



Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless
Quarterly Meeting – April 20, 2021
Meeting Minutes

A transcript from the electronic recording of the meeting may be found here:
<http://www.tdhca.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	Suzie Brady	Yes
6	HHSC	Claire Irwin	Yes
7	Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ)	Sherri Cogbill	Yes
8	Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)	Valinda Bolton	No
9	Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA), Housing Finance representative	Brooke Boston	Yes
10	TDHCA, Community Affairs representative	Naomi Cantu	No
11	Texas Education Agency (TEA)	Cal Lopez	Yes
12	Texas Department of Juvenile Justice (TJJD)	Marqus Butler	No
13	Texas Veterans Commission (TVC)	Blake Harris	No
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)	Fedora Galasso	Yes
2	TNOYS	Ann-Charlotte Proffitt	Yes
3	Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute	Darilynn Cardona-Beiler	Yes
4	Private Citizen	Dennis M. Scholl	No (submitted resignation)
5	Texas Homeless Network (THN)	Eric Samuels	Yes
6	Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC)	Mike Wilt	No
7	Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation (TSAHC)	David Long	No
8	Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV)	Molly Voyles	Yes

Other attendees Abigail Versyp (TDHCA), Elizabeth Yevich (TDHCA), Shrabya Poudyal (THN), Nick Thompson (THN),

Administrative support: Elizabeth Yevich (TDHCA), Jeremy Stremmer (TDHCA)

I. Welcome and Introductions

Mike Doyle called the meeting to order at via GoToWebinar 10:01 am, confirmed a quorum was present and introduced Jeremy Stremmer from TDHCA who walked meeting participants through the online meeting process.

II. Remarks from the Chair

Mike Doyle discussed his decision to not retire and urged attendants to take care of themselves during the COVID pandemic and that TICH is needed by individuals experiencing homelessness as well as the agencies that work with the homeless population.

III. Approval of draft minutes from the January 21, 2021 TICH Meeting

Mike Doyle then called for a motion to approve the January 21 minutes. Brooke Boston then made a motion to approve the minutes Cal Lopez then seconded the motion. The motion is passed unanimously with no comments.

IV. Nominating TICH Chairperson

Mike Doyle then moved to elect a TICH chairperson. Brooke Boston moved to nominate Mike Doyle as TICH chairperson. Joyce Pohlman from Health and Human Services seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously with no comments.

V. Legislative Update

In place of Michael Lyttle of TDHCA Elizabeth Yevich of TDHCA read Michael Lyttle's speaking points. Senate Bill 987 by Senator Dawn Buckingham, a statewide ban on camping in public places. TDHCA was added to a committee substitute of SB 987 to approve city purchases of property to house the homeless. Local governments must submit a plan to TDHCA to ensure appropriate services are in place. SB 987 has a House companion bill filed by Rep. Giovanni Capriglione which does not have TDHCA in it. House Bill 1226 filed by Rep. Liz Campos to create a statewide text-to-donate program to raise funds to support local programs serving the homeless. House Bill 1260 filed by Rep. Rhetta Bowers TICH doing a feasibility study on establishing a centralized homeless crisis response data system. HB 1277 filed by Rep. Campos directing TDHCA to use funds from the Ending Homeless Fund to create a transitional housing pilot program for local governments. HB 1278 filed by Rep. Campos to hold one public hearing a year in an urban and one in a rural area on homelessness. HB 3034 filed by Rep. Campos it would charge TICH with identifying a state agency to create a statewide homeless data system. Some of these bills have fiscal notes. Other bills have been referred to committees but have not yet had a hearing.

VI. Update from Member Agencies

(a.) i. TDHCA on the Emergency Solutions Grant. Abigail Versyp spoke on the behalf of Naomi Cantu about ESG CARES. TDHCA has received guidance from HUD that impacts the department's use of funds for homelessness prevention. HUD also provided guidance throughout the term of the CDC moratorium that is treated as a resource that prevents homelessness. With the CDC's moratorium expiration and the Texas Supreme Court guidance that they are not required to enforce the CDC moratorium HUD has allowed TDHCA to provide guidance to subrecipients that would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. This should help move homeless prevention funds. The new HUD guidance should expand eligibility for recipients. ESG CARES 1 contracts are ending on July 31, 2021. Working through contract management to reallocate funding to agencies that have a very high expenditure rate. Some agencies have 0-30% of funds expended. Reaching out to these agencies to see if they will need the money if it isn't needed it will be directed to programs that are able to spend the money to meet community needs. ESG CARES 2 is not being reallocated at this point but may be amending the current action plan to use the ESG CARES 2 as current grant expenditures are evaluated. The HUD guidance also applies to TDHCA's annual allocation.

ii. Brooke Boston presented on agency pandemic response. The Texas Rental Relief (TRR) is funded with Rental Assistance funds from the Treasury and can provide up to 15 months of rent and utility assistance including arrears. TDHCA is not using subrecipients but is using three vendors.. As of the meeting TRR has paid out \$13 million to approximately 1900 households but TRR is seeing exponential growth with 1-2 million in daily draws. Draws are expected to increase to 6-7 million per day until the funds are expended. TRR eligibility is 80% AMI and a portion of funds are eligible for stabilization services per recent Treasury guidance yet state leadership has not directed nor authorized TRR to stabilize. Stabilization may not be performed through TRR due to new ARPA funds.

iii. Brooke Boston discussed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). ARPA is also referred to as Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) 2.0. ARPA has stabilization funds the deadline to use ARPA funding is further out than the first round. Agency thinks that ERA 2.0 will be \$1 billion. ERA 1.0 was \$1.3 billion.

