

**City of Lawrence, Kansas
COMMUNITY COMMISSION ON HOMELESSNESS
February 9, 2010 Minutes (Lawrence City Commission Room)**

Members present: Jeanette Collier, Hubbard Collinsworth, Wes Dalberg, Katherine Dinsdale, Loring Henderson, Charlotte Knoche, Shirley Martin-Smith, Robert Mosely, Shannon Murphy

Members absent: Mike Monroe,

Staff present: Danelle Dresslar, Margene Swarts

Public present: Steve Cowan, Saunny Scott, Sara Taliaferro, David Tucker, Eunice Ruttinger, David Johnson, Heather Hoy

Chair Dinsdale called the meeting to order at 8:35 am.

ITEM NO. 1 Introductions

The members of the CCH introduced themselves. Henderson was present as member of the public.

ITEM NO. 2 Approval of the Agenda and the January 12, 2010 Minutes

Martin-Smith asked to remove Agenda Item No. 6, Housing Vision Update. Martin-Smith said that there will be a report on the Housing Vision in March.

ACTION TAKEN

Motion by Knoche, seconded by Martin-Smith to approve the Agenda as amended and to approve the January 12, 2010 minutes.

Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM NO. 3 Lawrence Community Shelter Discussion Regarding Franklin Road SUP Application.

Swarts said that attached to the agenda was a staff memorandum to the CCH detailing the SUP application submitted by the Lawrence Community Shelter (LCS) for the property at 3701 Franklin Circle. Staff compared this SUP application with the emergency shelter criteria that the CCH set forth and finalized in August of 2009. It appears to staff that the application meets the criteria with an exception based on the transportation piece. Currently, the proposed shelter location is not on a direct bus route. Swarts said that discussions are underway with the Lawrence Transit System to include the proposed shelter site as well as the jail on a direct route. The CCH is being asked to determine if they want to support the project by providing a recommendation to first the Planning Commission and ultimately the City Commission. If the CCH would like for staff to forward their recommendation for the application with instruction on the importance of the direct bus route staff can include that in the memorandum.

Loring Henderson, LCS Executive Director, said that LCS has chosen to submit this SUP application with permission of the building owners. Henderson said that he and Don Huggins, President of the LCS Board of Directors, met with Mr. Nugent of the Lawrence Transit System

last week and they are optimistic that the location will be serviced by a direct bus stop. The building itself is 25,000 square feet. At the Don's Steakhouse location that was previously under consideration there were plans for two buildings to accommodate all the services LCS will be providing. The Franklin Circle location has sufficient space to accommodate the services in one building. LCS plans to use 15,000 square feet for the sleeping area and the offices, and 10,000 square feet will be used for the meeting rooms and the job program area. The Management Plan for the Franklin Circle location was created based on the neighborhood meetings surrounding the Don's Steakhouse application. There were a number of neighbors from the Prairie Park area who attended the neighborhood meetings regarding the Don's location. Henderson said that there will be a new set of meetings starting on February 25th. The CCC will facilitate the meeting on February 25th. The proposed Franklin Circle site is not directly connected to any City of Lawrence neighborhoods, but LCS is extending the notification of meetings on the new proposed site out to 1000 feet of the location. Henderson said that he was meeting with the Sheriff's Department on February 10 and is also meeting on the 10th with Steve Glass and Bob Newsome who are developers in the area near the proposed shelter. Henderson also said that there are several neighbors near the proposed site that are Douglas County residents, and he met with them last week.

Martin-Smith commented that as she looked over the Management Plan she found that it was closer to the intent of the original Task Force and that she felt that it addressed some concerns that were brought up in the previous application for Don's Steakhouse. She said that there were neighbors in this area that have already been in on the relocation process that brought about the changes in the Management Plan. Martin-Smith asked Henderson if he saw any downsides or challenges with the Franklin Circle location.

Henderson said that transportation was the largest challenge, but that is a process in the works. He also said that the Capital Campaign is always a challenge in the beginning as well. Henderson said that in the long run, the Franklin Circle location will be less expensive than the Don's Steakhouse site.

Martin-Smith asked Henderson if there has been a discussion regarding incremental capacity or a contingency plan if all the money is not raised for the relocation. Martin-Smith asked if it would be possible to begin in stages by sleeping as many as they could with the funds raised and then adding on as funds became available.

