

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

TEXAS INTERAGENCY COUNCIL
FOR THE HOMELESS

Austin Omni Hotel at Southpark
Southpark A&B
4140 Governors Row
Austin, Texas

September 21, 2016
11:00 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

MICHAEL DOYLE, Chair
BROOKE BOSTON
AMY FELKER
FRANCES GATTIS (via telephone)
KELLY KRAVITZ
TODD NOVAK
PAM MAERCKLEIN
GEORGE McENTYRE
NAOMI TREJO

ADVISORY MEMBERS PRESENT:

JANA BURNS
CHRISTINE GENDRON
DAVID LONG
MOLLY VOYLES
DENNIS M. SCHOLL
ERIC SAMUELS

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT:

TERRI RICHARD (TDHCA)
ELIZABETH YEVICH (TDHCA)

ON THE RECORD REPORTING
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P R O C E E D I N G S

1
2 MR. DOYLE: I'm going to call this meeting to
3 order. This is the September meeting of the Texas
4 Interagency Council for the Homeless, and I would like to
5 welcome all of you that are here.

6 We're going to start with my remarks, and I'm
7 going to turn it over to Bob Pulster, the regional
8 director for the United States Interagency Council, and
9 he's going to kind of give us a little update on the
10 council's activities. Bob.

11 MR. PULSTER: Thank you, Michael. Thank you,
12 everybody. It's a pleasure to be here.

13 I just want to start out by thanking you all
14 for the invitation. I've been working with folks from
15 Texas for many years but this is actually my first time
16 at a TICH meeting, but I particularly want to thank our
17 friend, David Long, and Michael at TSAHC, and also Eric,
18 who have been good partners and friends supporting my
19 work in Texas and have an exceptional commitment to the
20 goal of ending homelessness.

21 I also want to let you know that I was a
22 staffer in my home state before coming to work at USICH
23 for the state ICH, and that was the State of
24 Massachusetts, so I do understand the challenges and
25 opportunities of running a council. Bringing together

1 multiple partners, private and public, and just the fact
2 that you're continuing to meet and moving forward, I want
3 to give you commendation for that.

4 At USICH, we have the distinction of
5 coordinating the federal interagency council on
6 homelessness. We have 19 cabinet secretaries who meet
7 quarterly. They actually do come to the meeting. We
8 have currently Secretary Sylvia Burwell of HHS is our
9 chair. And with a relatively modest budget, we do staff
10 the council and we mobilize designees from each of the
11 secretariats that work outside of council meetings
12 prepping for the quarterly meetings, and that makes a big
13 difference, just having a staff that supports not only
14 the prep for the council meetings but also the
15 interagency work that happens before council meetings.

16 I also want to just acknowledge my federal
17 colleagues that are in the room. Tammy Treviño, as you
18 all know, is the regional administrator for the
19 Department of Housing and Urban Development. And
20 Marjorie McCall Petty is the HHS regional director, also
21 based in Dallas, and I'm pleased to have them here. And
22 I think there are some VA partners. But there's a lot of
23 federal folks here today to support your efforts, and I
24 hope that you have the time to check in with Tammy, and
25 Marjorie and also

1 with Dorothy and Eloise who represent the VA.

2 So I want to just say that nationally an
3 interagency council has made a huge difference. We
4 released our federal strategic plan, and I know that you
5 all have a plan, and we've seen, as a result of our plan,
6 significant decreases in the number of veterans
7 experiencing homelessness and other populations. So in
8 veterans it's very striking, a 47 percent decrease in the
9 number of veterans experiencing homelessness since 2010
10 which is when we released Opening Doors. That's a result
11 of the great work here in Texas, because we know that
12 Austin, I know that Ann is here and her team, as well as
13 Houston, Marilyn, Eva and her team, and San Antonio,
14 Melody and Edward, I don't see them, but I work with all
15 those communities.

16 And Texas, being a leader in the work to end
17 veterans homelessness is something that you should
18 consider a feather in your cap, and what you can mobilize
19 to build upon that and in not only helping other
20 jurisdictions on veterans homelessness but also learning
21 from the experience on ending veterans homelessness and
22 translate that into other sub populations such as
23 chronically homeless individuals, families and youth.
24 And of course, that's all a result of strong partnerships
25 at the federal and local and state level which is, I

1 know, what you're trying to model when you work with
2 other populations.

3 So at the USICH, just very quickly, when we
4 think of what we can do, we have leverage for change, so
5 at the federal level we provide tools, just real solid
6 kind of Excel spreadsheet kinds of tools, real practical
7 kinds of tools for communities. We provide training and
8 technical assistance, and these are things that you can
9 do at the state level which I know you're probably
10 interested in. Those are the kind of tools that we do,
11 so it's training, it's tools and best practice
12 information.

13 It's communications and messaging when you
14 have state officials who are all on the same page about
15 what the talking points are and what we're trying to
16 achieve and what the goals are, so communications and
17 messaging is a huge lever that you have as a state
18 council.

19 Setting policy priorities and budget. When
20 you can align state departments around a particular
21 budget opportunity, there's huge power in that to the
22 field because money drives what happens in the field.
23 Right? So if you have two state departments come
24 together and want to collaborate on a particular goal
25 related to homelessness, and you can put your money

1 together in some way that's creative and innovative to
2 move a system, that's going to be huge.

3 The thing that we've done at the federal level
4 is put out information memorandums or different kinds of
5 guidance, and what that does is it provides leverage for
6 you all in the state and local communities to take that
7 kind of guidance and leverage work at the state and local
8 level. For example, HUD released guidance on how you can
9 use your multifamily portfolio to preference units for
10 individuals or families that are homeless. Now, that
11 could happen based in kind of law but there wasn't a
12 particular memo that told communities how to do it or
13 encouraged the to do it and laid out a plan for them to
14 do it. So HUD can't do that, that has to happen at a
15 local level working with your local field office, working
16 with your property owners and developers. But that's an
17 opportunity for you all do something, that's one example.

18 Another example is the memo that recently came
19 out of the Center for Medicaid Services which talks about
20 how your Medicaid program can fund housing-related
21 support services for folks that are in housing that are
22 formerly homeless. And Marjorie is displaying it right
23 there.

