were a lot of communities that emphasized
3 getting out there and counting unaccompanied youth, and
4 many communities did use the app. I don't know that the
5 use of the app would have helped with the unaccompanied
6 youth count but it might have helped.

7 Ann, did you want to say something? She may
8 not be on anymore.

9 MS. GENDRON: So Dallas used it.

10 MR. SAMUELS: You did?

11 MS. GENDRON: We all went out and volunteered
12 and they used all the training we had designed for Youth
13 Count Texas.

14 MR. SAMUELS: Awesome. Yeah, a lot of
15 communities use that app. Balance of State, Houston,
16 Dallas, I think Fort Worth and San Antonio, that's the
17 majority of the state if you just look geographically.

18 MS. STAMP: That's great. Well, I know in
19 talking the folks in the kind of Harris County area, they
20 were really making a push to try and get school personnel
21 involved and feeling like the app be a little less
22 threatening because, you know, sometimes it's difficult
23 for school personnel to ask those sensitive questions
24 about unaccompanied youth in the schools, but maybe just
25 putting them in touch with the app so the youth themselves

1 could complete it.

2 MR. SAMUELS: That's not something a lot of
3 people consider, but that's great.

4 MS. STAMP: They actually held a training for
5 some of the liaisons in the area how to use the app and
6 how to talk with kids about using the app.

7 MR. SAMUELS: Great.

8 MS. GENDRON: I was going to save it for our
9 presentation, but it's interesting to me, since we're
10 talking about unaccompanied youth, how these kind of
11 interact with each other, because this suggests that the
12 number of homeless persons is decreasing, it is a success,
13 but the school district data shows that unaccompanied
14 homeless youth that that number is increasing big time,
15 more than 1,000 more from the previous year. And so I
16 think, to me, when I look at this, there aren't really
17 many youth-centered programs on here, very, very few.

18 And so the work that Austin is doing is really
19 exciting and there's a lot that can be learned from that,
20 but that money supports Travis County, and we have,
21 obviously, school districts and counties across the State
22 of Texas that really aren't getting anything. And so
23 we'll talk more about that when we get to our report but I
24 just wanted to draw attention because I think it's just
25 interesting to see both of these side by side.

1 MS. STAMP: And part of that is because the
2 definition is different. I mean, our unaccompanied
3 homeless youth may be staying with someone and they might
4 not get counted through a point-in-time because the person
5 might be a relative or may be over the age of 25 or older
6 and so they don't get counted.

7 MR. SAMUELS: We believe it's important to
8 point out that number as well because that is an indicator
9 of those that are at risk of falling into this very
10 literally homeless definition.

11 MS. GENDRON: We know because we know what this
12 is funding, it's not funding much for youth, and we know
13 that the count isn't a good methodology for counting
14 youth. Right? And so there are a lot issues involved
15 with that.

16 MR. SAMUELS: One more thing about that.
17 Unfortunately, you can see that there's not many programs,
18 CoC funded programs that are serving youth. Also, a
19 couple of years ago when there was a lot of cuts to
20 programs, a lot of the domestic programs also got cut
21 which was very unfortunate as well.

22 MS. LOPEZ: I have a quick question.

23 MR. SAMUELS: Yes. I know the app -- well, I
24 think the app was translated across the state. I know
25 that the CoCs -- well, the Texas Balance of State CoC

1 definitely has translations available. I would imagine
2 every Continuum of Care does.

3 MS. LOPEZ: So in multiple languages?

4 MR. SAMUELS: So that's a good question. I
5 think most would be English and Spanish. In Houston I'm
6 assuming that they have multiple translations, probably
7 they do in other cities as well. Sorry I don't have that
8 answer.

9 MS. GENDRON: When we did the surveys most had
10 Spanish but I didn't see any other languages, but I didn't
11 ask for it.

12 MS. LOPEZ: And the only reason I ask is from
13 previous experience depending how the surveys are written
14 in Spanish they may not answer to their true situation.
15 So that's why I was just curious, if they are being
16 translated who is being used to review the translations,
17 because depending where you're at or how it's translated,
18 it could actually skew them away, especially unaccompanied
19 youth who are on their own, so that's why I was just
20 asking. And also, if other languages were used, which
21 ones, if the geographic area is being reviewed to see
22 which are the most common languages spoken and if it's
23 being translated into those three, four or five languages
24 that are the most common ones.

25 MR. SAMUELS: I was laughing because we had

1 someone put a question into Google Translate and we showed
2 it to someone in the Valley and they said that does not
3 mean what you're trying to convey there.

4 MS. LOPEZ: Well, I'm not from the Valley, I'm
5 from the Border area, and so I can tell you that Valley
6 Spanish, Border Spanish, general Spanish, they're all
7 slightly different.

8 MR. SAMUELS: Oh, yeah.

9 MR. DOYLE: Well, good discussion on the
10 Continuum of Care. Anything else, Eric or Meghan?

11 MR. SAMUELS: No.

12 MR. DOYLE: Okay. From our committees, our
13 Performance Data Committee, Brooke chairs that, but
14 Elizabeth, you're going to give us a report?

15 MS. YEVICH: I am here for Brooke Boston. I am
16 Elizabeth Yevich, director of the Housing Resource Center
17 here at the Texas Department of Housing and Community
18 Affairs, and talking about proper data, Mike, I think
19 that's a good segue into the Performance Data Committee.

20 Brooke wanted me to let you know that since the
21 last TICH meeting she met with someone in TDHCA's Data
22 Management and Reporting Division, by the name of Julie,
23 and they together had a really good meeting with the
24 Veterans Commission, and she wanted me to thank former
25 TICH member, Pam Maercklein, for pulling together all the

1 TVC staff to be there.

2 And she went on to say that that meeting went
3 just as they hoped, stating that like most of the member
4 agencies, Texas Veterans Commission does not have
5 Legislative Budget Board, or LBB, performance measures
6 that are specific to just homelessness, however, the
7 programs measured do, in fact, assist homeless veterans
8 and there is data of these activities and programs that
9 sheds light on the fact that like TVC is touching this
10 issue significantly, just not in a formal measure.

11 She has several examples here, I'm just going
12 to touch on one or two. For TVC, their employment
13 programs, there were 3,290 homeless veterans were
14 assisted, so that's measurable data, by either TVC, TWC or
15 local workforce board staff. Of that number 1,300 were
16 seen by just TVC. Another measure that they came up with
17 of TVC's 2016 Housing for Texas Heroes program -- there
18 was a total funding of a little over \$4 million -- 45
19 percent of those funds went to veterans homeless
20 prevention, 31 percent of the funds went for homeless
21 veteran support. 2017 it was very similar statistics. So
22 you can see that a majority of the funding was being used
23 clearly for homeless veterans.

24 So Brooke wanted me to let you know this was
25 just the kind of information that they were hoping to

1 find, and for those of you that she -- or I'll get to
2 that -- will be meeting with in the future, this is the
3 example of what they're trying to find that you might have
4 in your programs that they could pull together for this
5 Performance Data Committee. Then a basic question would
6 be: What portion of those who you are assisting are
7 homeless? That's a question she's going to come around
8 with. And then they're going to report back to the TICH a
9 final product for the joint efforts for all the agencies,
10 however, Brooke is going to be transitioning out of this
11 in the next month or so and Cate Tracz is going to be
12 taking this over and meeting with you soon.