Henderson said that there was not a contingency plan. The sleeping area is just a large room, so it is not something that can be incrementally built. Building that particular room for a reduced number of people will not affect the overall project budget. Henderson said that LCS is keeping a close eye on the situation with homeless families. LCS has housed as many as seven families recently. The number of homeless families is larger than the community had realized. Henderson commented that there may need to be more room for families in the proposed location. Henderson said that the Topeka Rescue Mission has approximately 220 clients which included 150 family members and 70 singles.

Martin-Smith said that number may be driven by differences in the two community's Housing Visions.

Henderson said it was something that LCS was watching closely.

Martin-Smith asked since there is not a contingency plan in terms of funding and the new location cannot be built in stages, what will happen if the money cannot be raised by the time the current location's SUP is expired.

Henderson commented that the Franklin Circle location is already built, whereas Don's Steakhouse was going to be a project starting from scratch, so the time frame is a smaller window for completion. Henderson said that there are very exciting things that are happening with the jobs program at LCS, and this is just overall a great space for relocation. The bus route that is being proposed to service LCS and the jail is a large loop that will take clients as far as 9th and Massachusetts on the same bus.

Dinsdale asked if the location was outside of the City limits.

Henderson said that both the jail and the proposed shelter site are in the City limits. The county line is very close behind the location.

Dinsdale asked if Henderson has heard from any neighbors since the new site had been announced.

Henderson said that at this time he has heard more from the development stakeholders in the area. The purpose for contacting Henderson is to talk about the location and the plan.

Martin-Smith noted that the rights and responsibilities were really tightened up as well.

Henderson said that there was also a new element about a review committee to review the Management Plan and the Good Neighbor Agreement periodically. The Management Plan cannot be written in stone for the length of the SUP. It needs to be a living document as things change. When the review committee finds a necessary amendment to either document, it must be in a format that can be taken to the City for review and/or change.

Dinsdale asked if the neighborhood association closest to the proposed site was Prairie Park.

Henderson said that the closest neighborhood now is Prairie Park, however there is a lot of development planned in the area so he is not sure if the newer development will be considered Prairie Park or not when it is all said and done. Henderson said that the SUP application will go to the Planning Commission on March 22nd or March 24th, and tentatively to the City Commission on April 6th. The current SUP expires in mid-April so the City Commission wants to weigh the options prior to that time.

Dinsdale asked Henderson if LCS had a contract on the property.

Henderson said there was not a contract but LCS did have an agreement with the current owners.

Collinsworth asked about the case management element in the Management Plan and how many case managers that LCS planned to have at the proposed site.

Henderson said that there is a pool of seven that they hope to have at the proposed location. There are currently four case managers, one for families and three others. Those four will be utilized in the proposed location as well as the three outreach workers. There will be no immediate hires. If there is funding available LCS would be interested in looking at hiring a full time certified drug and alcohol counselor as opposed to a case manager.

Collinsworth noted that with the current staffing the ratio of staff to guests is 1-41. He asked Henderson if he found that number feasible or if it needed to be modified to fit the need.

Henderson said that the number is feasible since a lot of that time is spent with guests sleeping.

Collinsworth asked Henderson what the protocol would be if a staff member or a guest becomes sick in the middle of the night.

Henderson said that it would be handled as it is now. If a staff member is sick LCS will cover their shift. Henderson can come in to staff the facility or they will find another employee to come in. If a guest is sick then Henderson is typically the one who takes them to the hospital. LCS tries very hard to minimize ambulance calls.

Sara Taliaferro, CCC, said that as far as the Good Neighbor Agreement is concerned there is a mechanism in the CCC that as the shelter site is finalized and is moving forward the CCC would facilitate a site council consisting of neighbors, shelter representatives, and other stakeholders. A formal agreement can be facilitated.

Dinsdale said that the communication with the neighbors and notification efforts should be documented as this process moves along. Dinsdale asked Taliaferro how far in advance the notification to the neighborhood will be made regarding the meeting on the 25th.

Taliaferro said that the letters will be mailed by February 10.

