



Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless  
Quarterly Meeting – January 21, 2020  
Meeting Minutes

A transcript from the electronic recording of the meeting may be found here:  
<http://www.tdca.state.tx.us/tich/meetings.htm>

**Members present:**

#	Member Agency	Representative	Attendance (Yes/No)
1	Office of the Governor appointee, Cornerstone Network (TICH Chair)	Mike Doyle	Yes
2	Office of the Lt. Governor	<i>vacant</i>	n/a
3	Office of the Speaker of the House	<i>vacant</i>	n/a
4	Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)	Joyce Pohlman	Yes
5	HHSC	Helen Eisert	No
6	HHSC	Claire Irwin	Yes – by phone
7	Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ)	Sherri Cogbill	Yes
8	Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)	Valinda Bolton	Yes
9	Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA), Housing Finance representative	Brooke Boston	Yes – Elizabeth Yevich as proxy
10	TDHCA, Community Affairs representative	Naomi Cantu	Yes
11	Texas Education Agency (TEA)	Cal Lopez	Yes
12	Texas Department of Juvenile Justice (TJJD)	Marqus Butler	Yes – by phone
13	Texas Veterans Commission (TVC)	Joe Ramirez	Yes
14	Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)	Shirley Jones	Yes

**Advisory Members present:**

#	Advisory Member Organization	Representative	Attendance (Yes/No)
1	Texas Network of Youth Services (TNOYS)	Christine Gendron	No
2	Integral Care	Darilynn Cardona-Beiler	No
3	Private Citizen	Dennis M. Scholl	No
4	Texas Homeless Network (THN)	Eric Samuels	Yes
5	Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC)	David Long	Yes – Michael Wilt as proxy
6	Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV)	Molly Voyles	Yes – Molly Thibodeaux as proxy

**Other attendees:** Kali Adams (TDHCA), Sophia Checa (THN), Spencer Duran (TDHCA), Samantha Foss (THN), Marcy Stahl (HHSC), Megan Sylvester (TDHCA), Morjorie White (City of San Antonio).

**Administrative support:** Danny Shea (TDHCA).

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Mike Doyle called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. After all attendees introduced themselves, it was confirmed that a quorum was present.

**II. Remarks from Chair**

Mike Doyle welcomed Council members and guests to the meeting and acknowledged that homelessness has recently been the focus of much media attention. He reminded members in the event that they provide comments for media or elected officials, they may not do so on behalf of the TICH.

**III. Approval of draft minutes from the October 8, 2019 TICH Meeting**

Mike Doyle introduced the draft minutes from the October 8, 2019 TICH meeting. Naomi Cantu moved to approve and Cal Lopez seconded the motion. There were no comments and members voted aye unanimously to approve the minutes.

**IV. Election of TICH Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson**

Mike Doyle invited Council members to nominate a Chair. Naomi Cantu nominated Mike Doyle for Chair, and Valinda Bolton seconded the nomination. Mr. Doyle accepted the nomination and members voted aye unanimously to approve the reappointment of Mr. Doyle as Chair of the TICH.

Mike Doyle announced that he would nominate a member for Vice Chair at a future meeting.

## **V. Annual Report Committee Update**

Eric Samuels provided an update on the 2019 TICH Annual Report. Joyce Pohlman and Michael Wilt volunteered to assist in updating the Report. Mr. Samuels shared that the Committee's goal will be to have a draft Annual Report finalized by the summer of 2020.

## **VI. Discussion on Reviewing and Possibly Updating Bylaws**

Mike Doyle announced that he, Elizabeth Yevich, and Danny Shea would be reviewing the TICH Bylaws and sharing proposed edits to the bylaws for Council members to review before the next quarterly meeting.

## **VII. Updates from Texas Homeless Network**

Eric Samuels provided an update on results from the 2019 Point in Time (PIT) Count in Texas. In January of 2019, nearly 26,000 people were counted as experiencing homelessness at the time of PIT Counts across 11 Continuums of Care (CoCs) in Texas. The number of individuals experiencing homelessness identified during PIT Counts has increased slightly each of the past three years. Mr. Samuels also distributed a handout that provided the dates for the 2020 PIT Count being held by each CoC across the state and encouraged members and guests to volunteer for their local PIT Count. General discussion followed.