24 So this is a huge topic when we think of what
25 you can do to end chronic and street homelessness is how

1 with the right housing opportunity, and it may be a
2 voucher from a housing authority -- which HUD has also
3 put guidance out to help you leverage those
4 opportunities. So once you have a housing voucher or
5 housing unit, you want to make sure that you can provide
6 the services to successfully sustain that individual in
7 housing, and what we're finding is that states that are
8 able to leverage their Medicaid, particularly for folks
9 who are already Medicaid eligible through SSI, you can
10 wrap around all the services you can imagine for
11 successful tenancy through Medicaid. Now, that takes
12 some work, it takes some work.

13 And so Marjorie from HHS has offered to
14 support a state conversation with some state officials on
15 how we can begin that dialogue, particularly here with
16 people at the local level.

17 Those are just a few examples, there are many
18 others of the kinds of leverage you can use as a state
19 council that make a difference, and again, has
20 contributed to the progress that we've seen at the
21 federal level.

22 As I said, we saw a 47 percent decrease in
23 veterans experiencing homelessness from 2010 to 2016.
24 From 2010 to 2015, at the national level, we've seen a 13
25 percent decrease in the number of individuals

1 experiencing chronic homelessness at the federal level
2 between 2010 and 2015.

3 And I also want to say that in Texas, your
4 statewide point in time data from 2015 to 2016 has
5 distinguished your state as having one of the largest
6 decreases among all the states in the country. You
7 probably know this but I just want to call it out. So
8 between 2015 and 2016, Texas had a 26 percent decrease in
9 veterans experiencing homelessness. That's probably a
10 result of the work in Houston and San Antonio and Austin,
11 but all across the state. So Texas has a 26 percent
12 decrease in veterans, an 18 percent decrease in
13 individuals that are chronically homeless across the
14 state, 2 percent decrease in households with children.

15 So as you can see, there's a lot of good stuff
16 happening here. I'd just acknowledge Eric and his team
17 at THN and all the CoC leaders that are in the room that
18 are working so hard to make that happen.

19 But it's also true that more than half of the
20 homeless population in the United States is in five
21 states, and of course, Texas is one of those states. So
22 California has 21 percent, New York has 16 percent,
23 Florida has 6 percent, and Texas has 4 percent. That's
24 about 24,000, roughly, homeless persons within the State
25 of Texas. So you're a big state, you're going to be in

1 the top states that have the most number of homeless
2 people, but overall, you're also among the 33 states
3 between 2014 and 2015 that had one of the largest
4 decreases. Both Florida and Texas were two states that
5 had the largest decreases.

6 So it's a matter of scale, obviously, since
7 you're such a large state, but it really boils down to
8 what you're doing at a local CoC level that's driving
9 down the numbers. And I think you've got some good
10 progress here to build on.

11 And I'm happy to be here today to
12 participation, listen in and see how we can be a
13 resource, but also just want to, as I said to Michael and
14 Eric and my friend David, that USICH is your partner in
15 this, we're building new ways of federal engagement at a
16 statewide level, and that's why you see our federal
17 partners here with you today. So where federal partners
18 can sit with you at tables to make a difference, we're
19 going to be able to do that now. Particularly when we
20 look at youth and families, it's HHS, and we're happy to
21 have Marjorie here to help build that conversation.

22 And in Texas, when we talk about ending youth
23 homeless, you've got two pilot programs that are funded
24 by the federal government here in Texas. There aren't a
25 lot of pilot programs across the country that are being

1 funded, I think there are five, two of them are in Texas.
2 One is in Austin, the 100-Day Challenge to End Youth
3 Homelessness, which I'm sure you've all heard a lot
4 about, and Ann and her leadership are doing great work
5 there. Also, calling out her Social Innovation grant
6 which is another big deal, a HUD grant that Texas
7 recently was awarded that has lots of potential as well.
8 And also, in Houston is a pilot for the LGBTQ initiative
9 that Eva and Marilyn and her team, and Rafael, I know is
10 in the room, and the good folks in Houston have been
11 working on.

12 So there's a lot to be proud of here in Texas.
13 I know the numbers can feel overwhelming and daunting,
14 but the fact that you have your state partners all
15 together, meeting on a regular basis, you have strong
16 leadership, you have your federal partners, you've got
17 the backing of USICH and 19 cabinet secretaries. I just
18 want to commend you for your work and let you know that
19 we're here to continue to support you as partners.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. DOYLE: Thank you so much, Bob. It's
22 great to know that you are there. Appreciate it very
23 much.

24 I want to just kind of piggyback on that a
25 little bit and let you know that as our federal partners

1 are willing and able to meet with us to discuss local
2 problems, this interagency council is a conduit between
3 state agencies and Continuum of Cares. Bob alluded to
4 Continuum of Cares over here, but if you're with an
5 agency that's a Continuum of Care lead, would you raise
6 your hand. Okay. Good. You're critical to this
7 conversation because the federal government is here to
8 help, and when they create programs, they're so big that
9 we really don't know what to do down at the grassroots
10 level, we need you grassroots participants telling your
11 local CoCs what you need to do this work better, and
12 let's move it from the ground up. Let us hear about it
13 so we can advocate and bring the partners together.

14 You may be daunted by the task of trying to
15 pull together Bob or anybody else, Tammy or anybody at a
16 federal level like that, but through the council we can
17 help you do that. So we need Continuum of Cares in their
18 areas if you've got a program that you think will work
19 but there are some road bumps that you might be hearing
20 that you can't do that, let us know. If it's something
21 that we can help facilitate a discussion around, that's
22 why we're here.

23 So thank you again for being here, and thank
24 you guys for being here.

25 Let me just announce for the record that we

1 have a quorum present and voting, and I would entertain a
2 motion on the minutes that were sent out by Elizabeth and
3 Terri, a motion to approve the minutes as submitted.

4 MR. McENTYRE: So moved.

5 MR. DOYLE: There's a motion by George. Is
6 there a second?

7 MS. BOSTON: Second.

8 MR. DOYLE: Second by Brooke. Any comments or
9 questions, corrections?

10 (No response.)

