

DURHAM HOMELESS SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Full CoC Meeting
Wednesday, February 24, 2021
3:00 p.m.
Virtual Conference Call

The Durham Homeless Services Advisory Committee met on the above date and time.

Committee Members Present:

Chair Ellecia Thompson, (Durham VA Medical Center);
Vice-Chair Angela Vick-Lewis (Formerly Homeless Representative, City of Durham);
Secretary Captain Helen Tripp (Durham County Emergency Medical Services (EMS));
Harold D. Briscoe (City of Durham Homeless Subpopulation Advocate);
Dr. Angeloe Burch (Durham County Homeless Subpopulation advocate);
Heidi Carter (Durham County Commissioner);
Jonathan T. Crooms (Durham County Veteran Services Office – *Proxy for Lois Harvin-Ravin*);
Drew Cummings, (Chief of Staff, Durham County Manager’s Office);
Ryan Fehrman (Executive Director, Families Moving Forward);
Janeen Gordon (Assistant Director, Durham County Social Services – *proxy for County Commissioner Heidi Carter*);
Calleen Herbert (NCCU Office of Community Engagement & Service);
Jovonia Lewis (Durham Public School Board of Education)
Eliza Mathew (Duke University Office of Durham and Community Affairs);
Charita McCollers, MSW (Lincoln Community Health Center/Federal Health Care for the Homeless);
Wanda Page (City of Durham City Manager’s Office);
Mayor Steve Schewel (*Proxy Amber Wade in attendance*)
Tracy Stone-Dino (Alliance Behavioral Healthcare);
Vega Swepson (Resource Specialist, Durham Technical Community College);
Ebony Thomas (Durham Public Schools Homeless Liaison);
Chris Toenes, MSW (Non-Profit Representative, City of Durham/TROSA);
Renee Vaughan (Faith Community Representative);
Amber Wade (Assistant to the Mayor - *Proxy for Mayor Schewel*)

Excused Committee Members:

Michael Best (Formerly Homeless representative);
Meredith Daye, (Development Director, Durham Housing Authority);
Director Lois Harvin-Ravin, Durham County Veteran Services Office (*Proxy Jonathan T. Crooms in attendance*);
Regina King (Faith Community Representative for the City of Durham);
Alex Protzman (LIFE Skills Foundation);

Committee Members Absent:

N/A

Staff Present:

Community Development Manager Colin Davis,
Senior Community Development Analyst Lloyd Schmeidler,
Senior Community Development Analyst Hanaleah Hoberman,
Community Development Coordinator Ruebe Holmes.

Also Present:

Shiesha Bell (LIFE Skills Foundation);
Rikki Gardner (Housing for New Hope);
Valerie Haywood (Urban Ministries Durham);
Manuel Hyman (Alliance Health);
Debbie Long (Community Empowerment Fund);
Sheldon Mitchell (Urban Ministries of Durham);
Alexandra Nelson-Tomlinson (Open Table Ministry);
Kristi Page (Housing for New Hope);
Russell Pierce (Housing for New Hope);
Drew Pridden (TROSA);
Kate Gonzalez Redding (Reinvestment Partners);
Carolyn Schuldt (Open Table Ministry);
Frank Stasio;
Liz Stevens (Durham County Dept. of Public Health);
Malcolm White (Alliance Health);
Sally Wilson (Project Access Durham);
Laressa Witt (Alliance Health);
Tim Wollin (Step Up Durham);
Jasmin Young-Bradshaw (Durham Crisis Response Center)

Subject: Call to Order and Housekeeping

Chair Thompson called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. She thanked everyone for attending, read the goals of the HSAC aloud, and reviewed housekeeping rules.

Subject: Minutes Review and Approval

The minutes for December 16, 2020 and January 20, 2021 meetings were reviewed. The Secretary noted grammatical corrections submitted by staff member Schmeidler.

Motion: Mayor Steve Schewel

2nd: Janeen Gordon

No vote was taken

Subject: Public Comments Period

No one signed up for public comments

Subject: Executive Committee Quarterly Report

Chair Thompson presented the Executive Committee Quarterly report.