13 So that's the update.

14 MS. TRACZ: So next on my list is to circle
15 back with TEA, so Cal I'll get in touch with you sometime
16 early next week and maybe we can set up a time to kind of
17 dive a little deeper into performance measures that we
18 could pull out that would be helpful for this for the
19 council.

20 And then just be thinking, as we go through and
21 reach out to all of the agencies, be thinking about your
22 performance measures, how they currently exist and what
23 pieces might be in there that address homelessness or
24 homeless population or transitioning out of homelessness.

25 MS. MOTEN: So for the report that you

1 provided, the employment services actually are my numbers,
2 and I am actually looking to create some type of database
3 or a way that we ourselves can actually differentiate like
4 between the genders of those veterans that we have served
5 with those employment services, and so if you need
6 information or you're looking for a number how to get that
7 information, then you would contact me, that way I could
8 start gathering that information in a way to provide that
9 to you.

10 MS. TRACZ: We'll connect after the meeting and
11 trade contact information. Thank you.

12 MR. DOYLE: Anything else on the Data
13 Committee?

14 MS. YEVICH: That's the report.

15 MR. DOYLE: Okay. Eric, now you're going to
16 talk about the Annual Report Committee.

17 MR. SAMUELS: I think Cate is going to help me
18 out a little bit with that.

19 MR. DOYLE: She helps everybody out.

20 MR. SAMUELS: She helps on every one.

21 So we've been working on drafting the annual
22 report. I have a couple of folks that have been helping
23 out a lot. Dennis, who is on the phone, has actually been
24 helping out a lot. Allison Winney from the Speaker's
25 office, despite not having attended any meeting from last

1 year, she is helping out with some of the editing of that.

2 I will say it's still in a pretty rough format so we're
3 going to try to get it to a good draft stage for review by
4 TDHCA and then on to the members.

5 MS. TRACZ: Right. Thank you so much to the
6 committee for pulling together all of the material that we
7 want in the report from the 2017 activities that the TICH
8 undertook.

9 So Eric said it's a draft, we're going to pull
10 all together. TDHCA will just kind of give it an
11 administrative overview, we'll probably run it through
12 Legal to make sure it's legal, and then it will come to
13 all the members. So in the next two weeks you'll all
14 receive an email copy of the draft report. Please review
15 it, make comments, send those comments back to me, so by
16 the time we come back for our April meeting we'll have a
17 final report that we can vote on and hopefully accept and
18 then submit to all of the legislatively required folks
19 that we need to submit that to.

20 So be on the lookout, the report will be coming
21 once we get it in a good releasable draft from with all
22 the hard work the committee has put into it, so that will
23 be coming.

24 MR. SAMUELS: I will say I looked back at all
25 the notes from last year and I want to include everything,

1 so I tend to put maybe too much in there, so I think it
2 needs to be summarized down a little bit, but it's tough
3 to determine what should be added and what should be
4 omitted.

5 MR. DOYLE: And for those who aren't familiar,
6 it is the TICH's intention and responsibility to provide
7 the member agencies heads a report on what we've done each
8 and every year about homelessness in the State of Texas,
9 so it's something that legislatively we need and are
10 required to do -- with no money.

11 MR. SAMUELS: There's that.

12 MR. DOYLE: Yeah, there's that.

13 And there is a vacant spot on the board for the
14 Speaker's office, we'd love for you to just move yourself
15 right in to be representing that office, and if we need to
16 make calls, we will be glad to do that.

17 MS. WINNEY: We'll see. We've been talking
18 about it.

19 MR. DOYLE: Okay. Good.

20 Okay. Disaster recovery activities, this is
21 for everyone so we'd like to hear from everybody, and
22 since TNOYS, you're next, why don't we let you start and
23 you do your report, and then we'll go from there forward.

24 MS. GENDRON: That sounds good. Also joining
25 me we have Texas Appleseed, and this is Gabriella McDonald

1 and Deborah Fowler, and so we're going to do kind of a
2 joint presentation.

3 So most of you are familiar with TNOYS already.
4 We are a statewide network of organizations that serve
5 Texas youth and families. We've been around for almost 40
6 years now. Our members are the folks who serve young
7 people who are homeless, who are in foster care, or who
8 are at risk of those situations. Our mission is to
9 strengthen support and protective services so we do
10 legislative and regulatory advocacy, we provide
11 professional development and program support for training,
12 consultation. We also do a lot of work and partnership
13 with young people and so work to develop youth leaders, to
14 get them in front of lawmakers, to get them in positions
15 as trainers for service providers and that kind of thing.'

16 Hopefully you remember Youth Count Texas, it's
17 been a couple of years now. TNOYS was one of the primary
18 organizations that lobbied for legislation that called for
19 Youth Count Texas, and kind of to go back and give you the
20 history, what happened was we know that providers that
21 serve young people who are homeless are struggling, we
22 know that the State of Texas doesn't specifically
23 appropriate funding for that purpose, we know that nobody
24 in Texas is specifically charged with making sure those
25 youth don't fall through the cracks, but we didn't have

1 any data to really back up anything, nobody had ever
2 looked at how many young people in Texas are homeless, at
3 that time the CoCs weren't all making concerted efforts to
4 count youth, additionally, at that time the CoCs weren't
5 all coming together to share their data.

6 So anyway, TDHCA implemented this study, TNOYS
7 helped coordinate it. If you haven't seen it or it's just
8 been a while, I encourage you to check out the report on
9 the TDHCA website. Jeanne Stamp actually brought some
10 data which would be more up to date than what was used for
11 Youth Count, but because youth homelessness is really
12 complex, how do you define homeless, how do you define
13 youth, there are all different kinds of systems that can
14 identify or capture youth who are homeless, and try to
15 come up with a final number, and so that report really
16 dives into who's homeless, what does that mean, and what
17 does the literature tell us about young people who are
18 homeless.

19 And then that report also offered some policy
20 recommendations but that really wasn't the focus of the
21 project, and so more recently TNOYS and Texas Appleseed
22 partnered together -- and Texas Appleseed had actually
23 reached out to us because they had kept identifying youth
24 homelessness as an issue in their other work, and they'll
25 talk more about that in a second -- but the report that we

1 released most recently focuses on how does youth
2 homelessness intersect with all of these state systems
3 that we do have. Because there's not a real state system
4 that serves homeless youth, they typically fall between
5 systems, or they can end up in a variety of systems which
6 Deborah and Gabriella will talk about.

7 So I'm really excited about it, we're really
8 excited to talk through the findings a little bit with
9 you, and especially given some of the work that you guys
10 are doing right now and the planning that TDHCA is doing,
11 we hope that maybe some of the money from this new fund
12 can be used for this purpose, and we'll talk a little bit
13 about that in a minute.

