

Strategic Plan Oversight Commission Meeting 11/29

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

- ReGina Hentz
- Amy Brown
- Julie Schneider
- Safiya Merchant
- Sarah Rennie
- Taura Brown
- Dr. Curley
- Donna Price
- Ma'Jenaya Johnson
- Kourtney Clark
- Matt White
- Barbara Poppe
- Matthew Doherty
- David Dirks
- Kristy Greenwalt
- Tasha Gray
- David Bowser

Framework for Equity and Lived Experience Participation

David Dirks went over a proposed framework for equity and ensuring participation of people with lived experience of homelessness (PWLEH) during the implementation of the strategic system improvement plan. The framework included the following elements:

- Implementing an Equity, Belonging and Justice lens to each of the emerging themes
- Developing an equity training plan for system leaders, organizations, and front line staff
- Elevating and engaging Detroit Advisors Group and the Youth Action Board in the implementation process
- Supporting and enhancing resources for continued participation for PWLEH throughout implementation and beyond
- Expanding participation and providing professional development
- Recommendations
 - Identifying disparities, barriers and solutions in each of the working groups
 - Identifying what DEI structures currently exist in the system of care and assess effectiveness of those structures
 - Establishing equity metrics for system of care
 - Drafting equity and anti blackness training

In response to the framework, SPOC members had the following feedback:

- Member Amy Brown appreciated the calling out of white dominant culture in a majority black homelessness system. Member Taura Brown highlighted that residents being served and front-line staff are Black while decision-makers are White or people of color who may exhibit anti-blackness
- Member Julie Schneider discussed that this topic is often discussed but then won't be addressed on a continual basis. She applauded that these conversations have resulted in concrete recommendations to be incorporated into the strategic system improvement plan
- Member Sarah Rennie said this kind of work has to be a long-term priority with intentionality and that White people in the system need to do the work
- Member ReGina Hentz said we must all be accountable to our positions and ourselves

Dirks asked SPOC members to think about who will lead this work from a systems perspective. He also presented recommendations to continue to engage residents with lived experience in the strategic system improvement planning initiative. This included:

- Plugging in the Detroit Advisors Group and the Youth Action Board into implementation work
- Establishing normal outreach to PWLEH regarding updates on implementation
- Establishing meaningful roles on any newly established committee or system
- Securing funding to expand compensation, including an emergency fund
- Creating professional growth opportunities for PWLEH to take the lead
- Investing in mental health resources
- Investing in stable housing resources for PWLEH engaged in this work

System Modeling

BPA team member Matt White discussed preliminary findings from the system modeling exercise and the assumptions undergirding these calculations. Among his findings, these included:

- The homelessness system is primarily lacking resources for single adults and youth (an optimized system would have 228 more units of emergency shelter and 759 more units permanent supportive housing for this population)
- The homelessness system would also need more resources for families to be truly optimized, including 26 more emergency shelter beds and 132 units of other permanent housing for this population

Rennie said she thought the calculations were missing data on households experiencing domestic violence because not all programs supply data to HUD. Schneider asked the consulting team if they have seen communities using a model of directing funding away from emergency shelter to rehousing resources.

SPOC members approved the assumptions for the modeling exercise but wanted to revisit the data calculations.

Next Step: HRD Project Manager Safiya Merchant will work with White and Rennie to provide additional data for the system modeling exercise. White will come back to the SPOC with updates in December. Merchant will also invite SPOC members to the next system modeling workgroup meeting.

Updates on Building Momentum Workgroups and Planning Session For Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness, Reimagining Shelter, and Improving Rehousing and Housing Supply

The consulting team provided emerging recommendations and themes from the community feedback sessions hosted in November on reducing unsheltered homelessness, reimagining shelter, and improving rehousing and housing supply. They also provided an update on the Building Momentum workgroup's activities.

SPOC member feedback included the following:

- The importance of looking at best practices and developing standards to improve street outreach activities
- Increasing training and compensation for provider staff could be a recommendation outlined by funders of homelessness services
- The importance of discussing staff compensation with provider leadership
- The importance of providing funding to smaller, grassroots organizations started by Black residents
- Landlord engagement is challenging and housing supply is often not affordable for both those on fixed incomes or who work full-time jobs. Properties also do not pass property quality inspections.

Implementation Framework Workgroup Update

The implementation workgroup gave an update, and that workgroup has looked at reevaluating CoC committee structures to support the strategic plan and the possibility of forming an interagency council on homelessness. They will soon be discussing timelines and staffing needs.

Community Engagement

SPOC members discussed upcoming priorities for community engagement, including engaging residents, City Council, and the CoC Board and Executive Committee.

Next Step: Merchant, HRD's project manager, will develop a draft communications and engagement plan for the SPOC to review.