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CITY SECRETARY  
DALLAS, TEXAS

MINUTES OF THE CITIZEN HOMELESSNESS COMMISSION  
Video Conference  
Thursday, July 09, 2020  
start 3:05 pm

Call to order by Chair Margolin at 3:05 pm

**1. Roll Call:** Present - Ann Margolin (Chair), Jennifer Snow, Linda Garner, LeTitia Owens, Brandon Vance, Christian Marquez, Britton Banowski, Josh Cogan, David King, Tami Fowler, John Shellene, Alan Tallis, Kevin Cooper, Lisa Marshall, and Amy Desler

**2. Public Comment** – No public speakers registered.

**3. Approval of June 22, 2020 Minutes** – Commissioner Garner and King requested the minutes be revised as they were not representative of the discussions and would like the minutes revised to the satisfaction of Commission. Chair Margolin stated the June 22, 2020 approval of minutes would not be voted on at that time and asked each Commissioner to send comments or corrections to Ms. Kelly Hunt for revision.

**4. Chair's Report:**

Chair Margolin informed the group that she had obtained clarification from the City Attorney's Office that Boards and Commissions Chairmen can establish their individual meeting rules regarding the amount of time each Commissioner and public witnesses can speak. To that end, Chair Margolin informed Commissioners that they would each have four minutes to speak during Round One of questioning and two minutes during Round Two.

**5. OHS Program Updates and Path Forward Briefing by Kevin Oden (Power Point presentation)**

**Carl Falconer/Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance:**

Mr. Falconer provided details about the partnership between the MDHA Continuum of Care and the Office of Homeless Solutions in preparing for the launch of the new Rapid Rehousing Program. He also spoke about plans for working with the City of Dallas regarding new federal funding for ending homelessness in the City of Dallas and Collin Counties.

**Mandy Chapman Semple/Clutch Consulting:**

Ms. Chapman-Semple provided detail on Clutch Consulting's agreement with the Meadows Foundation to improve the systems at MDHA and the broader effort to end chronic homelessness in the Continuum of Care.

**Kevin Oden/OHS Interim Director:** Mr. Oden updated the Commission on OHS' current efforts to launch a new Rapid Rehousing Program that will house at least 300 individuals and families as well as the operations at the temporary shelter at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center. He also provided details about the plan to acquire new properties using federal Coronavirus Relief Funds. Those properties will be used as bridge housing for Dallas residents experiencing homelessness.

**Ms. Garner:** Requested that Interim Director Oden begin sending weekly updates to Commission again.

**Mr. Oden** agreed.

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**Ms. Garner** also asked about the plan for guests once they test negative for COVID-19 and exit the hotel. She was specifically concerned about guests who are shelter resistant.

**Mr. Oden:** Indicated that the Dallas Love Field Inn would continue to operate as needed but that as many people as possible would be moved through the Rapid Rehousing Program or into a traditional overnight shelter.

**Ms. Garner for Ms. Desler:** Asked if CHC representatives could attend Councilmember briefings regarding the purchase of properties for bridge housing.

**Mr. Oden** indicated that OHS could not directly invite Commission members to the meetings but that OHS can inform Councilmembers that the Commissioners would like to be included in the meetings, so the individual Councilmembers can extend the invitation if they choose.

**Ms. Garner:** Asked for the current list of potential sites for purchase.

**Mr. Oden** stated that the list cannot yet be made public because negotiations are ongoing.

**Ms. Owens:** Asked about the process for selecting vendors for the Rapid Rehousing Program.

**Mr. Oden** Stated that seven vendors applied for the program and all were selected for participation. He added that this process was different from a traditional procurement in that there was no scoring. Instead the selections were based on the ability to house residents quickly. He also stated this is a Pay-for-Performance model where the vendors are not guaranteed funding unless they have housed their clients.

**Ms. Owens:** Asked who selected the vendors and how the groups were selected to receive RRH funding and what the process will be for allocating the \$26 million for site acquisition?

**Mr. Oden:** Said the seven subrecipients who applied were chosen on their capability to house people and that the \$26,000,000 will be spent on turnkey site property acquisition for additional homeless housing.

**Ms. Owens:** Asked if the Citizens Homelessness Commission can see the proposals for the seven organizations that were given the funds.

**Mr. Oden:** Deferred to City Attorney's Office.

**Barbara Martinez/CAO:** Stated the proposals can become public information once the contracts are executed. Ms. Martinez added that the proposers sometimes exclude information they consider proprietary. If a proposer asks that the details of a response be kept confidential for proprietary reasons or because they believe the information will create a disadvantage in future competitions, Ms. Martinez stated that the proposer must submit the argument to keep the contract private, with the Attorney General's Office for a ruling.

**Mr. Vance:** Asked how OHS is moving guests from HMIS to the Housing Priority List and then into Rapid Rehousing? How many homeless are in HMIS and qualify for housing?

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**Mr. Oden:** Informed the group that MDHA created a special project list for this program. He said we will utilize a By Name List that is separate from the MDHA Housing Priority List and that this will allow us to maintain the integrity of the referral list.