14 Deborah and Gabriella, do you want to introduce
15 Texas Appleseed?

16 MS. McDONALD: Sure. So for those of you who
17 don't know, Texas Appleseed is a public interest justice
18 center network to make social and economic change so that
19 all Texans can prosper. What that really means is we have
20 a very wide mission to work to talk about a number of
21 issues, including fair housing and disaster relief, fair
22 financial services, school to prison pipeline issues, as
23 well as a number of other matters. But the reason we
24 ended up working on youth homelessness is because we
25 started to see it intersect so much with so much of our

1 other work and really kind of exploded was when we were
2 doing our truancy work and we would go to court watch,
3 kids would say I'm homeless, that's why I'm not in school,
4 I don't have a bus to catch, I don't have a rid, I don't
5 know how to get those things.

6 And so in doing that work we were talking with
7 a law firm who put out a homeless youth handbook that
8 really lays out do I have a right to go to school, can I
9 sleep on a park bench, what should I say to police, these
10 types of things, and it answers all of those legal
11 questions, legal rights and responsibilities, and so we
12 were able to put that out and that's available online and
13 will be updated.

14 But then we wanted to go ahead and look at a
15 policy report because when we take on issues surrounding
16 fair housing or fair financial services, we really like to
17 get to know an issue really, really intimately, and so
18 the homeless youth handbook really helped to do that but
19 this policy report really helps to familiarize us with all
20 of the issues. So the reason we reached out to TNOYS was
21 we were doing an interview with some of the stakeholders
22 and we talked to Christine and Christine really had some
23 interest in delving deeper with us, and we're really glad
24 she did because that worked out great.

25 In doing this report we got data from TEA, we

1 got data from TJJD, we also tried to get data from DFPS
2 but that didn't quite work out.

3 MS. GENDRON: We paid for it and we're still
4 waiting; it's been a year and a half.

5 MS. McDONALD: So we got publicly available
6 data through DFPS, but we also had lawyers who helped us
7 do a bunch of stakeholder interviews with all the service
8 providers, law enforcement and anybody else who touches
9 the systems, medical professionals, along this line. And
10 so the other thing we did was we were able to interview
11 more than 100 youth themselves about things that they are
12 concerned with and what they saw and what their stories
13 were, and so there are quotes throughout the entire report
14 that really talk about what this experience is like and
15 that really provides some color to all of the data, and so
16 that was really, really helpful to us.

17 So, I think, Deborah.

18 MS. FOWLER: Sure. I'm Deborah Fowler, the
19 executive director for Texas Appleseed, and this project
20 was a product of my passion for the issue as a result of
21 the other youth-focused work that we've done. In addition
22 to work around truancy reform, we've worked for many years
23 around juvenile justice reform, we're working hard around
24 juvenile justice reform right now, but also foster care
25 issues and education issues. And so this was an

1 opportunity for us to take a look across all of those
2 systems to see how they were touching youth who may be
3 experiencing homelessness and how they were supporting
4 youth who may be experiencing homelessness.

5 And so we weren't quite sure how much time we
6 would have today so I'm going to go through our
7 overarching findings with you, and then if we have time,
8 we can delve a little more deeply into some of our
9 specific findings. But as Gabriella mentioned, we looked
10 at data from TEA which is a very rich source of data, and
11 data from the juvenile justice system, as well as the
12 publicly available data from DFPS, and what we found --
13 and I know it won't come as a surprise to you -- we found
14 that homelessness is a significant problem for young
15 people in Texas. And I want to speak a little bit to some
16 of the different indicators of that and go back to a
17 conversation that was started a little bit earlier this
18 morning.

19 You know, we went to participate in a point-in-
20 time count in Dallas one night last week, and I think what
21 we saw was really what a challenge it is to use a point-
22 in-time count to effectively identify unaccompanied
23 homeless youth. We were working in downtown Dallas from
24 9:00 to 1:00, was that Friday?

25 MS. GENDRON: The Friday night one.

1 MS. FOWLER: A little over a week ago, right.

2 And we saw or talked to youth that we believed
3 probably did not have a place to sleep that night but who
4 were not willing to self-identify, and what we see in the
5 data across systems is that there are indicators that this
6 is a serious problem in Texas. I mean, to say that
7 between the 14-15 school year and the 15-16 school year
8 that the number of unaccompanied homeless youth grew by 49
9 percent, I don't believe that means that we actually saw a
10 49 percent increase in the number of unaccompanied youth
11 who were being identified by schools, I think what it
12 means is that we're getting better identification at the
13 school level, and that's really important.

14 The same day that we released our report, there
15 was a national estimate of youth homelessness that was
16 released by a group of researchers out of the University
17 of Chicago, and I think that their estimate really gives
18 us a sense of how undercounted even in Texas -- where I
19 think we're doing a pretty good job, certainly our
20 educators are doing a pretty good job of identifying --
21 still are. That estimate indicated that one in thirty
22 youth, ages 13 to 17 in a given year experience
23 homelessness, and that's unaccompanied, and one in ten
24 young people ages 18 to 24, and if you translate that for
25 Texas using the 2010 census numbers, that would be more

1 than 60,000 13 to 17 year olds and I believe around
2 300,000 18 to 24 year olds. And so I am assuming, based
3 on my memory of what the numbers were for unaccompanied
4 homeless youth in the 14-15 school year that in 15-16 it
5 would have been around, what, 24,000?

6 MS. LOPEZ: I believe so. I'm not thinking of
7 the number right off the top of my head.

8 MS. FOWLER: I think that's right because it
9 was about 16,000 the year before, and so if it grew by 49
10 percent, then that probably puts it in that range, which
11 is getting closer to that 60-some-odd thousand number but
12 is still a ways off. And one of the things that we found
13 was that while schools are really clearly on the front
14 lines, the homeless liaisons are doing heroic work,
15 amazing work, but there are not enough resources for
16 schools, and that in and of itself presents barriers to
17 identification. And so we believe that the number is
18 probably closer to that 60,000 and if we had more
19 resources and better identification, we'd have a better
20 sense of just how great the problem is in Texas.

21 Our other overarching findings was that -- and
22 this, again, I think it's intuitive for young people,
23 particularly unaccompanied homeless minors -- that
24 homelessness is not just a housing problem, it's often
25 indicative of issues within the family and that for better

1 prevention we need to really find a way to target and
2 address those family problems before they result in a
3 youth, for example, running away from home.

4 MR. DOYLE: Do you have any indicators of what
5 those family problems are? Is it based on the ACES
6 program or the ACES data that we've seen, if you've got
7 three or four of these you're probably going to go to jail
8 from a justice perspective, but do you have something like
9 that that you're likely to be homeless?

10 MS. GENDRON: So the ACES are definitely part
11 of it and I think there's a lot in our report that touches
12 on some of those drivers, but I mean, family conflict,
13 mental illness, poverty, anything from a kid's abused so a
14 kid leaves home, the family can't afford to keep paying
15 for everybody and so when you're 16 you're out, to the
16 young person has a mental illness and they just don't get
17 along and so they leave or they're kicked out, all kinds
18 of things. And so the ACES, we talk more about ACES in
19 the child welfare realm because in child welfare there's
20 all these assessments and you know like exactly how many
21 adverse childhood experiences a kid has had, and with
22 homeless kids we don't have that stuff, they haven't had
23 all those assessments, but we know that trauma is
24 definitely a part of it, and that what happens to them on
25 the street, that's not necessarily early childhood but

1 it's upping that trauma history.

