



MINNESOTA
INTERAGENCY COUNCIL
ON HOMELESSNESS

Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness

Council Meeting

February 23, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. via GoToWebinar

Minutes

1. Welcome and opening remarks:

Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan started the meeting at 10:09 a.m.

Council Members present: Commissioner Harpstead, Department of Human Services (DHS); Commissioner Ho, Minnesota Housing (MHFA); Commissioner Lucero, Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR); Commissioner Mueller, Minnesota Department of Education (MDE); Commissioner Olson, Office of Higher Education (OEH); Commissioner Schnell, Department of Corrections (DOC); Commissioner Schowalter, Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB); Chair Zelle, Metropolitan Council (MetC)

Designees Present: Andrew Garvais, Director, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA); Lorrie Janatopoulos, Director, Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED); Assistant Commissioner Mary Manning, Minnesota Department of Health (MDH); Sara Severs, Chief of Staff, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)

Guests: Hattie Hiler, Minnesota Housing, Sam Grant and Beki Saito, Rainbow Research.

In keeping with the Minnesota Open Meeting Law, guests are welcome. In the interest of time, attendees were not identified in these minutes. However, an attendee report is on file.

Check-in question: What in your budget do you think will most advance your agency's work on equity or justice?

- Council members shared a variety of work across the council agencies

2. Director's report

- Update on COVID response for people experiencing homelessness
Shared a summary of current COVID cases and vaccine rates among people experiencing homelessness and walked through current response efforts.
- Legislative policy and budget updates
Provided a high-level overview of the Housing Stability Budget in the Walz-Flanagan Budget to Move Minnesota Forward.
- 2021 Point-in-Time count
Provided a summary of the initial data from the January 2021 Point-in-Time count.

3. Adopt interagency data vision

Discussion question: As you think about what efforts, initiatives, or approaches might advance this vision for how we use data to drive progress on homelessness, what innovative ways could your agency better use data to improve outcomes and better support people experiencing homelessness?

- Better understanding homeless shelters, how they operate, and what the field needs to be sustainable
- Our current use of HMIS has been helpful but now need to take it to another level
- Measuring how our services are meeting the needs; practitioner characteristics identified to ensure appropriate services or to identify gaps of services; meet people where they are and address their needs where
- Homeless Action Team is a success but lack connection to mental health services, chemical addiction, etc.; hopeful that data can bridge the connection
- With the right data, connections might help to improve services and relationships with community health care workers
- As we use data to help move initiatives towards reducing homelessness, be mindful of what are we measuring

Motion: Approve and adopt the interagency data vision

Motion: Commissioner Schnell moved to approve and adopt the interagency data vision. Seconded by Commissioner Lucero. Vote was taken. Motion carries 12-0. All were in favor.

4. Kick off the development of the justice-oriented strategic plan with Rainbow Research

Discussion question: Given your initial ideas about what "achieving housing, racial, and health justice for people experiencing homelessness" means, in the next 3-5 years what will be different in what you see, hear, feel, and say about homelessness if we are successful in shifting to a justice-focused approach?

- Racial disparity of people living outside
- There is no academic achievement difference in homelessness and there are no identifiers
- Know who are students are and their challenges; have services to address their needs
- Lack of mental health care services won't be a predictor of homelessness or a barrier of accessing shelter
- Move forward with traction from homelessness; people who have disproportionately experienced homelessness will be provided full health potential
- Understanding within systems that homelessness is a failure of systems and not the individual
- Elimination of profound racial disparities
- Minnesotans who seek shelter in a right-of-way are non-existent or rare; outreach workers would be able to provide immediate services to meet the needs of the individual
- Access to resources for preventing homelessness in the first place immediately

- Intersectionality of all the above; individuals leaving the justice system have good health and access to full services, so their incarceration is not a factor that leads to homelessness; ultimately to return *home* successfully
- Community would not see this as a nuisance and that trauma would not need to be on display in order to get services; all see clearly their role in supporting people with resources to include dollars, housing and relationships; need for real culturally relevant support and treatment, and being creative to overcome barriers for those who battle addiction

5. Closing remarks and adjournment

- a. Homework from LG: Think about how you work across your agency to gather the best thinking to contribute to the work of specifying what housing, racial, and health justice for people experiencing homelessness means, and to get those perspectives plugged into the conversations that Sam and Beki will be convening. The State is one voice among many in these discussions, so let's make sure that we are not only listening, but also that what we contribute benefits from everyone within your agency who has wisdom to share about this topic.
- b. The meeting was adjourned at 12:02 p.m.