Martin-Smith suggested staff communicate the support of the CCH to the Planning Commission and the City Commission, as well as addressing the transportation concerns. The public transportation piece is crucial to this location being successful. That needs to be emphasized. Martin-Smith said that the transportation piece aside, the application seems to be what the CCH felt that is should be.

Dinsdale also suggested staff draft a memo of support addressing the extensive changes to the Management Plan, and restating that the emergency shelter is a crucial piece of the Housing Vision. She agreed that the transportation piece should be addressed in the memo as well. She also suggested highlighting that there are additional means in place for neighbors to interact with the shelter to express concerns and address issues that might arise.

Collinsworth asked if the CCH could be updated on the progress of the transportation route piece.

Swarts said that staff will email the subscription link to the Lawrence Transit System list serve to the CCH members.

Knoche said it was important in the memo to mention the Management Plan's extensive changes as well as the protocol to address neighborhood concerns.

Martin-Smith commented that the Management Plan was much more detailed and seemed to have embraced a lot of the neighborhood concerns that were expressed at the meeting held in October at the Boys and Girls Club regarding the Don's Steakhouse site.

ACTION TAKEN

Motion by Dinsdale, seconded by Martin-Smith to ask staff to submit a memorandum to the Planning Commission and ultimately the City Commission showing CCH support for the LCS Franklin Circle SUP application, noting the importance of approval of a direct service bus stop at the location as well as highlighting significant changes in the Management Plan.

Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM NO. 4 Receive and Review Letter from Bert Nash Regarding the Reduction of Outreach Case Management.

Henderson entered the meeting as a voting member.

Swarts said that Eunice Ruttinger and David Johnson from Bert Nash were present to talk about the budget reductions in their agency and the subsequent reduction in homeless outreach workers. Swarts said that The Salvation Army, ECKAN, and LCS came together to write a letter to the City Commission to ask for deferral of the Bert Nash item. Bert Nash has worked to come up with a plan for the utilization of the three outreach workers to allow for them to remain working with the homeless population of Lawrence.

Ruttinger noted that the CCH is aware that Bert Nash is in the midst of some very serious funding and budget issues. The agency had a \$785,000 reduction in funding for this year. When an organization or agency is faced with those levels of reductions, they have to look at all their options and the overall mission of the organization, as well as how can the agency can continue the same level of service to the community while absorbing the cuts. With the homeless outreach team, the City funds \$164,000 for the operations, and Bert Nash subsidizes approximately \$45,000 as well. This is a program that was looked at in terms of the funding challenges. Bert Nash met with providers to talk about where the program was and where it was heading. One thought was that the program could shift from an outreach effort to more of a housing program. Ruttinger said that most of the work that the outreach team did has resulted in the majority of homeless individuals being able to find the outreach team. As a result, what is now needed is housing. The local services have evolved as well with the addition of case managers to various agencies in the community. Bert Nash wants to be sure that they are linking to those other agency programs. They want to look at the mental illness piece of the case management and think about how they can bring people into services, triage, and provide appropriate agency referrals to Bert Nash mental health or other agencies. Ruttinger said that they would also like to explore a centralized intake system for the community. This will take planning and thought, but it is something that is important to provide the best possible wrap around service in the community.

Ruttinger said that right now there are five staff members working with the homeless population. They will be going from four outreach team members to three. They will be looking at how to handle referrals more effectively. Bert Nash has identified several part time positions that have been brought together to create a position for the outreach worker that will no longer be working with the homeless population in an outreach manner. The homeless outreach case load for that individual will be divided up between the other outreach workers as well as with community partners. Bert Nash is thinking of this as a case management homeless housing program. There may also be a change in the amount of time that a case manager is required to work with a client to facilitate the new larger case loads.

Knoche expressed concern about service being closed up after a client is housed. Her preference would be that the case is transferred to another case manager. Case management cannot be dropped for those people who are newly housed.

Ruttinger said that within the case loads are those people who are not ready to commit to housing and these are cases in which the outreach team has spent a lot of time. This is the type of change that they are looking at.

Knoche agreed that if someone is not pursuing housing that there is cause for their case to be closed or transferred, but the workers should be focused on services that the clients need to obtain housing and keep housed.