2 MS. FOWLER: And I'll tell you, one of the
3 indicators that we see in the data -- just in terms of
4 numbers that I didn't talk about -- the vast differences
5 between counties in terms of the number of kids who are
6 referred to the juvenile system for running away from
7 home, and I'll give you an example. Dallas County, for
8 the year that we have data for, had the highest number of
9 referrals for runaways to its juvenile system, despite the
10 fact that Harris County has a much larger number of kids.

11 And in addition to interviewing youth, we
12 interviewed stakeholders, including law enforcement, and
13 what we found were there are real differences in law
14 enforcement practices between cities, and one difference
15 that we think may contribute to that discrepancy between
16 Dallas and Houston is that Dallas has a dedicated unit
17 within their police department that focuses on human
18 trafficking and that goes out and looks for kids who are
19 at high risk for human trafficking. And I think that
20 that's commendable for Dallas to have dedicated those
21 resources, but I think what it means is that you're going
22 to see a higher number of kids referred to the juvenile
23 system for running away because law enforcement is
24 actively looking for those kids; whereas, we didn't hear
25 that as much with some of the law enforcement interviews

1 that we did in other cities.

2 So that's also another issue that I think for
3 this group to consider is the way that we tend to think
4 about homeless minors through sort of a law enforcement
5 prism rather than a child welfare or a supportive services
6 prism, and the way that affects policy.

7 So other cross-system findings, schools are
8 uniquely positioned to identify students and serve as a
9 resource for youth who are experiencing homelessness, and
10 it's critical that schools have the resources to do so
11 because we also found that kids who are homeless, whether
12 they're accompanied or unaccompanied, have particularly
13 poor academic outcomes. They're more likely to be
14 retained at grade level, they're more likely to drop out,
15 and they're more likely to experience exclusionary
16 discipline, which we know puts them at high risk for
17 juvenile and criminal justice system involvement in and of
18 itself later. And so we need to take a hard look at the
19 good work that the homeless liaisons are doing but see if
20 there's a way to expand that across more school districts
21 in the state.

22 Whether or not a youth experiencing
23 homelessness enters the child welfare or juvenile justice
24 system seems arbitrary, and Christine has already spoken
25 to this somewhat because we know that a lot of the kids,

1 for example, who are referred to the juvenile system for
2 running away from home were really fleeing abuse and
3 neglect, but they ended up in the juvenile system rather
4 than the child welfare system. So looking at and trying
5 to figure out how we can apply more of a child welfare
6 prism and mindset to the kids who get picked up for
7 running away because we know that a child welfare type
8 support system is going to be more effective in meeting
9 their needs than a juvenile justice system model.

10 We were also struck by the fact that while
11 there are multiple systems that touch the issue of youth
12 homelessness and realize and acknowledge that they are
13 serving kids who have experienced homelessness, that we
14 don't see one agency that is really taking a leadership
15 role or that is claiming ownership of the issue. And so
16 one of our hopes flowing from this report is that we can
17 encourage, and we really think it would be terrific to
18 see, for example, TDHCA and DFPS take sort of a
19 co-leadership approach.

20 And then, of course -- and I know that
21 Christine is going to speak to this more -- there are
22 problems with a lack of a consistent definition of youth
23 homelessness, that you all are all aware of, and that
24 connects with the big glaring problem that we saw which is
25 just under-funding for services for homeless youth. There

1 are nonprofits in the state that are really doing amazing
2 innovative work with young people but their funding seems
3 to be consistently at risk and there's not enough of it.

4 So I think, Christine, you were going to talk a
5 little bit about the services piece.

6 MR. DOYLE: Can I ask one question, that
7 report, how do we get that report?

8 MS. GENDRON: So we meant to bring the hard
9 copies, the box is really heavy but they're bringing it,
10 so we can bring them to the April meeting, but also it's
11 online, so maybe Cate can send everybody the link.

12 MS. TRACZ: Absolutely. I'll send the link to
13 everyone.

14 MS. FOWLER: There's also an executive summary
15 that was just published online which has some great video
16 from the youth interviews that we did, so I really
17 encourage you to go and find that executive summary too
18 because you'll get to see some of the amazing kids that we
19 talked to.

20 MS. GENDRON: Yes. And there is a lot of data
21 in here about what's happening in regard to the juvenile
22 and criminal justice systems, the foster care system, and
23 so we really encourage you to check it out because Texas
24 Appleseed in particular did some really incredible data
25 analysis that I think will be of interest to everyone.

1 So also what we looked at, youth homelessness
2 is intersecting with all of these state systems, it's
3 putting drains on these systems, it's costing these
4 systems money, none of these systems are able to
5 consistently and effectively serve these youth, despite
6 the best efforts made by many, including homeless liaisons
7 and others. The system that kind of does exist to serve
8 these young people is really what's being offered by
9 nonprofits, and so it's like an informal infrastructure,
10 and we hear from folks in schools and elsewhere that they
11 rely on these organizations but just the services they
12 need aren't there.

13 And what we hear consistently from providers is
14 that they can't meet need. So last year we called a
15 provider in Houston, for example, and they said they had
16 300 young adults on a wait list for housing. I called
17 them recently to find out if that was still the case and
18 they said it's fewer young adults on the wait list now but
19 it's not because they're getting people housed, it's
20 because they now have fewer staff who are even doing
21 intake to get young people on these lists.

22 We have heard just in the last year or so
23 providers in Austin and Dallas looking at having to close
24 programs. Many providers have had to close programs so
25 when federal funding cycles change for the Runaway and

1 Homeless Youth Grants they have to totally scramble
2 because the only real funding that is available
3 consistently to serve homeless youth are these federal
4 Runaway and Homeless Youth Grants that are offered through
5 the federal Administration for Children and Families, and
6 that typically is like a \$200,000 grant that you aren't
7 guaranteed to get over and over again. And so you might
8 have a major city that gets \$200,000 for an emergency
9 shelter or for a transitional living program, well, we all
10 know that doesn't cut it, and so that's why we're seeing
11 wait lists in many of these major cities.

12 And then furthermore, as we talked with
13 stakeholders and with youth, you know, this is also an
14 issue in rural areas so many of these rural areas there
15 are services at all. And so one of the things that was
16 interesting to me in here is if you look at data for some
17 communities, for example, let's say police identify a
18 young person who has run away from home, there are a lot
19 of reasons the youth may have run away from home, but we
20 know that taking the young person back home is not always
21 the best answer, taking the young person to a lockup is
22 not always the best answer, it's not always cost-effective
23 or trauma-informed. Well, where else are you going to
24 take a young person if you don't have a shelter or an
25 agency that has the capacity and resources to serve them?

1 There's not a lot else you can do.

2 And so I think there's kind of a mixed message
3 in terms of these services, or it's a clear message but
4 there's two pieces. Right? So in some areas we've got
5 really incredible programs that we can learn from but they
6 just can't meet demand and they're always having to
7 scramble because their funding is always changing and they
8 never feel like it's secure. And then on the other hand
9 we've got also a lot of communities where there just isn't
10 anything and it's a drain on law enforcement, it's a drain
11 on schools, and obviously it's really harmful to young
12 people and families.