- Meets monthly on the first Friday
- Discussing COVID vaccine for CoC members and the homeless population
- Monitoring COVID outbreaks/exposures in community agencies serving the homeless
- Working on the coordinated entry process

- Monitoring White Flag processes and barriers
- Working on procuring COVID isolation locations
- Assisting with COVID testing sites
- Reviewing the Point in Time Count procedures and results
- Reviewing and updating Interlocal and Governance charters

Chair Thompson thanked the Performance Management and Policy and Planning subcommittees for their work. It supports the work of the Executive Committee.

Subject: COVID Isolation and Vaccine Update

Colin Davis reported an RFP was sent out to secure COVID positive housing for people experiencing homelessness. We have had one responsive reply. This was approved by the BOCC. It provides four units or 14 beds. We can use exigent circumstances to procure hotel rooms if all these beds are full. We cannot purchase hotel rooms to hold in reserve.

Liz Stevens, Durham County Deputy Public Health Director, provided an update on the efforts of the Durham County Department of Public Health during COVID.

- Deputy Director Kristin Patterson oversees the vaccination efforts at the Health and Human Services (HHS) building.
- Vaccines are available Monday through Saturday at HHS.
- Southern High School is another vaccination site in cooperation with Duke.
- The state determines the prioritization for who receives the vaccine.
- Currently vaccinating groups 1 and 2.
- Moving into group 3 now.
 - Prioritizing educators, teachers, and childcare workers.
 - Beginning March 10, we can move to other essential workers including homeless providers and staff.
 - Homeless residents will be in group 4.
- “Deeper Dive” documents are available on the state’s COVID website. (Links to these pages were added to the chat.)
- Recognized the work and partnerships of several people who have facilitated getting vaccines to the community.
- Getting doses out is restricted by allocation by the state.
- The distribution process is set up to accommodate more vaccines when the doses are available.

Ms. Stevens accepted questions.

- Are we getting any supplies from Johnson and Johnson?
 - We currently receive a mix of Pfizer and Moderna. We anticipate receiving the Johnson and Johnson vaccine once it is available.
- Are people able to choose which vaccine they receive?
 - Yes and no.
 - The clinics are set up to provide a certain vaccine for the day.
 - The state expects all the vaccine to be used up during the week.

- They can work with people to schedule their vaccine on certain days if they prefer one vaccine over another. This is usually for health reasons.
- Can you share some of the strategies Public Health is using to target people of color for vaccination?
 - We are working with community partners on this. Director Jenkins has been meeting with many groups to provide information about the vaccine and any barriers that may be in place.
- Are we seeing any of the virus variants in Durham?
 - The state lab is doing testing to determine the efficacy of the current vaccines on the variants. We are staying in close contact with them.
- Since we do not have a robust shelter plan for our homeless population, is it a possibility to use access to vaccinations as a potential plan to treat our folks as a means to reduce or prevent outbreaks? Are there any conversations about using vaccinations as a homeless strategy to prevent COVID positive tests.
 - It is a worthwhile thought. The CDC allows flexibility to decide who should receive the vaccines.
 - We have to look to the state for direction. There are several groups working to get the homeless moved higher in the prioritization.
- What can the HSAC do to get this cause pushed forward?
 - Our biggest limit is our supply.
 - This is a significant problem, not just in Durham.
 - The focus is on making sure the supply is being distributed in an equitable and efficient way.
- How is the County's allocation of vaccinations determined? Is it based on hospitalizations or number of persons tested positive?
 - The method the state uses is unclear.
 - Counties must demonstrate they can exhaust all the doses they receive.
 - Durham uses a wait list to call people to use up any vaccine that is left at the end of the day so that nothing is wasted.
- How many doses is Durham County receiving on average?
 - The state decides in three-week increments.
 - Public Health has been receiving 1,300 doses per week.
 - The number of providers determines the number of doses distributed.
 - Walgreens, Harris-Teeter, Gurley's Pharmacy, and other pharmacies are online
 - More providers means the supply is spread more thinly.
 - Some pharmacy partners have been able to go to homes to provide vaccines to those who cannot get to a clinic.
- Commissioner Carter noted Lincoln Community Health Center has also been providing vaccinations on Saturdays and Sundays.

- Mayor Schewel commended Public Health for a great job.
 - To-date 21% have been provided to people of color.
 - 38% in Durham are people of color.
 - We are not yet where we want to be to be equitable.
 - All the vaccines are efficacious. People should not be encouraged to pick and choose which vaccine they receive.
 - Vaccine supply is a national problem. We will be getting more soon
 - To get the homeless population increased in priority we need advocacy at the state level. We cannot change our prioritization locally.