Samantha Foss, Director of Development and Communications at THN, provided an update on THN's VISTA projects. THN is currently supporting VISTAs in Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, El Paso, Longview, and Texarkana. Recruiting is currently underway for VISTAs in Austin and Taylor, as well as for host sites in rural and mid-size communities where a VISTA would support veterans experiencing homelessness or housing instability.

## **VIII. Updates from Member Agencies**

Naomi Cantu provided updates on two TDHCA-administered homelessness and poverty prevention programs: the Ending Homelessness Fund (EH Fund) and the Emergency Solutions Grants Program (ESG). The EH Fund, funded by voluntary contributions made by Texans when registering their cars, continues to bring in between \$10,000 to \$12,000 per month, and Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 contracts with grantees are underway. Additionally, FY2020 ESG contracts are in effect with about 50 ESG recipients throughout the state. Ms. Cantu reported that there may be a minor rule change proposed for the ESG program, and that there will be a chance for public comment on the proposed rule change. Lastly, Ms. Cantu shared that the 2020 Qualified Application Plan (QAP) would award additional points to proposed tax credit developments for agreeing to accept referrals from local CoCs or homelessness service providers. General discussion followed; additional details are available in the meeting transcript.

Spencer Duran presented an update on the Section 811 Project Rental Assistance program. The program has housed nearly 400 households to date, with a goal of housing 600 households by 2021. Mr. Duran also reported that TDHCA was in the process of applying for an additional \$7 million in Section 811 funding under a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) released by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). An additional \$7 million dollars in funding would allow TDHCA's Section

811 program to house an estimated additional 140 households and increase the program's capacity over a 30-year period to nearly 700 households. General discussion about the Section 811 PRA program followed.

Valinda Bolton provided an update from DFPS. DFPS is working with HUD on developing the agency's Tenant Protection Vouchers for Foster Youth to Independence Initiative. Designated DFPS liaisons will reach out to local public housing authorities to build relationships and develop memorandums of understanding related to the initiative. To date, seven transition-aged youth in Harris County have received vouchers.

Cal Lopez provided updates from TEA. TEA recently submitted 2018-19 school year data to the federal Department of Education, and reported identifying 114,055 students experiencing homelessness in Texas public schools. This is a slight decrease from the previous year, when an increase in the number of students experiencing homelessness was attributed to Hurricane Harvey. Ms. Lopez also shared new informational posters from the Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youth Support Center, information about a McKinney-Vento 101 webinar scheduled for January 30<sup>th</sup>, information about TEA's upcoming conference scheduled for summer 2020, and information about the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth conference scheduled to take place in Dallas-Fort Worth in November 2020.

Joyce Pohlman presented updates from HHSC. HHSC is planning a series of regional housing summits around the state, the goal of which will be to collect input from local communities on what housing needs and concerns are, particularly for older adults and people with disabilities, and trying to build partnerships to address those needs. There are five summits scheduled between January and June 2020. Additionally, HHSC's Behavioral Health Advisory Commission Housing Subcommittee has requested that the agency develop a Housing Choice Plan. The plan is expected to be complete within one year, and is designed to outline the current landscape of housing options for individuals with mental health conditions, individuals with substance use conditions, and individuals who have intellectual or developmental disabilities.

Joe Ramirez provided an update from TVC. TVC is coordinating the Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services (TCCVS); the TCCVS is working on addressing the unmet needs of Veterans in Texas. Mr. Ramirez is coordinating the TCCVS Housing Subcommittee and welcomed members' attendance and input at TCCVS and Housing Subcommittee meetings.

Megan Sylvester shared an update on federal appropriations for Fiscal Year 2020.

#### **IX. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

#### **X. Closing comments**

The next TICH meeting is scheduled for April 21, 2020 from 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM, and will be held at the Texas Workforce Commission building, Room 124T, 1117 Trinity Street, Austin, TX 78701.

**XI. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:17 AM.