13 And so we really hope that this can be somewhat
14 of a catalyst really to continue the momentum that I think
15 we've had in regard to seeing some of our state agencies
16 come together to tackle this issue, and we hope that the
17 TICH can take a leadership role in this effort. We'd love
18 to see there be a subcommittee on the TICH again devoted
19 to youth homelessness and I think we would be interested
20 in helping lead that. Also, though, we think there needs
21 to be state funding to support services specifically for
22 young people who are homeless.

23 We also think that there are a lot of really
24 incredible programs in Texas that can be built upon to
25 better serve these young people. So for example, in our

1 foster care system there is this SIL, supervised
2 independent living. It's a great model for serving people
3 who choose to stay in foster care after their 18th
4 birthday. Well, maybe we can make it available to kids
5 who don't choose to stay in care or remain in care because
6 we know it's a good model and it's frankly really cheap
7 compared to the alternative.

8 We've got the HHSP out of TDHCA. That's a
9 great model because communities are able to decide how
10 they want to spend the money, they don't have to spend it
11 in a certain way, they can look at, well, what do we need,
12 and the needs in regard to youth homelessness in every
13 community are different because they've all kind of pieced
14 together different solutions based on what they could work
15 with.

16 And so yeah, I think this report was really
17 exciting for me because there's so much information here
18 and we encourage you to take a look at it.

19 Is there anything you guys want to add?

20 MR. DOYLE: Clarifying question. You talked
21 about waiting lists. I missed waiting lists for what.

22 MS. GENDRON: Housing.

23 MR. DOYLE: Housing?

24 MS. GENDRON: But this is housing for young
25 adults.

1 MR. DOYLE: Which is under 18 it would be hard
2 to find a place.

3 MS. GENDRON: This is up to age 24, though.

4 MR. DOYLE: Okay.

5 MS. GENDRON: So I think waiting list in
6 Houston for 300, I think that may have been some sort of
7 voucher for youth to get apartments through one of the
8 organizations that's helping to serve youth.

9 MS. FOWLER: But didn't we hear that Promise
10 House has a waiting list of like 150?

11 MS. GENDRON: Yes. And that's for transitional
12 living. And these wait lists, this is consistent. We
13 hear other providers say they're not even keeping track,
14 they don't have wait lists.

15 MR. DOYLE: Are we talking about organizations
16 like the Lena Pope Home and All Church Home, or ACH?

17 MS. GENDRON: ACH is a good example, yes. So
18 ACH, Promise House, LifeWorks, Salvation Army, Covenant
19 House, there are a number.

20 MR. DOYLE: They just can't get in.

21 MS. GENDRON: Right.

22 MS. McDONALD: And I think the other point I
23 wanted to bring up is it's really interesting to see the
24 YHDP, the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project that
25 Ann was talking about earlier, ECHO learned a lot about

1 the difference between adult homelessness and youth
2 homelessness in dealing with that project. They talked
3 about that, they talked about working with LifeWorks and
4 how much of a difference it makes, and we have to
5 acknowledge that difference when we're trying to serve
6 youth, and I think it's really important for us to think
7 about what type of supports youth will need in addition to
8 just a house because a lot of these kids didn't have
9 parents to teach them. Because problems start in the home
10 and that's why you experience homelessness, a lot of them
11 didn't have somebody to teach them how to do their taxes,
12 how to properly apply for a job. And so people in this
13 room really do have the ability to touch all of those
14 things when we think about this issue.

15 MR. DOYLE: Well, and from a workforce
16 perspective it's a future workforce issue when kids get
17 homeless and get into that cycle. Texas, as we all know,
18 is just flourishing economically and jobs are critical. I
19 know I serve on our local workforce board and the first
20 thing employers ask us is tell me about your youth, is
21 there going to be people to fill the jobs that we're going
22 to create. So it's an important issue.

23 MS. GENDRON: You're right; that's a good
24 point. And what has also been striking just over the
25 years, talking with young people and talking with the

1 providers who serve them, is that a lot of these young
2 people who have been homeless are extremely resilient and
3 actually have very high level skills, and it's interesting
4 because that's not always the story in foster care. And
5 providers will compare young people they serve with foster
6 care histories compared to young people who have been
7 homeless and on their own, and young people who have been
8 homeless and on their own, they know how to survive,
9 they've had to learn, and so they have a lot of potential.

10 MR. DOYLE: They do.

11 MS. McDONALD: I think one of the most
12 interesting and heartbreaking things, I think, I heard was
13 when homeless liaisons are on the frontlines of
14 identifying but even they don't identify it sometimes
15 until a kid who has been sleeping in a tent somewhere says
16 I don't have anybody to pay for my cap and gown, and that
17 was kind of crazy to hear.

18 MS. FOWLER: One last point. One thing that
19 really struck me in the TEA data that I just really
20 recommend taking a look at, when we analyzed by rate
21 instead of just by count, we found that there were some
22 rural school districts that had among the highest rates in
23 the state. So again, this is not just an urban problem,
24 it's one that's shared across communities.

25 MR. DOYLE: Well, thank you for that. That was

1 very informative.

2 Does anybody have any questions?

3 MS. LOPEZ: I think this is a good segue for me
4 to come in here with the Texas Education Agency.

5 First of all, the reports that TNOYS and Texas
6 Appleseed were able to produce with the data is great, I
7 think it tells a great story. I often say a lot of times
8 data tells the story.

9 So I'm very new to TEA, I started in October.
10 TEA now has a position that's 100 percent committed to
11 homeless education, so I am now the new McKinney Vento
12 Homeless Education state coordinator, and so my position
13 is 100 percent over McKinney Vento and homeless education.

14 So we're very excited about it at the agency, and so I
15 just kind of wanted to talk about some of the initiatives
16 that the agency will be focusing on now that we do have a
17 full-time position, and a lot of the information and
18 concerns I've heard today will also be focuses at the
19 agency.

20 Since I've come into the position and been here
21 for a few months, I have been tasked with the competitive
22 grant process, so in the past the competitive grant was
23 run by Region 10 for our homeless education within the
24 school districts, our LEAs and serving centers. The
25 upcoming grant cycle has now returned to TEA and we will

1 be administering the grant process. So if you go to the
2 TEA website and go to the grants opportunities page, they
3 do have a little icon on the left that says "A year in
4 advance" and you'll be able to see all of the upcoming
5 grants that TEA will be administering. Ours will be there
6 as well, and we hope to release the application within the
7 next couple of weeks. We are anticipating awarding
8 anywhere between 60 to 80 sub-grants. We have almost \$6
9 million of funding that we will be able to award through
10 this competitive grant.

11 Given that with new legislation, the Every
12 Student Succeeds Act, which preauthorized McKinney Vento,
13 has a lot of stronger language and emphasis regarding
14 unaccompanied youth, the services that they receive to
15 ensure that they get the counseling and the assistance to
16 graduate from high school, and on time, not just to
17 graduate, and also to help remove barriers that a lot of
18 our families are facing. We're hoping to address a lot of
19 those concerns that's in the legislation that's given us
20 some stronger, I guess, a little teeth to move forward
21 with that through our grant, but also through more, I
22 guess, resources, documents and some guidance from the
23 agency, from the Texas Education Agency coming here soon.