11 MR. DOYLE: All in favor say aye.

12 (A chorus of ayes.)

13 MR. DOYLE: Opposed same sign.

14 (No response.)

15 MR. DOYLE: Those do pass.

16 Okay. Dr. Sarah Narendorf from the University
17 of Houston -- my alma mater, class of '70 -- Go Coogs,
18 three and oh -- is going to give us an report on House
19 Bill 679 on youth homelessness.

20 DR. NARENDORF: Good morning, everybody.

21 So this is just me kind of reporting in.
22 We're about halfway through our work on Phase 3 of House
23 Bill 679, so there were two prior phases that the Texas
24 Network of Youth Services -- Christine, next to me --
25 they headed that up, and then we're in Phase 3 which is

1 taking the data that they collected in those first two
2 phases as well as data from TEA and DFPS and getting some
3 stakeholder feedback, literature review. We're amassing
4 a lot of data, and sifting through it to try and come up
5 with recommendations that we'll be writing up, and the
6 next time I see you all, we should have some more
7 developed recommendations to present to you all and get
8 your feedback, and then that would go to the legislature.

9 So we're kind of halfway through Phase 3, so I
10 just kind of want to let you know what we've been up to.
11 We've done three stakeholder feedback sessions as part of
12 this. We've done two of those and the third is tomorrow,
13 so if you're interested in hearing more details about the
14 data analysis we've done so far and also really want to
15 participate in the conversation around discussing what
16 are we going to do, what is the strategic plan going to
17 look like, we really would love to have lots of people
18 there, so that's tomorrow afternoon. So I just wanted to
19 let you know about that.

20 In terms of what we've done so far, we've done
21 descriptive analysis on all the data. As people probably
22 know, youth homelessness, numbers vary widely across
23 different data sources, so we're just kind of pulling all
24 that information together and gathering what we can from
25 each of those things. And then based on our stakeholder

1 feedback sessions and additional other sources of data,
2 we've come up with some preliminary recommendations.

3 TNOYS has been partnering with us. They also
4 have gathered some data for us that is sort of coming in,
5 so we have in addition to the data sets and the provider
6 and stakeholder feedback, we have an inventory of what
7 providers are providing services to homeless youth in
8 Texas, we'll have sources of funding that are potentially
9 available, we have a survey that is still open. Right,
10 Christine?

11 MS. GENDRON: We just closed it on Saturday.

12 DR. NARENDORF: Just closed for providers, so
13 to get wide ranging provider feedback in addition to
14 stakeholder feedback at our specific sessions.

15 We did a survey with homeless liaisons in
16 Texas. We've got 375 of them who participated in our
17 survey. So we have a lot of different data sources that
18 we've been sort of rolling out over the last few months.
19 Almost all of that is sort of coming to an end and we're
20 going to spend the next month kind of sort of regrouping
21 and trying to come up with specific recommendations.

22 So at the bottom of this handout that you
23 have, we've pulled it into five broad areas. What we've
24 learned so far, what we're hearing from people, what we
25 see in the literature are sort of broad areas. This is

1 up for discussion and input and development, and so if
2 you have ideas or you think this isn't quite the right
3 one, feel free to let me know about that. This is not
4 final, these are sort of trying to advance the
5 conversation towards where we get a lot more specific
6 about what we can do.

7 So the first one is improving data sources for
8 counting homeless youth. So I think in the first two
9 phases in the project, we have 758 young people across
10 Texas who were part of the Youth Count Texas survey. We
11 learned a lot in that process about maybe how to do it
12 better the next time. So we have recommendations around
13 specifically counting statewide, as well as potential
14 additional sources for monitoring and tracking data on
15 homeless youth. So we think there's room for some
16 recommendations there so that's one broad area.

17 We have been hearing a lot about the needs of
18 young people in foster care and juvenile justice, both
19 while they're in those systems and then as they prepare
20 to transition out. So that's another area where we'd
21 like to think about some specific recommendations about
22 what we could do.

23 The third is around housing in a full
24 continuum, so we hear that there are potentially gaps in
25 the types of housing services, all the way from

1 stabilizing young people before they become homeless to
2 transitional housing situations to independent living.
3 So I think that recommendation is across a broad
4 continuum, so there's room for lots of different
5 recommendations under there to get specific.

6 The fourth is specifically focused on schools.
7 Schools do an amazing job of identifying young people who
8 are in homeless situations, and it seems like there's
9 room to capitalize on that when looking at that homeless
10 liaison survey data to try and better understand how are
11 liaisons involved in schools, are there potential areas
12 where those liaisons could do more to get young people
13 connected with services and stabilize situations. So
14 definitely huge numbers of homeless young people are in
15 schools, so we want to think about that.

16 And then the final one is related to really
17 barriers to higher education and employment. We have
18 heard a lot about the barriers young people encounter
19 when they try and seek employment, and employment being
20 sort of a key linchpin in staying out of homelessness and
21 really getting to housing stability, so we definitely
22 want to be thinking about those as well. Things as
23 simple as making it easier to get documentation, like a
24 birth certificate and Social Security card and things
25 like that, criminal background checks and areas like that

1 have come up in conversations about barriers, so all of
2 that might fall under this one.

3 So those are our five broad recommendations.
4 So we'll be taking those out and kind of getting people
5 to react, tell us what they think, what specific things
6 do they recommend under each of these. And we're still
7 sort of doing some key interviews with stakeholders to
8 try and get more information, and I welcome anybody who
9 would like to talk to me more specifically, to contact
10 me. We're in the process of doing that. I also have
11 some young people who are involved in the projects, so
12 we're really wanting to include young people who have had
13 these experiences in every stage of the process, so
14 they're doing those interviews with me.

15 And so we're taking all of that and over the
16 next month we'll be sort of going through all of this
17 data. There's a list of very specific things we'll be
18 doing to write up a report which you guys should see in
19 November. So that's it.

20 MR. DOYLE: Very good. Any questions for Dr.
21 Narendorf?

22 MR. SAMUELS: Do you have information on what
23 you might do to improve the count, what those
24 recommendations might be, those specific recommendations?