Dinsdale asked about the severity of the cut on those who were being serviced by the outreach team and how those clients would be impacted.

Ruttinger said that in the long run they have to look at priorities. There will be some clients that the outreach team will not be able to continue to follow. This is a dialogue that Bert Nash will need to have with other agencies to discuss options and alternatives. The preference will be to make the transfers to other case managers if that is applicable in their case.

Martin-Smith said that it was not intended that whoever was awarded this RFP would be required to follow these clients for life. There have been new housing programs develop and more case managers to work with this population.

Ruttinger said that it is very important to look at the resources available in the community and triage.

Martin-Smith said that her sense of the outreach team is that it has been helpful.

Knoche commented that it is important that in the attempt to help someone get out of homelessness and stay housed, they need to stay plugged into services, otherwise they will not stay housed.

Ruttinger said that it was a matter of what direction the program wanted to go. With many of the community services, the client needs to be invested in the process. If they are not, then case management cannot be continued.

Knoche said that helping the client identify additional support services might be appropriate for them.

Dinsdale said that the view of Bert Nash with case management for housing homeless individuals seems more closely in line with the original intent of the program.

Collier thanked Ruttinger and Johnson for meeting with the providers and discussing the options. Working together will ease the transitioning of consumers from one program to another. There will be some minor duplication of services to work through, but for the most part a centralized intake will make that manageable. It is important to make the appropriate referrals up front. Collier also said that she was pleased that the providers are going to be meeting on a monthly basis.

Henderson also expressed his thanks to Ruttinger and Johnson and commented that the meetings were well focused and productive. Henderson said he thought it would be appropriate for the CCH to endorse a memo supporting centralizing the intake process and having monthly service provider meetings. Going forward it will benefit the community and the agencies that work with this population.

Dinsdale asked how the centralized intake system would work.

Ruttinger said that their thought was to handle the intake through HMIS as it is an electronic system. The centralized intake could be located at LCS and Bert Nash would train the staff on the specialized paperwork. The information taken at the intake would help determine the service path that the client would take and what agency would primarily work with them in the process. The case management may not necessarily be with the person who brought them into the intake area.

Dinsdale asked if SRS would be involved.

Ruttinger said they are involved as a referral source.

Collier said that SRS does make agency referrals to case managers.

David Johnson said that he appreciated the conversations and indulgence of the CCH. The budget cut news came to Bert Nash the week of Thanksgiving. This was not a cut that the agency had anticipated. The Medicaid cut was especially deep for them. The decisions that Bert Nash made about their programming was the result of much analyzing of programs and procedures. This program was looked at in December when they realized that the contract with the City was up.

Collier confirmed that three outreach team members will be staying on.

Johnson said yes. The work they do is not going away; there will just be some cases that are transferred. It is not reasonable to think that people are not going to get hurt by these cuts. There are no protected areas in the agency. The cuts did allow for a reassessment of how the agency was doing things. What will happen next year remains to be seen.

Collinsworth said that in hearing about centralized intake, he wonders if the CCH needs to engage in further discussion about how it will be handled. He asked if the City will need to put out an RFP for the centralized intake agency.

Dinsdale said she believed that it would be HMIS that would be the portal for the intake and by utilizing that there would be communication among the agencies on where the client would be referred.

ACTION TAKEN

Motion by Dalberg, seconded by Collier to ask staff to submit a memorandum to the City Commission showing CCH support for the Bert Nash program changes that have been brought about due to budget cuts. Bert Nash will provide homeless outreach and case management by three outreach workers.

Motion passed unanimously.

Henderson asked Johnson if it would be helpful if the CCH issued a statement of support for the agency to go to the legislature and express their concern regarding the cuts in the area of mental health care.

Johnson said that would be helpful. He said that he met with the USD 497 Superintendent and the primary places that they see the cuts were in education and mental health. When the legislature looks at across the board cuts mental health always takes a big hit. Johnson suggested that if the CCH would like to write a letter, a letter to the Senate and the House legislative leadership stating they do not support across the board cuts because they have a greater impact on mental health than any other category, may help.

Swarts suggested the CCH could put together a small group to look at drafting a recommendation to the legislature. The letter would then be forwarded to the City Commission to ask them to include it in their legislative update. If the CCH prefers, they can request the recommendation be sent outside of that update. The small group can meet and the CCH can discuss and approve if appropriate at the March meeting.

