

**California State Association of Counties (CSAC) – League of California Cities® (League)
Joint Homelessness Task Force (HTF)
Meeting Notes – May 11, 2017**

Attendance: Oscar Villegas (Co-Chair), Jan Arbuckle (Co-Chair), Kathy Miller, Robert Bendorf, Sam Dodge, Cindy Cavanaugh, Greg Devereaux, Jeff Brown, Curtis Hunt, Richard Garbarino, Damon Connolly, Phil Ansell

I. Welcome and Introductions

Council Member Jan Arbuckle welcomed everyone and invited them to introduce themselves.

II. Discussion: Essential Components of Homelessness Plan Documents (see handout)

League Staff Jennifer Whiting reported that she has spent time over the last few months reviewing different homelessness plans adopted across the state to identify recurring themes and components. The task force gave positive feedback on the information provided. They also added several ideas to the discussion. Specifically, they added the following Questions to be Considered When Exploring a Homelessness Plan or Strategy:

- Is our plan outcome based?
- What is the purpose of the plan? What are we trying to achieve?
- How will we determine if we are successful?
- Who is the audience?
- What is the role/responsibility of law enforcement?
- How will we share/represent our plan with the public?
- What other plans exist?

The task force also discussed whether the proposed question about collaborating with community partners should be a question, or if it should be a statement. Ultimately, it was left as a question, but staff will stress in the report that this is an important component to success.

Task Force members also asked for two possible additions to the Descriptions of Main Sections of Strategies:

- Data: What is the problem that is being addressed and what is already being done.
- Impacts on the broader community.

In addition, the report should note that some grant programs have specific requirements for what a plan should include, and any jurisdiction should explore those requirements if funding is the goal.

On Policies to be Considered in Each Strategy, the task force asked that Housing First and Rapid Rehousing specifically be mentioned.

Staff also indicated that the Index of Strategies/Plans will be updated to include the City of Los Angeles and County of Los Angeles. In addition, it was suggested that “(City and County of Sacramento)” be removed after “Sacramento Steps Forward”. Task force members also suggested that links to the National Alliance on Homelessness and the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness would also be good resources to include in the report.

It was also suggested that the report needs a section on approaches that cities and counties have taken that may or may not have worked.

III. Presentation and Discussion: BSCC Presentation on Grant Programs

Mary Jolls, Deputy Director of Corrections Planning and Grant Programs, Board of State and Community Corrections, spoke to the committee about what BSCC is doing in the area of homelessness. She indicated that this is a relatively new, but growing, issue for BSCC. Recent legislation has required that BSCC include housing of previously incarcerated persons as an issue in their grant guidelines. They often look for local elected officials to help develop grants, and invited the task force to volunteer. She then discussed three BSCC programs that include a housing component:

- MIOCR (Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction) - supports prevention, intervention, diversion, supervision, services and strategies aimed at reducing recidivism in California's mentally ill offender population and to improve outcomes for these offenders while continuing to protect public safety.
- Pay For Success – provides funding through Social Innovation Financing for three pilot counties when investors, local government agencies and service providers to agree on outcome goals for programs that reduce recidivism. Repayment on the private investment is based on reaching those targets.
- LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion) - improves public safety and reduces recidivism by increasing the availability and use of social service resources while reducing costs to law enforcement agencies and courts stemming from repeated incarceration.

IV. Presentation on Importance of Shelter Programs (see powerpoint presentation)

Michele Steeb, CEO, St. John's Program for Real Change, discussed their program which is focused on women and families. Their program model brings services in-house so that they are in one place and everyone can coordinate. There are five program levels that women work through in the 12-18 month program:

- Level 1 – Stabilization (Month one)
- Level 2 – Vocational Training and Self-Development (Months two-four)
- Level 3 – Advanced Employment Training and Positive Network Development (Months five-six)
- Level 4 – Job Acquisition and Self-Reliance (Months seven-eight)
- Level 5 – Family Sustainability and Community Development (Month nine+)

The St. John's Program has specific measurements for success for both the clients and the program. They feel strongly that their model is one of many, and won't work for everyone. There needs to be multiple ways to enter and interact with the system. Ms. Steeb also brought one of their clients to share her story and successes.