24 We're also looking to provide more data-driven
25 information. I know you have this infographic here and

1 it's a bit outdated. I will say that by our next meeting
2 in April we will have the 2016-17 information and we may
3 be highlighting some other statistics as well.

4 Another initiative of the agency is to have
5 more collaboration within the agency to kind of maybe do a
6 point-in-time look at homeless education information, but
7 not with just students who are deemed homeless but also if
8 they're covered in some other special population within
9 the school district. We feel that that might give us a
10 better picture of point-in-time, and then we will be
11 providing information that may be at the end of year.

12 So these are a lot of the exciting initiatives
13 that we're looking at. We also do provide data that's in
14 a duplicated and unduplicated process, and so we'll be
15 sharing more information about that as well.

16 And as a former homeless liaison, when I hear
17 these young ladies speak, I often think of many of the
18 unaccompanied youth that I have worked with and do know
19 that when it comes to their homeless issues there are so
20 many more barriers. What I've found often is that our
21 students who are 18 and still in school can't go to any of
22 the shelters or the homeless programs because they are for
23 students who are under the age of 18. Now, if we were
24 able to get them in before they were 18, they can stay
25 there and finish until they graduate, but I oftentimes had

1 hesitation sending somebody who had just turned 18 to a
2 shelter that's for adults, and so often that was my
3 concern for those students and was hoping that there would
4 be more resources.

5 But they are all stressed right now, all the
6 resources that are out there for this special population
7 of students. And so I think that that needs to be a new
8 focus because these students are resilient and many of
9 times the one thing that is constant for them, the one
10 thing that keeps them going is going to school, of
11 anything else going to school. And often there are
12 students that once they turn 18 their families cannot
13 afford to support them and they are asked to leave the
14 home, and so that happens during the senior year, that
15 happens all well too often.

16 So I'm very excited about the direction that
17 the Texas Education Agency is taking right now of being
18 more data-driven, looking at more of these issues, working
19 to provide more of our data with the community to kind of
20 tell the story of homeless education.

21 With Hurricane Harvey, we have had more
22 families that need the McKinney Vento definition of
23 homelessness than ever before. We have provided a lot of
24 resources regarding identification, we even have a YouTube
25 video, and I don't think the agency has ever done that

1 before. So if you go the Hurricane Harvey Resource
2 website on the Texas Education Agency, you will see all
3 the administrative letters that we have provided to the
4 school districts and to our regional education centers,
5 you will see links to our charts that help with coding and
6 identifying students, we have a sample of a student
7 residency questionnaire, and we also do have a YouTube
8 video that helps walk school districts through
9 identification.

10 So we are working very closely with impacted
11 districts to ensure that everybody has been identified.
12 If they were not identified upon when Hurricane Harvey
13 hit, but now we still have a lot of families that what I
14 call are going through a secondary housing loss, to ensure
15 that they are identifying those families as well.

16 I have so many little notes here. I did also
17 want to say when I talked about housing representative,
18 another committee that has been formed from the Texas
19 Education Agency -- actually it's a task force, a
20 Hurricane Harvey Mental Health Task Force that's
21 specifically working with impacted school districts has
22 been created. It's in partnership with the Texas Higher
23 Education Coordinating Board and Health and Human Services
24 Commission, and they are spearheading this Hurricane
25 Harvey Mental Health Task Force to support mental health

1 needs to the impacted school districts, and we will be
2 looking for a representative that may be able to help us
3 from the housing end because the task force has just
4 completed a survey that went out to those districts and so
5 they are assessing the needs. A lot of the needs have
6 been focused on the students but they are now seeing a lot
7 of needs on the staff and what they're experiencing due to
8 Hurricane Harvey.

9 MR. DOYLE: Thank you, Cal, that was good.

10 D.J., on disaster relief from TWC.

11 MS. BINGLER: Mine is going to be a little more
12 informal. I was thinking, as everyone was presenting,
13 that I think the staff in our board areas are often
14 partnering with many of the other agencies to provide
15 assistance adults, dislocated workers, and the youth that
16 we serve are generally between 14 and 24, so I think that
17 we are able to if not provide direct assistance, at least
18 work with other partner agencies to try to provide that
19 kind of assistance.

20 We are still working quite a bit with disaster
21 recovery efforts in the Gulf Coast area. We are still
22 spending money from the Disaster Dislocated Worker Grant
23 for disaster impacted individuals, trying to help everyone
24 recover. There were people that lost businesses, there
25 are people that lost homes, there are families that were

1 separated, and so a constant effort to help all those
2 people. Primarily with our agency is through employment
3 and training benefits, trying to help people who maybe
4 lost their job or an employer who lost their business try
5 to find other employment to help with the disaster
6 recovery effort, so turning things around that way, trying
7 to get them better skills to help the area recover.

8 So it's a constant effort and we'll still doing
9 a lot, a lot of our focus is still on disaster recovery.
10 We recently got some waivers approved from the Department
11 of Labor to spend more money to support the individuals
12 and businesses in the area with recovery.

13 MR. DOYLE: Good, and did a good job on the
14 temporary unemployment stuff, too, in the local
15 communities.

16 MS. BINGLER: Yes. Thank you. That was a big
17 effort.

18 MR. DOYLE: Sherri. We're hitting you by
19 surprise.

20 (General laughter.)

21 MS. COGBILL: I've been in this role in the
22 office about two days, so I might be better prepared, but
23 obviously, with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice
24 for about twelve years.

25 You know, we faced a lot of different struggles

1 through the hurricane, of course, and trying to rebuild
2 our halfway houses and repopulate those situations and
3 that has all been completed, so we are all back and
4 repopulated in that area. And of course, our case
5 managers who are out in the field and in the community
6 certainly have been assisting Houston area parolees and
7 their families with getting connected with resources to
8 hopefully rebuild their lives, of course, if they did
9 decide to stay in the Houston area. And then we also
10 really tried to get them placed other areas of the state
11 if they did have family or resources in those areas. So
12 it's just an ongoing thing.

13 MR. DOYLE: Did any of the units get flooded?

14 MS. COGBILL: We did have a couple of units
15 that flooded that we evacuated, and luckily we had some
16 space from the federal units that we did have to move, so
17 we were able to have adequate housing, certainly, but
18 we're all moved back in and functioning well as far as the
19 units and that side of it goes.

20 MR. DOYLE: Good.

21 Down to my right, any more updates?

22 MS. BOLTON: Just a couple. Valinda Bolton
23 with CPS/DFPS.

24 We're actually doing pretty well with disaster
25 recovery. We did lose some capacity with foster homes

1 because people's homes are not inhabitable, but not as
2 badly as we thought, and everybody was pretty much --
3 almost everybody was back in place pretty quick. We had
4 caseworkers at the George R. Brown in Houston, many of
5 whom were displaced but they had their laptops and they
6 were processing, seeing clients, working with folks right
7 there in the shelters.