25 DR. NARENDORF: Some of them are very simple,

1 like everybody really should use the same instrument,
2 which we tried to do this time and there were some
3 barriers to that. So we know a little bit more about
4 just saying here, please use this instrument wasn't
5 enough. Maybe there's a next step to make sure everybody
6 uses the same instrument. That would be a huge
7 improvement over what we had which was missing questions
8 across different places, you know, some very low level
9 things.

10 And then other people have suggested to me --
11 and I need to explore this more -- are there other ways
12 that systems that encounter homeless youth, but don't
13 track that those young people are experiencing
14 homelessness, could track that in a way that it would
15 just be a part of administrative data collection. So
16 that's a stakeholder idea that we're kind of trying to
17 think what would that look like and how could we better
18 use administrative data sources on an ongoing basis.
19 Because homeless youth touch so many different systems,
20 so we've got HMIS which is amazing, but a lot of young
21 people aren't -- it's not homeless specific, there are
22 other services.

23 SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE: How did you choose
24 your sampling number?

25 DR. NARENDORF: For that 758 that I mentioned,

1 so that is every young person how was surveyed across
2 about 14 different. It was part of the HUD counts,
3 primarily. Any community in Texas was encouraged to
4 participate and use a particular survey tool so that
5 everybody was, hopefully, across Texas as part of their
6 counts really focusing on young people and asking these
7 particular questions.

8 SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE: Your sampling
9 included?

10 DR. NARENDORF: I wouldn't say there was
11 sampling. It was really about people stepping up, and
12 you know, there's 200 kids in Corpus Christi who came
13 through schools primarily, and that's because of how
14 Corpus did that, it wasn't sort of a research-driven
15 process, it was a community-driven process.

16 MS. GENDRON: We released a report yesterday
17 that details the process for the whole state and ran the
18 numbers and the lessons learned. And Eric, some of the
19 recommendations are on teacher counts. And then Dr.
20 Narendorf will be building on that. There are not policy
21 recommendations Texas should do this, these are generally
22 what we've learned about trying to do a statewide count,
23 these are the challenges, these are the advantages of
24 using the point in time, the disadvantages, but it
25 doesn't take the position on Texas should only do this as

1 part of the point in time or not.

2 MR. DOYLE: Thank you. Let me move this along
3 or we're going to run out of time. Thank you very much
4 for that report, Doctor.

5 Next is the employment and health
6 recommendation from Senate Bill 1580 that Naomi has been
7 working on around veterans homelessness. So Naomi.

8 MS. TREJO: Yes. Thank you, Mike.

9 So you should all have a draft handout of the
10 recommendations. So we just heard about House Bill 679
11 which is about youth, and the other bill that was passed
12 in 2015 was the Senate Bill 1580 which is a little bit
13 different approach because we don't have a contractor for
14 that or an outside source, so we're doing that
15 internally, so it's a little bit of a different process.
16 I'm going to walk you through what we've done so far
17 which is on page 1 of the handout.

18 So we gathered recommendations or public input
19 from the public, both through roundtables and an online
20 forum, and then we have been running the recommendations
21 through the TICH membership as a whole after it's been
22 going through TDHCA staff and the TICH veteran work group
23 members. So recommendations from the roundtable and
24 online forums have been or are being presented at the
25 April, July and September TICH meetings, so this is the

1 final TICH meeting that we'll be giving input on the
2 recommendations.

3 So at the April meeting we heard about
4 increasing partnerships with the rental market. That was
5 what we discussed then for the study. In July we talked
6 about identifying veterans, sharing information and
7 increasing coordination and also increasing housing and
8 services resources. And today we're going to talk about
9 improving access to employment resources and improving
10 access to mental and physical health resources. Also, in
11 your handout, which was sent about a week ago so you
12 could digest it so we could have a robust discussion,
13 there are some at the end which are called miscellaneous
14 recommendations, and that is because when we were
15 grouping the recommendations together, we kind of
16 identified what category that they would fit under, so
17 we're presenting them to the TICH today but they actually
18 belong under some of the other recommendations that we
19 had discussed earlier.

20 In the interest of time, we're going to touch
21 on just a few of the recommendations of this draft, and
22 what we're looking for is considerations. For example,
23 how might this work, what are some implications, what are
24 some barriers of implementing the recommendation. So we
25 are going to be looking at for employment, the job search

1 which is 4a, employment readiness which is 4b, and then
2 on to page 5, support for veterans to use physical health
3 and mental health resources which is 5a, and 5b which is
4 access to physical health and mental health resource.

5 We're not going to touch on the miscellaneous
6 recommendations but you're free to bring that up during
7 this discussion if you feel like you have something you
8 really want to add.

9 So in that vein, we've done this twice before,
10 the first thing we're going to talk about is the job
11 search, 4a, and recommendations were received from the
12 public to better match the experience of veterans with
13 job qualifications, the second one was to identify
14 veteran friendly employers and translate military service
15 duties to job qualifications, and the third one was to
16 coordinate temporary work or employment agencies to
17 transition veterans from the military to working in
18 civilian life.

19 We did find in the TICH veteran work group --
20 which Pam here with Texas Veterans Commission is a part
21 of -- that Texas Veterans Commission is already doing
22 some of these recommendations. For example, the veteran
23 employer liaison to veteran career advisors are part of
24 the veteran employment services team and they've worked
25 to assess the training needs, education, and they also

1 work with the Texas Workforce centers.

2 So these are the kind of considerations that
3 we're talking about. Are there any other considerations
4 that we should take into account for this recommendation?

5 MS. CRAIN: I have a question. In our
6 analysis in Dallas --

7 MS. TREJO: Can you introduce yourself?

8 MS. CRAIN: I'm sorry. Cindy Crain of the
9 Dallas Continuum of Care. In our analysis of veterans
10 and trying to figure things out, one thing that was
11 striking over the last three years and it was about 85
12 percent Army and 70 percent African American just
13 consistently. And so when you're looking at jobs and all
14 of that, it was profound to say I only had one Air Force,
15 and just the correlation between the field of service and
16 how that relates to matching what I learned in the
17 service and how I can job connect. I mean, it's really
18 profound.

