

Texas Interagency Council for the Homeless (TICH)

Quarterly Meeting

10:30AM January 24th, 2024

221 E 11th St, Conference Room 116

Austin, TX 78701

Naomi Cantu (00:00:00):

So good morning. We'll go ahead and get started. This is Naomi Cantu. I will be chairing, just substitute chairing today. Mike Doyle is not feeling well. We're going to go ahead and go around with welcoming introductions. I am welcoming you. Thank you for coming. I work at TDHCA and I'm the director of Home American Rescue Plan. Jeremy

Jeremy Stremmler (00:00:23):

Jeremy Stremmler. I also work at TDHCA, manager of the Housing Resources.

Megan Sylvester (00:00:26):

I'm Megan Sylvester I work at TDHCA. I'm our Deputy General Counsel.

Eric Samuels (00:00:30):

Eric Samuels. I work at Texas Homeless Network.

Lauren Rose (00:00:34):

Lauren Rose with Texas Network Youth Services.

Michael Wilt (00:00:37):

Michael Wilt, Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation.

David Long (00:00:40):

David Long, Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation.

Amber Morrison (00:00:43):

Amber Morrison. Proxy for Dr. Blake Harris, Texas Veterans Commission. Veterans Mental Health.

Robert Hetzel (00:00:50):

Robert Hetzel. HHSC. Veterans Mental Health Services.

Rosy Falcon (00:00:55):

Rosy Falcon, TDHCA. Homeless Programs Manager.

Fedora Galasso (00:00:59):

Fedora Galasso, SCEO for the Texas Network Abuse Services.

Desiree Viramontes (00:01:03):

Desiree Viramontes for Texas Education Agency.

Michael Allmon (00:01:07):

Michael Allmon from IOD.

Naomi Cantu (00:01:08):

From IOD? And who do we have on the phone?

Brooke Boston (00:01:19):

Brooke Boston with TDHCA.

Darilynn Beiler (00:01:24):

Darilynn Beiler, with the Mental Health Policy Institute.

Kelly Davis (00:01:30):

Kelly Davis with TWC.

Abigail Versyp (00:01:34):

Abigail Versyp with TDHCA.

Brittany Hinton (00:01:38):

Brittany Hinton with HHS

Lonnie Bean (00:01:46):

Lonnie Bean. HHSC. Filling in for Claire Irwin

Naomi Cantu (00:01:54):

With the person from HHSC. We just went repeat themselves. We didn't quite get that.

Lonnie Bean (00:02:00):

Sorry. Lonnie Bean from HHSC filling in for Claire Irwin.

Naomi Cantu (00:02:09):

And who was before you? Does anyone remember?

Lisa Medina (00:02:15):

Lisa Medina from TXPHP.

Naomi Cantu (00:02:17):

Thank you Lisa.

Lisa Medina (00:02:20):

You're welcome.

Naomi Cantu (00:02:22):

All right.

Sean Lonergan (00:02:23):

Sean Lonergan TDHCA and TICH Administrative Support.

Peg McCoy (00:02:27):

And Peg McCoy, TDHCA.

Jared Ward (00:02:31):

Jared Ward, Texas Homeless Network.

Andre Adams (00:02:35):

Andre Adams TDHCA.

Elizabeth Yevich (00:02:40):

And Elizabeth Yevich TDHCA.

Marcus Butler (00:02:45):

And Marcus Butler with the Texas Juvenile Justice Department.

Naomi Cantu (00:02:52):

Alright, if that's everyone on the phone, do we have quorum?

Yes, we do have quorum. Great. I will convene the meeting. It is

10:38. I do not have remarks since I am filling in as chair.

We're moving on to item number three on the agenda. Approval of

minutes from September 27th TICH meeting. I will entertain a

motion if someone wants to move to accept or amend the minutes.

And second,

Brooke Boston (00:03:39):

This is Brooke I move approval.

Naomi Cantu (00:03:41):

Thank you. Brooke, can we second? I think we're advisory. I

don't think that count. We need one other member. Desiree is

seconding. Everyone who votes in a positive fashion say aye.