**Mr. King:** Asked how OHS will manage capacity at shelters, after the closure of the emergency shelter, to ensure there is no increase of unsheltered residents.

**Mr. Oden:** Explained the shelters have begun taking in guests again and that COVID-19 testing is ongoing using CDC guidelines. Mr. Oden added that there is a significant gap due to critical shortage of affordable housing as well as available shelter beds. Until we have adequate housing, the shelter network will be overburdened.

**Mr. King:** Asked that Mr. Oden provide detail about the Rapid Rehousing Request for Proposals process. because the fact that only seven organizations responded is concerning.

**Mr. Oden:** Responded that before the RFP was released, there was a month of discussions, two briefings to the Ad Hoc committee, and numerous phone calls to the service provider network. He added that the COVID-19 pandemic forced OHS to execute the RFP process on a shorter than normal timeline but that the application was also much less extensive than the traditional process.

**Mr. King:** Asked OHS to provide the coverage map and information on data sent out to subrecipients.

**Mr. Oden:** Said he would provide the information.

**Mr. Tallis:** Asked what the Commission can do to assist in fulfilling the OHS agenda and to ensure respective councilmembers understand the plight of the homeless in Dallas.

**Mr. Oden:** Indicated that support for the property acquisition is a way the Commission can be very helpful. He encouraged the Commission members to continue to be vocal because it takes all parties involved to fight stigma related to homelessness. He added that the Commission can spread the word especially in their communities to be a part of a long-term solution.

**Ms. Desler:** Asked for a schedule for subcommittee meetings and asked that the topic of anticipated city and state budget shortfalls be included on the next Commission meeting agenda. She also asked that the Commission establish technology protocols to make virtual meetings easier for all members.

**Mr. Oden:** Agreed to provide that information.

**Ms. Marshall:** Expressed concerns that Rapid Rehousing does not work for chronically homeless populations at levels 1-4.

**Mr. Oden:** Explained that OHS is currently focused on Rapid Rehousing in this round of funding and that program is targeted toward residents who are largely self-sufficient. Permanent Supportive Housing will be reserved for people who score lower on the P-scale and need ongoing case management and supportive services.

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**Mr. Cooper:** Stated this discussion is an indication of a lack of shelter capacity, the lack of traditional housing capacity, and the lack of Permanent Supportive Housing in the Homeless Response System in the City of Dallas. Mr. Cooper stated that he is a supporter of the Housing First model and asked if the \$26 million designated for property acquisition would be used for Permanent Supportive Housing? He also asked if HUD funds would be used for property acquisition? He asked how will Dallas Housing Authority vouchers be used to support this effort?

**Mr. Oden:** Explained that the Coronavirus Relief Funds expire Jan 1, 2021 and that requires rapid identification of sites for acquisition, so we must spend it quickly.

**Mr. Cooper:** Stated that every Council District will need to support this effort for it to be successful. He raised concerns about NIMBY opposition to the plan. He asked how the Commission can be helpful in ensuring its success?

**Mr. Oden:** Asked the Commissioners to think about ways this program can help their areas of the city and to promote those benefits in their communities. He stated that OHS will involve the Commission in every step of the process.

**Mr. King:** Stated a general area of concern for him is that African Americans are often not a priority in budget discussions which he believes is driving the numbers of African Americans to homelessness. He asked if OHS would be able to spend all the funds allocated to the Office in the time allotted for each program and asked how the funds will be spent?

**Mr. Oden:** Stated OHS plans to spend all money for 16 months program in accordance with budget and attorney's conversations and that additional budget priority information will be provided in weekly Commission updates as well as subcommittee and Commission meetings.

**Ms. Marshall:** Asked when looking for places like St. Jude, will we be using Metro Care, VASH, City Square and the County in a way that is similar to the Continuum of Care?

**Mr. Oden:** The City will require competitive bidding; council members and commissioners will look at the scope of the services, we are looking for the most qualified operators.

**Ms. Marshall:** Commented that no supportive service providers are currently visiting guests at St. Jude Center because of COVID-19. She asked if OHS will ensure services are provided at the properties it acquires.

**Mr. Oden:** Stated that he is generally unaware of operational issues at St. Jude Center because it is a private facility but that there will be a contractual obligation for provision of services for any vendor who operates one of the sites OHS plans to acquire. Those vendors will be required to provide services regardless of outside conditions.

**Ms. Garner:** Asked if the Commission can add requirements to vendor contracts.

**Mr. Oden:** Stated that OHS will consider the Commissioners' guidance to the extent possible when drafting proposals.

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**Ms. Garner:** Asks fellow commissioners to look within their Districts to identify sites for acquisition, to find ways to enhance the coverage area for citizens they represent, and to identify areas where services are lacking. Once that is done, she asked that they come forth with solutions and work with OHS, the Commission, and the Council to make this effort a success.

Meeting adjourned: <sup>4:59 AM</sup> 4:25 pm

Approved:  Date: 8-18-20

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