19 MS. TREJO: That's the kind of input we're
20 looking for.

21 MR. DOYLE: Other suggestions?

22 DR. SCHOLL: I have one more. Especially for
23 most folks in the military, a stronger relationship with
24 the state agencies that deal with -- I'm sorry, I need to
25 introduce myself. Dennis Scholl, private citizen,

1 retired colonel psychologist. To get the military folks
2 linked to volunteer fire departments and other first
3 responder type entities because many of them have skills
4 that from experience could immediately translate into
5 learning those sorts of skills. Voluntary activities are
6 really poor paid and so are firefighters, but to
7 immediately transition them into serving their community
8 in a first responder role would be something that could
9 be maximized.

10 MS. TREJO: And anything else on the first one
11 on 4a.

12 MR. DOYLE: Certainly they'll learn this when
13 they go to the workforce centers, but there's
14 apprenticeship programs that are really helpful and
15 internship programs to let them try that job before they
16 take it to see if they like it so that they don't jump in
17 and out of jobs. It doesn't look good on an employer
18 application if you've had four jobs in the last six
19 months while you're finding yourself, so internships are
20 probably something we ought to explore.

21 MR. PULSTER: And the federal government funds
22 Homeless Veterans Reintegration Programs, so HVRPs, which
23 can be part of your overall mix of services that are
24 available for veterans.

25 MS. TREJO: That is true. And we've been

1 trying to limit this to state not resources, but state
2 actions, but we do include federal programs in the major
3 part of the report. But thank you for that.

4 MR. PULSTER: That's from the Department of
5 Labor.

6 MS. TREJO: Thank you.

7 MR. DOYLE: Thank you. Naomi, the next one.

8 MS. TREJO: Great. The second, 4b of
9 employment recommendations was financial assistance to
10 help with court fees or fines which might be a barrier to
11 finding employment, and to change the state law to set a
12 time limit of no more than ten years for employers to do
13 a background check, character-based hiring practices, and
14 so taking into account rehabilitation. So we borrowed
15 from another discussion that we had had -- I think,
16 Dennis, you had recommended no more than a seven-year
17 background check because of the correlation with security
18 clearances, so we borrowed from that, and we included
19 TDC's employer liaisons as well. We didn't receive any
20 information from the Texas Workforce Commission, so it
21 would be great to get something for that.

22 MR. McENTYRE: I hate to stay out of this
23 conversation, but I was instructed that we're good with
24 everything, so we're not going to comment at this time.
25 So maybe in the future, but right now we're going to bow

1 out of making comments on it right now.

2 DR. SCHOLL: Mike, real quick with regard to
3 the clearance thing. Folks out of the military many have
4 a security clearance. If there's some way to short
5 circuit this clearance, it's going to take some time, and
6 if they come out and they haven't had, if there's not
7 Justice involved and have some complications since
8 separating from the military, if there's a way to
9 transition and accept their existing time of discharge
10 security clearance so we can put them in an internship
11 quicker would be kind of neat. They go through all kinds
12 of stuff to get clearances, and it could be quicker to
13 get them started.

14 MS. TREJO: I'm not sure how the internship
15 program works at TWC, so I'm not sure how that would
16 correlate.

17 MR. DOYLE: Not well, but it's not because TWC
18 doesn't want it to work, it's just a hard program to get
19 everybody together. And when people, particularly if
20 there's Justice involved, have to get a job real quick,
21 internships don't work because they're generally unpaid,
22 but it is a way to get your foot in the door.
23 Apprenticeships are more likely, but with Justice
24 involved with veterans, you've still got the issue of
25 finding a felony friendly employer.

1 MR. McENTYRE: And I can say this, not in
2 relationship to this, but there is a federal bonding
3 program for those that do have something in their
4 background check that TWC does administer that can bond
5 an individual that goes to work. I think the bond is
6 like \$10,000 that can help them get a job if they have
7 something in their background that requires them to get a
8 bond. That's always available.

9 MR. DOYLE: And there are job tax creditors
10 available too, for a couple of dollars an hour to offset
11 them on wages.

12 Thank you. Next one.

13 MS. HOWARD: Can I make a comment? So I would
14 like a consideration to be to lower -- my name is Ann
15 Howard, I'm with the CoC in Austin, Texas -- taking off
16 on the Housing First type of practices to drop that
17 background check to twelve months. I mean, seven years
18 and ten years is just -- what are we supposed to do?
19 They need a job now.

20 MR. DOYLE: So you're saying that as a
21 recommendation because that will never happen.

22 MS. HOWARD: Yes, but just to call it out that
23 it's just way too long.

24 MR. DOYLE: Good point.

25 DR. NARENDORF: I would just add that that's a

1 similar thing that we have for youth homelessness and
2 youth haven't had ten years. So we're running into the
3 same thing, so any shorter time frame would be youth
4 friendly as well.

5 MS. TREJO: Thank you, Dr. Narendorf.

6 SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE: Get rid of the check
7 the box.

8 MR. DOYLE: Well, that is a national
9 initiative that's going on too, but it will take a while
10 before you can tell an employer you can't check
11 somebody's background that's going to work for you in a
12 setting. That would be tough. We've got agencies that
13 are now doing it on the back page, not on the front page.
14 That has passed two sessions ago, so we can do that with
15 state forms, but individual employers are a different
16 deal.

17 DR. SCHOLL: Mike, just a little comment on
18 the last one, especially related to the fire stuff. I'm
19 a commissioner for an emergency services district. You
20 have to be able to manage the risk and liability, and
21 essentially by regulation we're not allowed to have folks
22 who have felonies in their background, and the period
23 that we check is seven. It's also done pretty cheap by
24 the people who manage our insurance. The notion that
25 there could be some bonding of folks to get some, for

1 example, veterans who have had some difficulties after
2 service who could still be damn good firefighters if we
3 could eliminate those obstacles. And I'll talk to George
4 afterwards.

5 MR. McENTYRE: It's on our website too, the
6 bonding program.

7 DR. SCHOLL: Our hands are tied from getting
8 some of these folks if they have a background and the
9 length of time we have to look at.

10 MR. DOYLE: Since we're shortening from two
11 hours to one hour to get you out of here for lunch in
12 time, let me move forward. Keep going.