Dinsdale asked for volunteers to be on the committee. Henderson, Murphy, and Collier will represent the CCH and they will work with Bert Nash to formulate a letter for a future CCH agenda.

Regarding case management, Murphy added that the Douglas County Jail has applied for a grant for two case managers to work with released inmates. They are looking at providing eight months of case management post-release for those suffering from dual diagnosis and alcoholism. There will be two generalized case managers that will provide services for up to six months post release as well. Murphy said that the jail would like to be included in the conversations regarding the centralized intake system. Murphy said that 75% of the inmates released are without case management, and extended care is something that is needed.

Regarding the Outreach Case Managers quarterly report, Swarts said that there has been discussion about the outreach report. She asked the CCH to look at the report for suggestions

of how it can be more meaningful. If the intake system can be centralized, there is a lot of information that will end up on HMIS. It had occurred to Bert Nash and other agencies in the discussions regarding the outreach team that less paperwork is a benefit. Swarts said that staff will place this item on the March agenda.

ITEM NO. 5 Family Promise Update

Dinsdale presented the Family Promise update and said that the 2009 Annual Report has been completed and Family Promise housed 19 families. 72% of those families were single parent families. Family Promise provided 4015 bed nights of lodging and 12,045 meals. They currently have 1200 volunteers and in 2009 those volunteers provided 11,000 hours of service. They have graduated seven families to permanent housing and 100% of those families are still housed. There are 13 congregations working with the program and an additional 24 support congregations. Fundraising has been the biggest challenge, and they are one of the St. Patrick's Day Parade charities this year.

Knoche thanked and congratulated Family Promise for entering into the agency participation agreement with LDCHA. She said it has really filled the gap for families.

Dinsdale said that they now are able to provide two years of case management post graduation for the families.

ITEM NO. 6 Housing Vision Update

Deferred until March meeting.

ITEM NO. 7 CCC Annual Report

Sara Taliaferro presented the 2009 Annual Report for the CCC. Taliaferro said that the CCC already met with several neighbors on January 14 regarding the shelter relocation. The meeting on January 14 prioritized concerns from the neighbors, and there was a follow up meeting conducted on January 25. The plan for facilitated meetings has not changed drastically with the new proposed location. Taliaferro said that she was interested in getting a police officer to speak at the neighborhood meeting regarding police activity and crime near the current location. The purpose of the meetings is to inform the neighborhood and shift the discussion from fears to facts.

Henderson said that the meeting notices are being mailed to the neighbors this time.

Taliaferro said that the last meeting went very smoothly. The neighbors were still in a reactive state, and there are still those people who are not for the shelter or against the shelter, they just want information and their questions answered. Taliaferro said that she is keeping in contact with the neighbors by email for those who provided email addresses. Most of the people at the meeting were from the Prairie Park neighborhood.

Dinsdale said that the CCC is setting the groundwork for credibility as the process goes forward.

Collier said that ECKAN had received an email from the KU Center for Service Learning and asked Taliaferro if the CCC is involved in the project that was described for matching professors and classes with community groups who may have a compatible project.

Taliaferro said that the CCC is involved in that process. She explained that through this process, there are ten professors and ten agency representatives. Each of the ten meet with each of the other ten. The organization explains their project and the professors see if there is a collaboration fit. The CCC will be attempting to gather support from a professor to have a class involved in the website creation. The topic this year is homelessness.

Collier said that this event has been very successful in the past and that the goal of the professors is to get the students experience in the community.

Taliaferro said that another project that the CCC is working on will begin discussions in March. The CCC will be meeting with Steve Ozark to talk to him about collaborating on a community dialogue on homelessness. The process will be dictated by these meetings and the CCH will receive a report when it is set up and defined. Taliaferro said that the idea of the dialogue is to actually have work session with the community. The community members participating will have homework to take home. The goal of the dialogue is to come up with community acts. Any issue that touches homelessness is eligible for coverage, including panhandling.

Dinsdale thanked Taliaferro for her hard work and attempts to educate the community and build bridges.