St. John's has two restaurants and a catering business, Plates, which provided lunch for the task force members.

VI. Presentation of Whole Person Care (see powerpoint presentation)

Dr. Kathleen Clanon, Medical Director, Alameda County, spoke on the Whole Person Care Pilot Program in Alameda County. Their vision is to create a system of whole person care that helps high-need patients achieve optimal independence and health in safe and stable housing. Funding for the pilot is provided by a grant from the California Department of Health Care Services. In total, 18 counties are receiving funding from the first round. Following the presentation, the task force discussed why some counties did not apply for funding. Possible reasons offered were: 1) that some counties are too rural, and 2) the coordination requirements were high and some counties were not ready to meet those requirements in the first round of funding. There may be more applicants in the future. The task force

also had a discussion on data sharing. Since some agencies are not included in HIPAA, there needs to be levels of access. The county is working through that, but is optimistic that a resolution will be found.

VII. Presentation on Employment Focused Housing Efforts (see powerpoint presentation)

Chris Richardson, Chief Program Officer, Downtown Streets Team, discussed their model for helping people out of homelessness which focuses on employment. They believe that a prescriptive path out of homelessness does not work, and so they focus on flexibility. In their program, someone who is homeless volunteers to do work as part of a team, and in return they get a “survival” gift card (a gift card they can use to buy things they need to survive). Team members also work with a case manager on other services they may need. Everyone on the team meets weekly to hear about job fairs, job opportunities, and other announcements. They also welcome new team members during the weekly meeting. Funding for the program comes from a variety of sources that the local government puts together.

VIII. Discussion on How to Identify Best Practices (see powerpoint presentation)

Martin Gonzalez, Executive Director, Institute for Local Government, led the task force in several activities to help direct staff on what areas to focus on when collecting best practices for the final report.

On target populations, the task force indicated the priorities are Families, Chronically Homeless, and Mentally Ill populations. To a lesser extent, Formerly Incarcerated and Substance Abuse were also prioritized.

On collaborative efforts, priorities were identified as City-County Collaboration, City/County-Faith Based Organization Collaboration, and City-City or County-County Collaboration. It was also noted that it is importation for all the collaborating partners to be on the same page throughout the process in order for the collaboration to be successful.

On housing approaches, the task force noted that Housing First is definitely a priority because it is embedded in the requirements throughout federal and state law. In addition, the task force listed Housing Assistance, Rapid Rehousing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Tiny Homes and areas to explore.

Finally, on governance the task force shared that it would be helpful to have common “dashboards” to help cities and counties use common language and definitions as well as tips and technical assistance on how to create and maintain more effective partnerships and collaborations. They also identified that funding is a priority. Since funding currently comes from many different sources, they suggested creating resources to help them “braid” funding or working with the state to create one dedicated pot of funding to address homelessness.

Concluding Remarks & Next Steps

While task force was meeting, the Governor released his May Revise for the 2017-18 state budget. Darcy Kernan, CSAC staff, reported to the task force that the May Revise included some changes to the \$25 million Community-Based Transitional Housing grant program. The May Revision broadened the purposes for which cities and counties may use their program funds based on feedback from many potential applicants. The proposed statutory changes do the following:

- Allow cities and counties to provide a portion of their program funds to the facility operator, if the facility operator agrees to use those funds for facility operations and services to residents. There is no limit on the amount the city or county may provide the facility operator.
- Allow cities and counties to use program funds for other purposes that their governing boards determine are in furtherance of the program's goals as long as the proposed uses are specified in the application.

Oscar Villegas, County Supervisor, Yolo County and HTF Co-Chair, thanked the task force members for all their work. Jennifer Whiting reported to the group that this was the third of four meetings, and focus will turn to compiling the information from the meetings into a report. If there are sections that need more work, a conference call will be scheduled. Otherwise, another meeting will not be scheduled until the report is ready for final review, likely in Fall 2017.