13 MS. TREJO: Thank you.

14 So the mental and physical health resources,
15 so the first one is support for veterans to use physical
16 health and mental health resources. So the
17 recommendations were implementing or expanding peer-to-
18 peer networks. Also, creating incentives or motivations
19 for veterans to enter rehabilitation programs. Work to
20 change the mind-set of veterans experiencing
21 homelessness, and address violence and victimization that
22 veterans experience while homeless, as well as post-
23 service related trauma.

24 So some discussion from HHSC that they
25 provided was Texas Military Veteran Peer Network is

1 already in place, and Brooke mentioned this at the panel
2 this morning, one of the overarching things we're finding
3 is there's been a lot of recommendations for things that
4 already exist, so it possibly could require more outreach
5 in order to access those programs. Also, fear of
6 stigmatization resulting from loss of employment, and
7 then working with them through partners.

8 And so any other considerations for these
9 recommendations?

10 MR. PULSTER: Another thing is that there's
11 some individuals who have military service but because of
12 their discharge status don't qualify for federal
13 benefits, so that's an opportunity where the state could
14 pick some support for those particular individuals. Even
15 working to change their discharge status would be one
16 thing, but to provide the kinds of services they need
17 because they fall out of VA care.

18 MS. TREJO: Thank you.

19 MS. FELKER: Amy Felker with HHSC Office of
20 Mental Health Coordination.

21 So this is something that's already going on
22 sort of, but a recommendation to strengthen that work
23 would be helpful. There's a lot of work around -- you're
24 correct that there is already a peer network and there's
25 some work to connect, there's spouse peers, there's lots

1 of different peer networks and working to connect those.
2 But also kind of jumping off of what you said, there's
3 some work to do outreach to help people, different mental
4 health providers to understand veteran status because I
5 think what we've heard happens a lot is that someone goes
6 or a crisis happens or something like that and someone is
7 told that you have to go be served here and here. So
8 there's a lot of work with different partners but also
9 veterans mental health services to help them to all get
10 aligned in terms of who serves who and try to have some
11 policy that also prevents, even if you aren't sure you're
12 supposed to serve them, you from just kind of kicking
13 them out.

14 MS. TREJO: Yes. And for that we can actually
15 refer back to recommendation category 2 where we talked
16 about identifying veterans so we can make that
17 connection.

18 DR. SCHOLL: Mike, two quick ones, if I can.
19 This is Dr. Scholl again.

20 MR. DOYLE: Very quick.

21 DR. SCHOLL: Okay. I emailed to Terri and I
22 mentioned the traditional vets organization, they could
23 be helping veterans. The other one is maybe a job
24 comparison between all services, mental health
25 technicians and having them be found equivalent to what's

1 called by the state qualified mental health
2 professionals. They may not have a bachelor's degree but
3 they've had mental health training in the military as
4 technicians, they can run circles around people with just
5 a master's degree in a social science. So to study that
6 would be interesting because that's determined by the
7 department or a procedure accepted by the department.

8 MS. TREJO: And the last one is making sure
9 veterans have access to both short and long term
10 treatment options and increase the length of time that
11 treatment options are available for the veterans if
12 needed. So there's some discussion about coordination of
13 mental health programs to the Veterans Commission and
14 HHSC as well -- DSHS -- I'm sorry.

15 Any other considerations on that?

16 (No response.)

17 MR. DOYLE: All right. Thank you, Naomi.
18 Great work. Thank you.

19 Agenda item number VI, and this is kind of the
20 highlight of the thing for me, but we're going to have to
21 limit it to about five or ten minutes. Continuum of Care
22 agencies, they're here, HUD is here, talk about the
23 application. What's going on with the application that
24 anybody has recommendations about?

25 MR. SAMUELS: Recommendations?

1 MR. DOYLE: It says conversation.

2 MR. SAMUELS: I'm Eric Samuels, president and
3 CEO of Texas Homeless Network.

4 And I think it was more of the same as what we
5 saw in 2015. I think HUD did a much better job of
6 defining what they want from us with the 2016
7 competition, so I was really happy about that. But I
8 mean, it's heavy Housing First, ending chronic
9 homelessness, removing barriers, all of that, that's
10 still in there and we're pushing forward with that.

11 MR. DOYLE: And what is that leaving behind?

12 MR. SAMUELS: I think like what Bob said, I
13 think in Texas we're doing a pretty good job of ending
14 chronic homelessness and veteran homelessness.
15 Households with children and youth homelessness, we can
16 do a better job in that area. Some people would say that
17 maybe we're leaving those folks behind but that money is
18 limited and we have to take those that are most in need,
19 most vulnerable and get those people housed. I think
20 that's what HUD is trying to do with this competition.
21 Someone may disagree with me or agree with me.

22 MS. THIBODEAUX: I'd just like to say from the
23 Greater Houston area perspective. Eva Thibodeaux, CoC,
24 Coalition for the Homeless, Harris County, Fort Bend
25 County, Montgomery County. I just wanted to say from our

1 perspective we appreciated the clarity that HUD has
2 brought to the last few NOFA program competition
3 applications. It's helped us to make informed decisions
4 around reallocation, and the clarity has really assisted
5 us with being able to communicate with our providers who
6 are funded around why we're making the decisions that we
7 are. So we found it to be very helpful and very clear in
8 the direction that HUD is expecting us to move in.

9 MR. DOYLE: Good.

10 MS. VOYLES: Molly Voyles, TCVF. I wouldn't
11 say left behind but I would say survivors of domestic
12 violence have seen less options with this focus. Not
13 every CoC. Some CoCs are making real efforts, but
14 overall when you slide the money to the chronically
15 homeless and permanent supportive housing, and as a
16 state, we've seen a huge shift. It doesn't mean it's not
17 important and that those populations shouldn't have been
18 met but I think that [INAUDIBLE].

19 MR. DOYLE: Any others?

20 MS. CRAIN: My only comment is in Dallas we've
21 had a lot of consolidation of grants, and I was like the
22 last to know and I would like to know, to whatever degree
23 is possible, when I've got grantees going forward doing
24 some merging and consolidating because I know things that
25 they may not know -- right? -- other than just a strict

1 contractual relationship. But I think we're down to the
2 last few. Because it impacted the local competition and
3 those kinds of things. We had very late GIW, changes and
4 changes. That might have been my bad. But those kind of
5 dialogues would be great.