ARPA also includes \$132.9 million for the Homeless Assistance in Support of Services Program which is for people who are homeless, individuals fleeing domestic violence or other housing instability. The Homeless Assistance program can be used like HOME funds and also allows funds for supportive services, non-congregant shelter, permanent supportive housing, and eligible nonprofit operating costs. Program will need a plan amendment and HUD will provide more guidance. Will go to board, and to authorize a plan amendment and will go out for five days of public comment. ARPA also created the Home Assistance Fund (HAF) from Treasury that focuses on mortgage payment arrears. HAF also includes reinstating mortgages, principal reductions, interest rate reductions, utilities, homeowners and flood insurance, HOA fees and liens, property taxes, housing counseling and repaying down payment assistance loans. Eligibility is 150% AMI but at least 60 percent of funds for households at 100% AMI. HAF requires needs assessment, public engagement, program design explanation goal target methods readiness assessment and a budget. ARPA also includes more LIHEAP funds known as Utilities Assistance Program (UAP.) TDHCA thinks this will be \$234 million for TX which will be distributed through subrecipients. ARPA also includes Low Income Hot Water Assistance Program (LIHEAP) unsure on program design and amount. TDHCA was designated by Governor's office as fund recipient.

iv. Mike Doyle asked if cities are having a hard time spending the money. Brooke Boston responded she believes demand is there as requests are already over \$500 million of the \$1.3 Billion available. Landlords and tenants are applying to both city and state programs. The Department is continuing widespread outreach throughout the state

(b.) Cal Lopez presented on Texas Education Agency (TEA.) TEA developed a FAQ for families that lost their housing due to the severe winter storm. TEA is partnering with Texas Network of Youth Services holding a 2021 Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program Summit. This conference will be virtual on 8/3 and 8/5. Registration is free and the theme is road to impact focusing on continuous improvement of education. Cal Lopez encouraged everybody to present at the conference. The call for proposals is extended to May 7. Cal Lopez also encouraged participants to sign up for TNOYS and TEA McKinney-Vento newsletter. TEA also launched a 2021-2022 Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youth competitive grant. All school districts can apply and TEA is anticipating 80 grants for \$7.7 million dollars. TEA held an applicant webinar on 4/7. This grant is to implement comprehensive approach to increase attendance on-time promotion and graduation. In late April and early May TEA Technical Support Center will be holding trainings on supporting seniors and unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness with post-secondary planning and access. The trainings will focus on school-of-origin transportation, how to build community resources and best practices to implement Mckinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

(c.) Eric Samuels, Texas Homeless Network. Eric Samuels handed it off to Nick Thompson who talked about the THN VISTA project. Bellevue is the only VISTA site that is only working exclusively on veteran employment for those exiting homelessness. Multiple VISTA sites have open positions. Eric Samuels stated the VISTA program also has two new members in New Mexico. Mike Doyle asked if the One Star Foundation is spearheading that program. Eric Samuels responded that THN is the Texas intermediary for homelessness for the Corporation for National Community Service.

(d.) Shrabya Poudal, the Texas Homeless Data Sharing Network pilot. This project has 3 Continuums of Care (CoC); Texas Balance of States, Houston-Harris County, and Ft. Worth/ Arlington/Tarrant County

and over 460,000 client records. Each CoC has access to 30 reports and dashboards in the warehouse and in the future will have access to aggregate-level data of all participants. This can be used for data analysis and to support HMIS data. Customized dashboards and reports are available from the Vermont based vendor Green River. Currently coordinating with CoCs and vendor to meet dashboard needs. The previously mentioned work plan for TS assistance from ICF to HUD was approved. ICF will be providing assistance on TSDS and policy support, CoC support and technical support. They will be providing policy support by drafting a TSDS and release of Information (RI.) Also submitted an infographic report to the TSDSM board and their HMIS teams which included dashboards and aggregate findings on permanent supportive housing, disability, client overlap/shared clients, population and core demographics. Currently working with second group of CoCs Amarillo, Austin, Waco and Dallas and are close to data use agreement with Amarillo. An issue with CoCs data sharing agreement is the contained arbitration clause and Texas cities cannot go through arbitration so the amending data sharing agreement. They are hoping to have El Paso sign as well. Mike Doyle asked about San Antonio and Shrayba Poudal responded that Haven for Hop runs their HMIS and their CoC is SARAH making it more difficult to sign but they are working with them.

Eric Samuels pointed out that HB 1260 would study the effectiveness of the Texas Homeless Data Sharing Network pilot and that the THN was surprised that HB 3034 was filed as THN did not work with Rep. Campos on that bill. THN did work to remove references of the public searching the database. Eric Samuels added that THN will be having their annual conference in Houston at the Omni Galleria between 10/4-10/6 and they are awaiting confirmation from Secretary Castro about speaking on the 4th. Mike Doyle asked if they are planning to have TICH meet with CoCs in Houston and Eric Samuels responded that it depends on the comfort of state agencies and their staff's comfort but that they do have a planned space for that at the hotel.

VII. Public Comment

Mike Doyle asked for public comments and Dennis Scholl responded that he has submitted typed public comment. Dennis Scholl stated that he will be ending his 10 year volunteer service on the panel as a public citizen member. He praised TICH and the member agencies and urges them to contact him if they need a public citizen member. He also asked that TICH continues to look at his interests of rural, south Texas homeless veterans and their families. Dennis Scholl then thanked TICH for letting him participate. Mike Doyle thanked Dennis Scholl for his help.

VIII. Closing Comments

Mike Doyle then asked for any other closing comments and Elizabeth Yevich read into the record the members that have attended. And Introduced Fedora Galasso who further introduced herself to the meeting attendants as the news Executive Director of the Texas Network of Youth Services (TNOYS). Mike Doyle welcomed Fedora Galasso..

IX. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:51 a.m.