- Ms. Stevens shared links in the chat
 - Durham County vaccine location:
<https://www.dcopublichealth.org/services/communicable-diseases/coronavirus-disease-2019/covid-19-vaccines/-fsiteid-3>
 - Group 3 Deep Dive: <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/vaccines/find-your-spot-take-your-shot/deeper-dive-group-3#frontline-essential-worker-essential-worker>
 - New Durham County Vaccine Hub breaks down demographics, race, ethnicity, age, geographic location
 - <https://durhampublichealth-durhamnc.hub.arcgis.com/pages/vaccine-distribution>
 - We know we are not where we want to be in vaccinating black and Latino peoples, but we are doing better than the statewide average.
 - The state vaccine dashboard:
<https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/vaccinations>

Sheldon Mitchell, Urban Ministries Durham, reported a new outbreak of COVID at the shelter. This included two residents and one staff. Regular surveillance testing revealed four additional persons testing positive. All have been moved to the isolation locations. Three staff have quit now due to the positive cases. They continue to work with Durham County Department of Public Health to plan and prepare.

Commissioner Carter asked how TROSA was able to get vaccines. Ms. Stevens explained TROSA is a substance use facility and falls within group 1. The type of facility and licensing determines whether it is eligible. This brings up a good point that other facilities that offer similar services should also be included. We know the homeless population is a medically vulnerable group.

Subject: White Flag Update

Carolyn Schuldt presented information about White Flag shelter during the COVID situation.

- Many people worked together to manage the legal and logistical requirements.
- Trinity United Methodist Church opened its doors January 11, 2021.
- Provides space for 20 people each night.
- They have served 112 unique individuals and 996 warm nights.
- To-date there have been no COVID positive cases.
 - Screen for COVID
 - Screen for weapons

- Blankets and mats are sanitized daily.
 - Special air purifier runs 24 hours/day
 - Residents are required to get tested on Urban Ministries testing nights.
- White Flag Nights are those with temperatures under 32° or 37° with precipitation. On those nights additional rooms are opened at Carolina Duke Inn (CDI) to house
 - People who are medically vulnerable
 - People with mobility issues (elevators at Trinity may not be available in an emergency)
 - Families
 - Have served 616 people in 438 rooms to-date
 - Housing for New Hope Street Outreach and Entry Point play a large roll in making this work.
 - Individuals are pre-approved. They are called on White Flag Nights to appear at CDI for that night.
 - Urban Ministries provides meals at CDI.
- Open Table Ministries (OTM) helps the vulnerable and are grateful to help those in need. They can provide clothes, coats, and shoes as needed.
 - Ms. Schuldt shared a few stories about some of the people they have served.
 - They are very careful to keep the mats more than six feet apart, sanitize items, and wear masks.
 - Colin Davis commended OTM for the strong work they have done to make this work.
 - Urban Ministries has opened the cafeteria for up to 12 people from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm on cold days.
 - The shelter at Trinity is open every night regardless of weather until March 31, 2021.
 - There is also a porta-potty in the parking lot of the church that is much used.

Subject: HUD CoC Renewals Awarded

Lloyd Schmeidler presented the permanent supportive housing projects awarded for 2020. He also shared the changes in funding from 2018 through 2020. The presentation is attached.

Subject: DHA HCV Update

Hanaleah Hoberman presented information about the utilization of the Durham Housing Authority resources for the homeless. It included the number of Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) used and available as well as next steps. The presentation is attached.

- Ryan Fehrman asked if families were underrepresented in those receiving HCVs.
 - Ms. Hoberman explained the numbers she reported were for households and not families so there was not a disparity. She did not have a breakdown by family.
- Rikki Gardner as about the number of vouchers provided for Transition Aged Youth (TAY).
 - Ms. Hoberman addressed the question. Nine percent of overall referrals went to TAY.

Subject: Announcements

Please email your announcements as needed.

Subject: Adjourn

Chair Thompson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Janeen Gordon

2nd: Ebony Thomas

With no further business, Chair Thompson adjourned the meeting at 4:34 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'HT' with a large flourish at the end.

Helen Tripp
Secretary, Homeless Services Advisory Committee