6 MR. DOYLE: Yes, ma'am. Name?

7 MS. CASTILLO: Maria Castillo with El Paso
8 CoC.

9 What I would like for HUD to be able to
10 provide us is more transparency in the decisions that
11 they make when they score applications. We did very
12 poorly last year and probably for obvious reasons, but in
13 looking at the detail and we're trying to see more detail
14 of how they scored and why they scored. That's what I
15 would like to see from HUD.

16 MR. DOYLE: And that can be asked for, can it
17 not?

18 MS. HOWARD: But I think this year they don't
19 supply us, like why did we get points taken off here,
20 what was our actual score. And I think this year, the
21 reason was given it's so close to the next NOFA, we
22 didn't really get that input. I felt like a kid trying
23 to take a test again without knowing why I got the grade
24 on my last test.

25 MR. DOYLE: So do I remember correctly that

1 you got the comments but not the score. Is that right?

2 SPEAKER: The scoring categories didn't align
3 with the application question categories.

4 MS. HOWARD: It was difficult.

5 One thing we're curious about is the point in
6 time count is still sort of driving the data baselines
7 and stuff like that, and yet we're heavily moving to
8 basing our sort of policy and practice around coordinated
9 access or coordinated assessment, and those numbers we
10 feel like are much more real -- if that's correct
11 grammar -- than the point in time count, and when will we
12 start to see some shift to using CA data to make
13 decisions on funding instead of PiT count. It's just an
14 interesting shift.

15 MR. DOYLE: Good question.

16 MS. GENDRON: I want to add something.
17 Christine Gendron.

18 I'm sure this is already on the radar -- and
19 there are probably people who can speak better about it
20 than I can -- we've been interviewing the directors of
21 basically every youth service agency in Texas that serves
22 youth who are homeless and many of them speak very, very
23 highly about the leadership at the CoCs but they're still
24 very, very frustrated with the process and they're very,
25 very nervous that if they have been they won't continue

1 to get funding, and they feel like they're actually
2 competing with services for victims of domestic violence
3 and that's not a position that they want to be in. And
4 so they're exciting about the HUD demonstration grant
5 funding and the opportunity. But that's going to fund
6 ten cities across the country and we really need ten of
7 those grants in Texas.

8 (General talking and laughter.)

9 MR. DOYLE: This is just a general question --
10 pardon my ignorance -- do the local CoCs get together
11 ever as a body of CoC leads and talk about these kind of
12 things.

13 MR. SAMUELS: So we've had a few calls and we
14 had a formal schedule a couple of years ago. I think
15 it's something that would be good to start up again. I
16 know after the 2015 awards came out, we had a
17 commiseration with one another. But we can certainly do
18 more in that area.

19 MR. DOYLE: I just said based from the TICH's
20 perspective, when we're supposed to be working with the
21 CoCs, we'd love to hear more from you more often so that
22 we can kind of direct what's next with Pathways Home. So
23 if you could put that back together, anything that we
24 could do as the TICH to help facilitate that, let us
25 know.

1 MR. SAMUELS: If there is an appetite for
2 that, Texas Homeless Network would volunteer to
3 facilitate that.

4 MR. DOYLE: Okay. Great. You just represent
5 200 and something counties.

6 Okay. Thank you for that discussion, very
7 informative. Thank you, Tammy, for not leaving the room.

8 (General laughter.)

9 MR. DOYLE: Naomi, you've got a short
10 presentation on ESG and HHSP?

11 MS. TREJO: Yes. So we have just started our
12 2016 Emergency Solutions Grants Program which is the
13 federal program that runs through the state for
14 homelessness. A list of our 31 sub-grantees is provided.
15 Just a few highlights. We were awarded about \$8.4
16 million, we had five CoC lead agencies who ran a local
17 competition, so that's five out of eleven ran a local
18 competition. The local competitions received 20
19 applications for a total of \$5.1 million, and they were
20 able to award \$3.9 million. At TDHCA we ran the
21 competition for the remaining CoCs and we received 21
22 applications for a total of \$7.2 million and we were able
23 to award \$4.5 million. So we had a lot more requests for
24 assistance than were able to award.

25 For Homeless Housing and Service Program, this

1 is our state funded homelessness program and it goes by
2 statute to the eight largest cities in Texas, and it's
3 run by formula, so we were able to award Arlington,
4 Austin, Corpus Christi, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth,
5 Houston and San Antonio.

6 MR. DOYLE: Great. Thank you.

7 The next two items that I skipped over, I want
8 to go in reverse order as well, but TWC was kind enough
9 to give us for two years (\$10,000) to work on a VISTA
10 project. As a provider, it is amazing to me -- and this
11 kind of fits into our discussion, Bob, earlier --when TWC
12 said they would do that -- and I sit on our local
13 workforce board so I was able to talk to the
14 commissioners personally, and George did a great job
15 plowing that ground for us, and we appreciate that,
16 George -- but I thought it was a matter of just writing
17 us a check and we'd go get a VISTA project.

18 MR. McENTYRE: Oh, how naive you are.

19 MR. DOYLE: What did it take, Brooke, a year
20 and a half? A year just to funnel that through the
21 system before we could actually use it, and so there's
22 one of my issues around how we're doing all this
23 collaboration. There are going to be little things that
24 it's just going to take years. We've got to be patient
25 if we're going to try to change the way we react to the

1 federal government through the state government down to
2 the local, because it's not that easy, I found out. When
3 they asked what we should do, I said, Well, why don't you
4 just get them to write us a check?

5 MR. McENTYRE: We spend more than \$10,000 to
6 contract \$10,000.

7 MR. DOYLE: So anyway, I wanted to ask for a
8 discussion about the use of \$10,000 from the Workforce
9 Commission. I think we've got that solved now pretty
10 much, don't we?