8 Probably one of the biggest far-ranging impacts
9 for us, so we have these things for CPS that we call
10 Rainbow Rooms, they're resource rooms where we have a lot
11 of supplies for families. Jean knows what I'm talking
12 about because she's on the Council of Child Welfare
13 Boards. So we have these Rainbow Rooms, pretty much at
14 least one in just about every county, and all up and down
15 the coast they were flooded or completely destroyed, and
16 all of the ones in the Houston Harris County area, except
17 for one, were flooded, and then after the hurricane that
18 one caught on fire and burned down. And then all the ones
19 in like the Beaumont-Port Arthur area, Port Neches-Groves
20 area were flooded.

21 And the impact of that is that we keep a lot of
22 things on hand for families, so we have what we call a
23 kinship placement where kids may be going to live with
24 grandma or an aunt or an adult sibling, so we may have
25 things that would make it possible for that home to meet

1 standards, like beds or fire extinguishers or diapers and
2 formula, and so that keeps kids from having to go to other
3 placements, and so that was a hard hit. But they're
4 almost all, with the exception of one or two, back open
5 and running, and of course, people have been incredibly
6 generous with helping us restock all of those.

7 We still have staff not back in their own
8 homes, but mostly okay.

9 MR. DOYLE: It affected everybody.

10 TDHCA.

11 MS. TRACZ: Naomi will do it for us.

12 MR. NOVAK: Chairman Doyle, it's Todd Novak on
13 the phone. Do you want to hear just a brief update
14 concerning the Texas Juvenile Justice Department?

15 MR. DOYLE: Yes. Go ahead, Todd.

16 MR. NOVAK: I just want to start off by saying
17 my goodness we are fortunate, our agency. As you all
18 know, TJJD, we serve the deep end of youth, so to speak,
19 in the criminal justice system. Just to kind of give you
20 an idea, we have about 379 kids home on parole right now,
21 so that just kind of gives you an idea, so we're not
22 talking about a tremendous population that was on the
23 ground during our disaster that we all experienced, but we
24 did come out very fortunate. We had significant office
25 closures, especially in the Houston area, as we all know,

1 but in terms of leased facilities, we really had no
2 damage, no flood damage whatsoever.

3 We did an outreach to all of our parolees, I
4 believe it was on August 28, to try to find dislocated
5 youth and families and only four were dislocated -- excuse
6 me, I should say displaced would be a better word -- only
7 four were displaced by the storm. So of course, we were
8 able to respond to that quickly and find family members
9 for them to live with until things got back in order.

10 We did have some staff, one staff member had
11 major flooding of their home, that was, of course, in the
12 Houston area. All of our secure facilities, we only had
13 damage at one, the Giddings State School where they had a
14 couple of downed trees and some wind damage with a little
15 bit of water leakage. I mean, all in all, listening to
16 some of the other stories, we really came out in a very
17 fortunate position.

18 MR. DOYLE: That's great.

19 Yes, ma'am.

20 MS. MOTEN: I was just going to ask if I could
21 go after him.

22 MR. DOYLE: Yes, go ahead, go right ahead.

23 Thanks, Todd.

24 MR. NOVAK: You're welcome, sir.

25 MS. MOTEN: For the Texas Veterans Commission

1 for the employment services side, we were actually able,
2 we were approved back in November or December for our
3 Harvey modification, and so what that means for us is that
4 we are now able and we are actually getting ready to start
5 the interview process, but we were able to receive
6 approval from the Department of Labor to hire five
7 additional staff members in the Houston area to work
8 directly with those veterans who were affected by
9 Hurricane Harvey.

10 And then along with that, of course, with our
11 Funds for Veterans Assistance Grant, they also have those
12 grantees or county entities that have those fundings to
13 provide assistance to the veterans and the family members,
14 who are eligible according to the program, in the Houston
15 area.

16 And as of today right now those organizations
17 who were approved for this next grant cycle that starts
18 for the grant cycle 2018-2019, they're in the process
19 today of actually providing three-minute presentations to
20 the FVA Advisory Committee to determine if they receive
21 the vote for this competitive grant process, and if they
22 do, then if they're recommended for approval and funding
23 then that goes up to our commissioners and they award the
24 funds and approve the list.

25 Also with us, Sarah Phillips -- who was on the

1 phone, I'm not for certain if she's still on there because
2 effective February 15 she actually will assume the role
3 from a statewide level for us from Federal Employment
4 Services to address the justice involved as well as the
5 homeless veterans, and so we're looking at creating that
6 program. The homeless piece came over to us -- and that's
7 the reason why we were both here today -- to really begin
8 to hone in on that, and I'm working, like I said earlier,
9 to create those numbers. One of the things that we will
10 have to do is really come up with a clear definition of
11 homelessness because, of course, Department of Labor has
12 their own.

13 And one, I think and I've always seen from the
14 other areas that I've always worked in, one of the
15 challenges, too, we found with homelessness are those
16 veterans who are fathers who are homeless with children
17 because there's really not enough services for those. So
18 even we are looking at possibly trying to identify that
19 particular demographic as well, because the struggle with
20 that is placing men in a facility that they either have
21 children, a son and a daughter, and that's always an
22 issue. So that's a population that's always missed when
23 you look at the homelessness issue.

24 And then we also have another staff member,
25 Ashley Vannoy [phonetic], who is addressing the veteran

1 women population from the employment standpoint statewide,
2 so she's actually going to be working and providing
3 workshops and seminars to assist women. We need to look
4 at the employment services. That way we are now beginning
5 to really focus on those particular demographics when you
6 look at some of the challenges of the women or of the
7 homeless fathers or men, and just different housing
8 modifications.

9 So I will say for this new grant cycle -- I was
10 texting them to ask because they're in the meeting -- for
11 the total five grant cycles that they have awarded for
12 this new grant period coming up is \$26 million, so based
13 within the five categories they have the short-term, they
14 have funds for those organizations that will go towards
15 short-term homelessness which is normally six months or
16 less, then they have the long-term homelessness, and then
17 they also have the housing modifications. So I can only
18 assume or speculate that in the Houston area that those
19 organizations that received the approval and awards for
20 next year to assist those veterans and family members with
21 housing modifications and that are dealing with
22 homelessness, they would be able to that assistance based
23 upon those organizations' grant criteria.

24 We still also have those grant funds available
25 for those organizations that started back July 2017

1 through June 30, 2018. And I know a lot about that
2 program because I've been in this position now since
3 November 1 and I actually was one of the grant officers in
4 FVA so I can kind of give you background information on
5 what that looks like from the FVA standpoint and what
6 we're doing here from an employment standpoint.

7 MR. DOYLE: Good. Thank you.

8 Naomi, quickly.

9 MS. CANTU: Finish up. We have four programs
10 that have committed funding for emergency disaster. They
11 help with immediate needs, utilities, rental assistance
12 and many of them are continuing to pay those funds. We
13 also approved 305 properties to provide emergency housing.
14 That was updated on our vacancy clearinghouse for the
15 apartments that we oversee. And we have also taken
16 measures to waive late fees and work with borrowers on
17 suspending payments for our loan programs when affected by
18 Hurricane Harvey.

