

Interagency Council on Homelessness

December 10, 2008

9:00 a.m. – 10:30 p.m.

Olympia, Washington

Present:

Alfie Alvarado-Ramos, Deputy Director, DVA

Jody Becker-Green, Assistant Secretary, DSHS

Anne Fiala, Assistant Deputy Secretary, Community Corrections Division, DOC

Patricia Julianelle for Melinda Dyer, State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, OSPI

Mark Streuli, Policy Manager, WorkSource Operations, ESD

CTED Staff:

Annie Conant

Tedd Kelleher

Bruce Yasutake

Homelessness Housing and Assistance Act Document Recording Fee Revenue Update

4,700 fewer homeless people will be served in 2009 vs. 2008 due to a projected 28% decline in local and state document recording fees. 15,300 additional people are projected to be homeless in 2009 in Washington State (102,300).

Final Ten-Year Homeless Plan: 2008 Annual Report

The plan was submitted to OFM/Governor's office on December 4. CTED anticipates getting it back by the end of the month so that it can be distributed to the public.

Legislative Session and Budget Updates/Agency Updates

All agencies have submitted their supplemental FY 2009 budget reduction proposals to OFM and the Governor. Decisions on specific reductions will be included in the Governor's 2009-2011 budget.

ESD, DVA and DSHS are seeing significant increases in demand for services

About half of CTED's proposed FY 2009 reductions would come from not funding the Transitional Housing, Operating and Rent program (THOR) expansion.

The Affordable Housing Advisory Board (AHAB) is beginning work on the 2011-2016 Affordable Housing Advisory Plan. This is a year long process that starts at its December 17 meeting, where AHAB will be focusing on one of seven goals – to

“significantly reduce homelessness for individuals and families.” More on AHAB can be found at:

http://www.cted.wa.gov/portal/alias_cted/lang_en/tabID_718/DesktopDefault.aspx

The Offender Re-entry Transitional Housing Pilot Program final report was sent to the Legislature in November. As of October 31st, 120 people have been enrolled in the program. Of the 32 who have exited so far:

- 22 (69%) returned to jail or left the program without a forwarding address;
- Eight (25%) moved on to permanent affordable housing; and
- Two (6%) entered a substance abuse treatment facility.

DOC is working on three tiers – efficiencies, policy decisions and legislative proposals. DOC staff are having difficulty finding employment for offenders.

Many of the proposed DSHS changes require legislative or federal approval. The newly formed DSHS Internal Housing Work Group met in October/November. The purpose of this group is to address the unmet housing needs, caused by the multiple barriers to obtaining stable, affordable and safe housing, for people served by DSHS. DSHS recognizes that the services DSHS provides are enhanced by stable housing. Work group objectives are to:

- Document the specific needs for housing of people served by each DSHS administration/divisions;
- Examine the extent to which that need is met through public and private sector programs;
- Facilitate planning to meet DSHS housing needs;
- Enable the development of strategies to meet DSHS housing needs;
- Identify homeless-related housing and supportive service programs among state agencies;
- Identify ways in partnering with appropriate services can reduce service duplication and meet DSHS housing needs;
- Identify internal policies and actions that may contribute to homelessness or interfere with in addressing housing needs;
- To collaborate and partner internally within DSHS to address unmet housing needs DSHS;
- Recommend policies to DSHS administration/divisions; and
- Draft an Action Plan to address the unmet need for housing for people served DSHS.

Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration is collaborating with DOC to develop a comprehensive strategy for helping youth leaving incarceration. The Aging and Disability Services Administration continues to provide services for people who are moving from long-term care facilities back to the community (see: <http://www.aasa.dshs.wa.gov/professional/roads>). The Mental Health Division is focusing efforts on people moving from the mental health institutions.

Jody suggested that the ICH focus on data sharing, research and evaluation issues, and discussing a coordinated effort working with the Gates Foundation. Toni Johnson is working on data share agreements with several Housing Authorities, including Pierce County Housing Authority.

DVA continues to work on accessing the significant federal resources that are available for veterans. Columbia Legal Services and the Veterans Legislative Coalition are leading an effort to address discrimination against veterans in Section 8 housing.

OSPI is reorganizing under the new Superintendent. McKinney-Vento funding for OSPI was being considered for an increase from \$800,000 to \$1.6 million in November as part of a federal stimulus package. The additional funding was not approved by Congress but could be reconsidered after the first of the year. The number of homeless students has increased to 18,670 from the 2006-2007 to the 2007-2008 school year, an increase of over 2,000. This is a result of the floods last fall, more students in school and schools doing a better job counting homeless students. (24 of 295 school districts get McKinney-Vento funds in grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$46,000.) One of the legislative efforts spearheaded by a group of high school students is a proposal to tweak existing law so that youth 14-18 can access regular medical care without a parent or going through the lengthy emancipation process.

Stakeholder legislative agendas

Tedd and Annie highlighted the following items from the WSCH and WLIHA 2009 Legislative Agendas:

Washington State Coalition for the Homeless Policy Priority - Prevent homelessness and ensure the success of the Homelessness Housing and Assistance Act (E2SHB2163) passed in 2005 by requiring state agencies, especially DOC and DSHS, to track the housing status of people leaving their care and develop plans that outline the resources and policy changes needed to avoid discharging people into homelessness by 2011. The current practices and capacity of the criminal justice, mental health and child welfare systems are resulting in the unintended—and inadequately addressed—consequence of releasing people from their care into homelessness. Ex-offenders are released from their sentences with no home to go to, people with mental illnesses are being released from psychiatric facilities without stable housing, and parents whose children are taken away by the child welfare system often lose their housing when they lose their children, making family reunification nearly impossible and placing undue burden on the foster care system. In order to reduce homelessness by 50% by the year 2015 as mandated in E2SHB 2163, the legislature should require DOC and DSHS to discontinue the practice of discharging people into homelessness by 2011. (WSCH Lead Item.)

Washington Low Income Housing Alliance – Maintain the Housing Trust Fund at \$200 million for the 2009-2011 biennium and ensure that the housing supported by the fund is well maintained and able to serve our most vulnerable residents by:

- Increasing funding for the operations and maintenance account that enables the Trust Fund to support housing for homeless and extremely low-income individuals and families; and
- Protecting the State's valuable investment of over \$600 million in more than 32,000 housing units by allowing some capital dollars to be used for administering the Trust Fund.

2009 Meeting Schedule and Plan (3rd Wednesday)

- March 18 – Data exchange, refocus
- May 20 – Legislative wrap-up/supplemental budgets
- September 16 – Homeless Plan
- October 21 – Homeless Plan
- December 16 – Legislative and Budget updates