11 MR. McENTYRE: For this next year.

12 MS. BOSTON: I don't think for the next year
13 we do. Right?

14 MR. McENTYRE: I hadn't heard anything else on
15 the contract.

16 MS. BOSTON: Well, I think the contract part
17 is fine, but do we know for sure how we're spending it?

18 MR. DOYLE: The contract part is fine. How do
19 we want to spend it? Any recommendations? Brooke?

20 MS. BOSTON: The contract part is not fine.

21 MR. DOYLE: If we ever get it, fine. Would
22 you want to continue the VISTA program? What are the
23 recommendations for that \$10,000, council members?

24 MR. McENTYRE: Let me just explain something
25 right quick before we go off on recommendations. So when

1 the commission approves the \$10,000, a discussion paper
2 has to be written by yours truly, and I have to outline
3 in that discussion paper what the purposes of that
4 \$10,000 are for, and I use the Pathways Home purposes.
5 So as long as it fits within those purposes, that's what
6 the \$10,000 can be used for and that's what goes in the
7 contract for the uses. So that being said, as long as it
8 fits within those purposes, it can be used for that.

9 MR. DOYLE: I think I could argue that it fits
10 into nearly every one of those purposes.

11 MR. McENTYRE: And that's fine if that's
12 what's going to be put in the contract. So that being
13 said.

14 MR. DOYLE: So do we want to table that and
15 let's discuss it in November, give some thought to that?

16 MR. McENTYRE: Or do you need to discuss it
17 now?

18 MS. BROOKE: Well, I don't think we need to
19 talk about the contractual issues.

20 MR. DOYLE: As long as we use it for one of
21 the nine legislative mandates.

22 MR. McENTYRE: As long as it fits within that,
23 you can say it fits within number two, I don't think
24 there's any question.

25 MR. DOYLE: Marilyn.

1 MS. BROWN: I'm Marilyn Brown with the
2 Coalition for the Homeless in Houston and the incoming
3 chair of the Texas Homeless Network.

4 We should have said this in the last agenda
5 item but you're still talking about money, there seems to
6 be a disconnect between the federal government, the
7 twelve CoCs and what we are doing to implement Opening
8 Doors and Pathways and so we've missed some coordination
9 there. I mean, there's decisions being made at TICH,
10 we're down in the field doing things that HUD is telling
11 us in Opening Doors, and whether it's these funds or some
12 other funds, the conduit to that is Texas Homeless
13 Network.

14 I mean, I had no idea there was an agenda item
15 to talk about the CoC application and we're the largest
16 CoC in the state and won the last application for the
17 nation, so Eva has kind of got that part figured out. So
18 I would encourage in your discussions that if we really
19 want to make this a coordinated effort to solve
20 homelessness in Texas that TICH help fund THN to be able
21 to coordinate the twelve CoCs to get that connection
22 between federal and state and local, because if we have
23 too many chiefs, we're not going to get very far. I
24 mean, I think they're all the same, they just need to be
25 coordinated.

1 So I don't know if that's one of the nine
2 things that will work for this \$10,000, but each of the
3 departments with some budget and we can sit down and
4 really do some deliverables of what THN can do to
5 coordinate the CoCs. As one of the largest states in the
6 nation that has the biggest homelessness problem, we
7 ought to be the largest state that solves it first.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. SAMUELS: And I want to say one of the
10 reasons that Marilyn brings this is up is because as an
11 agency we're really at a crossroads, we need to determine
12 whether or not we're going to continue on with these
13 statewide initiatives, and if we're going to do that and
14 we're going to continue to work on behalf of TICH, then
15 we're going to need the support to do that. And right
16 now, all of our funding at our agency goes into the Texas
17 Balance of State CoC lead. I think that there's a role
18 that we can play on the state level, but we will need
19 that support, and so that's what Marilyn is alluding to.

20 MS. BROWN: I didn't mean to allude.

21 MR. SAMUELS: She meant to state it.

22 (General laughter.)

23 MR. DOYLE: It is noted, Marilyn.

24 MS. BROWN: Thank you. I think we can really
25 work together.

1 MR. DOYLE: It sounds like the contract is not
2 going to be worked out in time to put it in there anyway,
3 so we're going to figure it out.

4 MR. McENTYRE: And one thing that I would ask
5 is that this support applies to all my fellow brethren
6 and sisters at the agencies. Because I get asked the
7 question about, well, what are the other agencies doing.
8 I would kind of like at the next meeting to have a report
9 because this is actually the second year, what are the
10 agencies throwing into the kitty, so to speak. Because I
11 know last year, wasn't it TEA was the other agency that
12 kicked in, but we didn't hear anything from the other
13 agencies, and I know they're supposed to provide a
14 statement that they can't or pitch money in. So I'd kind
15 of like to have a rundown so when I get asked the
16 question, I can say, Hey, guess what.

17 MR. DOYLE: Good point.

18 Okay. In the interest of time, we are out of
19 time. Brooke, is there anything that we have to talk
20 about at this meeting on the designation of membership?

21 MS. BOSTON: No.

22 MR. DOYLE: Public comment, is there any
23 public comment? You'd be limited to two minutes but we'd
24 love to hear from you.

25 (No response.)

1 MR. DOYLE: There being none, we'll pass that.

2 Our next meeting is November 17. Aaliyah, I'm
3 sorry we didn't get to you. Thank you for hanging in
4 there with us, but we'll talk about it at the next
5 meeting in November.

6 Our next meeting is November 17 of this year.
7 It will be at a place to be announced, and if you're
8 wondering what's on the agenda, where that is, it's on
9 the TDHCA website so you can call that up and it will be
10 there ten days prior to November 17. It's at the Brown
11 Heatly Building in North Austin. It's at ten o'clock
12 till noon, usually two hours long.

13 So thank you for coming. We are officially
14 adjourned.

15 (Whereupon, at 12:00 p.m., the meeting was
16 adjourned.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

MEETING OF: Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless

LOCATION: Austin, Texas

DATE: September 21, 2016

I do hereby certify that the foregoing pages, numbers 1 through 47, inclusive, are the true, accurate, and complete transcript prepared from the verbal recording made by electronic recording by Nancy H. King before the Texas Department of Housing & Community Affairs.

(Transcriber) 9/28/2016
(Date)

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