ITEM NO. 8 Miscellaneous/Calendar

Heather Hoy reported on the E-Housing year end report and said that in 2009 the E-Housing program served 45 eligible families, with 29 families leased up. E-Housing also issued 20 security deposits and 14 families received transitional housing vouchers. Hoy said that LDCHA ran out of the City of Lawrence Outside Agency funding that was covering rent assistance. With only security deposits available it is harder to keep the clients housed.

Hoy reported that LDCHA spent \$15,000 on rent and utility assistance in January. She said that their goal was to spend \$25,000 per month. Hoy told the CCH that she was uncomfortable with the HMIS risk assessments for Homelessness Prevention. She said that some questions on the intake form are causing them to have to turn clients away, and it is not right that they are forced to turn anyone away for the Homelessness Prevention funding. Part of the screening process asks about income, education, and prior evictions. If a client does not have a diploma or a GED they are ineligible. Hoy said that she understands the guidelines for eligibility for Rapid Re-Housing because the clients need to be able to be stabilized, however there is a problem with the application of the Homelessness Prevention funds. Hoy said that LDCHA staff and City staff were determining a meeting date with James Chisolom of KHRC to talk about the eligibility requirements.

Hoy responded to the centralized intake conversation by telling the CCH that when they developed the grant application there is an available HMIS voucher system within the module. If the referral agency is using HMIS, the referral is recorded and a voucher is printed for the referral agency. Steve Cowan in the HPRP office handles triage of those who are determined to be

ineligible for funding. Under the centralized intake, he would be able to print off a voucher for that person to take to the agency they were referred to, and the intake process is already complete and in HMIS.

Collinsworth asked Hoy if LDCHA was still on track to spend down the funds in 24 months as they originally intended.

Hoy said that they were on target for spending the funds by October of 2011. There is always some opportunity that more funding can become available to the community, so LDCHA wants to make sure that the funds that they have received are spent in a timely and effective manner. The Emergency Shelter Grant for 2010 will have a HPRP option as well, and with HUD changing the definition of homelessness, LDCHA will be able to help even more people.

Collier wanted to thank everyone at LDCHA for their hard work as this has been a learning process for everyone.

ITEM NO. 9 Public Comment.

David Tucker, Bert Nash, said that he wanted to reassure the CCJH that although some people will be taken off the caseloads of the outreach team, the outreach team is always accessible to them and these people frequently call them directly even if they are not part of their case load at that time. He said that funding assistance or paperwork assistance can be done when someone is not on a caseload. If the person comes back to the outreach team they can look at reinstating their case or they can refer them on to other people. Tucker said that case management can be for life, and that although some caseloads will be reevaluated they should not worry about people not receiving assistance from the outreach team just because they are not technically one they are case managing.

Dinsdale commented that it is apparent and clear to her that the case managers and the outreach workers truly care about their contacts and the people that they are working with.

Collinsworth said that case management is based on trust. Each case manager develops their client base based on trust.

Knoche agreed and said that is the same with housing providers. LDCHA is asking landlords to enter into leases with families and individuals, and they trust that when they say that case management will be offered and available for the clients that it is. If the client goes into crisis or has difficulties the trust factor is very important.

Dinsdale said that this community wants and should have the best system in place to support that.

Collier asked Swarts what the process will be for future commissioner consideration as the terms of several are up in June.

Swarts said that Dalberg was reappointed for a new three year term, but Martin-Smith, Dinsdale, and Henderson all have terms that will expire in June. Swarts said that staff can place this topic on the agenda for April.

ITEM NO. 10 Adjourn.

ACTION TAKEN

Motion by Collinsworth, seconded by Murphy to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Motion passed unanimously.

Attendance Record

Members	01/ 10	02/ 10	03/ 10	04/ 10	05/ 10	06/ 10	07/ 10	08/ 10	09/ 10	10/ 10	11/ 10	12/ 10
Jeanette Collier	+	+										
Hubbard Collinsworth	+	+										
Wes Dalberg	+	+										
Katherine Dinsdale	+	+										
Loring Henderson	+	+										
Charlotte Knoche	+	+										
Shirley Martin-Smith	+	+										
Mike Monroe												
Robert Mosely	+	+										
Shannon Murphy	E	+										