19 So that's my quick and fast update for Harvey.

20 MS. SYLVESTER: And this isn't from TDHCA, but
21 the GLO received \$57.8 million in Community Development
22 Block Grant Disaster Recovery funds, and they have just
23 extended their public comment period about how to spend
24 those funds until February 13, 2018.

25 MR. DOYLE: Great. Thank you, Megan.

1 Any public comments?

2 MS. DOUGHERTY: HHSC has a disaster update just
3 real quick.

4 MR. DOYLE: Oh, I'm sorry.

5 MS. DOUGHERTY: HHSC is involved several
6 service provision grants, federal grants. One is the
7 disaster case management program that's currently being
8 operated by FEMA. I don't have specific information but I
9 know it's anticipated that the proposal that was submitted
10 to the Federal Government should be awarded soon, and so
11 HHSC will work with FEMA to transition operations of the
12 disaster case management program, and they will work also
13 with the voluntary organizations active in disasters who
14 are also, I believe, co-grantees on that funding
15 opportunity which is new for disasters at the federal
16 level, that kind of makeup.

17 And then the crisis counseling program is in
18 full swing in the affected areas and we just learned that
19 our regular services program was awarded, and that's \$11.1
20 million that will extend crisis counseling services
21 provided by paraprofessionals in several areas in those
22 affected areas for an additional nine months.

23 MR. DOYLE: Does it affect people that moved
24 from Houston to another area? Can they access those
25 counseling services, for example, in Bexar County or

1 Tarrant County.

2 MS. DOUGHERTY: No. Unfortunately there are
3 specific areas that were identified in the proposal that
4 was funded by the Federal Government. But new to the
5 regular program is that there are several education
6 service centers on that grant, so partnering with those
7 providers as well as some of the local mental health
8 authorities.

9 MR. DOYLE: Great.

10 Anybody else? Yes, Dennis. We've got three
11 minutes.

12 DR. SCHOLL: I don't want to get between the
13 folks and lunch here too long so I'll put something in
14 writing and send it to Cate but I did want to cover a
15 couple of points real quick. One, I hope a certificate of
16 appreciation might be prepared by you and maybe a
17 representative of the Department going to the various
18 departments or anyone from the membership who showed up to
19 50 percent of the meetings during the years that are
20 assigned. Sometimes that brings an additional duty to the
21 attention of another department.

22 I want to thank the folks that did both the
23 transcript and the minutes, dynamite job. I read both the
24 transcript and the minutes before.

25 And also, I want to commend Eric for taking on

1 the plan and that sort of thing. From my years as an
2 executive director at the Alaska Mental Health Board, a
3 program of written documentation that answers succinctly
4 and effectively for the legislatures who care about the
5 matter -- for them a lot of it is in the weeds --
6 answering their questions can have major, major impacts.

7 And then lastly, I'll provide some written
8 comment on the fund, of course, continuing my special
9 interest in the rural areas, those at risk as a
10 consequence of intellectual or mental issues and veterans.

11 Thanks, Mike. And I'll send some stuff to you
12 as well. Appreciate it.

13 MR. DOYLE: Thank you, Dennis.

14 Who else was on the phone that spoke?

15 MS. MURO: Hi. This is Mona Muro with the
16 Texas Council on Family Violence.

17 I just wanted to quickly add during the
18 discussion of relief, Harvey relief initiatives, our
19 domestic violence programs in the Greater Houston Area and
20 the Harris County area were greatly affected. We have
21 nine programs there that had a lot of damage to the actual
22 infrastructure. The Beaumont area in particular that
23 shelter was devastated and has continued to come back to
24 full capacity, as well as the rest of our shelters have,
25 but for many months they were severely impacted. We had

1 various shelters have to evacuate physically their
2 survivors in the shelter and seek shelter at other
3 locations across Texas. We had survivors fleeing from the
4 Houston area all the way up to Amarillo and Lubbock, some
5 folks came to the Austin and Bastrop areas. Obviously,
6 the Galveston area and Corpus area were all affected by
7 that.

8 So I just wanted to highlight those particular
9 issues and relief and support for funding for the programs
10 as far as their infrastructure because many times there
11 are restrictions on how domestic violence programs can
12 spend funding with respect to their infrastructure and
13 facilities. We have done a few initiatives on our end,
14 alongside with the National Network on Domestic Violence,
15 as well as the Verizon Foundation to help support the
16 domestic violence foundations in some of their initial
17 rebuilding, but obviously there's going to be some longer
18 term pieces as well to address.

19 So I just wanted to highlight that particular
20 community that we can continue to work with and kind of
21 put to the forefront with respect to their continued
22 Harvey recuperation.

23 MR. DOYLE: Thank you, Mona.

24 Anybody else?

25 MS. GENDRON: So I have a question. We would

1 really like to see a committee for the TICH focused on
2 youth and we would like to lead that, and so I wanted to
3 suggest that we create that committee and also that we
4 invite Texas Appleseed to be on the TICH so that they
5 could co-lead that, but I don't know what the process is.

6 MR. DOYLE: We'll have to get it on the agenda,
7 which will have to be for April since it wasn't on this
8 agenda in time, but we will certainly look at it.

9 MS. GENDRON: So to vote on something it needs
10 to be on the agenda in advance.

11 MR. DOYLE: Right.

12 MS. GENDRON: Okay. Good enough. Thank you.

13 MS. STAMP: So SXSW EDU, which is coming in
14 March, there will be a panel on the Invisible Million:
15 Homelessness in America. The proposal was submitted by
16 Schoolhouse Connection and the Institute for Children,
17 Poverty and Homelessness, who are two national
18 organizations and they invited our office to do some input
19 on the panel, as well, there will also be a former
20 homeless student being able to talk. So that's the panel
21 discussion on the 6th.

22 But on the 5th is the SXSW big kickoff for the
23 whole event. It's at Maggie Mae's at seven o'clock in the
24 evening, and Schoolhouse Connections has been invited by
25 SXSW to do this kickoff with a national campaign to

1 improve graduation rates for homeless students, and they
2 will have ten students that they're giving scholarships to
3 that evening, one of which is a Texas student from
4 Clearwater, Texas -- which I know you know where
5 Clearwater is; it's out east of Dallas, for those of you
6 that don't know. So those ten students will all be there
7 and receive scholarships, and of course leave since it's
8 Maggie Mae's, and the rest of the evening will really be
9 focused on homeless students, homeless graduation rates
10 and homeless support.

11 So it's kind of a big thing that SXSW has
12 really embraced this and sort of taken it on as a theme
13 for their kickoff event. So I invite all of you to
14 attend.

15 MR. DOYLE: Okay. We are adjourned. Thank you
16 all for being here. Look at your agenda for the date of
17 the next meeting, April 10, I believe.

18 (Whereupon, at 12:03 p.m., the meeting was
19 adjourned.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

MEETING OF: Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless
LOCATION: Austin, Texas
DATE: January 30, 2018

I do hereby certify that the foregoing pages,
numbers 1 through 87, inclusive, are the true, accurate,
and complete transcript prepared from the verbal recording
made by electronic recording by Nancy H. King before the
Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs.

/s/ Nancy H. King 2/3/2018
(Transcriber) (Date)

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