All Board Members (00:04:14):

Aye.

Naomi Cantu (00:04:14):

Great and negative, Same sign. Okay, those have passed. And we are on to number four on our agenda item discussion and possible approval of letter of support for Texas Network of Youth Services, Youth Homelessness TNOYS System Improvement grant application. This is a voting item and I believe Fedora has a presentation. And Jeremy for the people on the phone, its A PDF?

Jeremy Stremmler (00:04:41):

Yes. So you should have received it if you're on the phone via email from Sean and the materials he sent, there is a presentation and then also a copy of the draft letter that Fedora will also explain during her presentation.

Naomi Cantu (00:05:01):

Alright, please.

Fedora Galasso (00:05:03):

Awesome. All right. Again, my name is Fedora Galasso. I'm the CEO for TNOYS. So I'm going to give you a little bit of an overview of TNOYS for those of you who may be unfamiliar with TNOYS. And then we'll dig into this really great opportunity

that we have here to really expand services and supports for youth experiencing homelessness here in Texas. So just quickly about TNOYS, we are a member organization. We are a C3. So we do work to support our members across the state of Texas. So we have over a hundred organizational and professional members who serve youth, young adults and families across Texas. And these are providers that would provide shelter for young people experiencing homelessness, would help them as they age out of foster care or exit juvenile justice system, things like that. And our members really represent the broad youth services system that really serves youth and young adults experiencing homelessness.

(00:06:08):

And when we talk about young people experiencing homelessness, we talk about older youth. So we go up to 26 and so there is a little bit mixed with the adult population, but this population is very specific in their needs. So we really represent the broad range of systems that serve young people. So for example, a communities in school or a homeless shelter or an RTC, those are all part of our member network. So we work to strengthen services and support for Texas Youth and Families and really do that in using a three-pronged strategy of focusing on how do we improve practices for young people through capacity building training, technical assistance and support, partnering with

young people. So we have a broad swath of programming that really works to center young people and have them at the table and really work with them and their lived experiences.

(00:07:08):

And then our policy work to not only work at the capitol and with legislators to help them understand the needs of young people and their lived experiences, but also working hand in hand with state agencies to make sure that they understand the needs of providers as well as youth. We sit on many state work groups to really work hand in hand with state agencies. We consider them our partners. So when we talk about systems and youth serving systems, we all know working in homelessness that it's much broader than just housing. We have health needs and child welfare needs and needs around juvenile justice, workforce education, as well as victims and survivor services. So we work across these seven systems knowing that across systems collaborative approach is really the best approach to serving young people. I talked a little bit about the work that we do in our policy practice and partnerships, but I do want to highlight some of the programming that we have to really center young people and make sure that young people are always at the table really driving the programs and the services for them.

(00:08:20):

So our roadmap of youth engagement is, we'll talk a little bit more about it because that's a big part of this grant is that we really work to listen and learn from young people, lift up their stories. We have two flagship young adult leadership programs. One is our Young Adult Leadership Council, which is made up of young people who have experiences of homelessness as well as foster care or disconnection from school and work and health needs. As well as our Texas Emerging Leaders Board, which is part of the Texas Opportunity Youth Network, which really focused on young people who are disconnected from school and work since we know so many people experiencing homelessness are also disconnected from school and work. So really focusing on having that lived experience of those young people to shape the work that we do. We also make sure that our work with young people is not transactional.

(00:09:16):

So we have an alumni network and we're always able to have young people who are experiencing homelessness at the table. And then we also have lots of folks on staff who have that lived experiences as well. So as I mentioned, our Young Adult Leadership Council is our flagship 12 month program where we really work to make sure it is a work-based learning program where they're earning while they're learning and they're getting that professional development and they're able to really be part

and parcel of everything that we do at TNOYS as well as across the network. So they work with us on strategic planning as well as on every single project that we have that's critical to this grant that I'm going to talk about because that was one of the big reasons that we knew that we were just kind of a shoe in for this grant or we hope so, fingers crossed. But the fact is that we have had young people at the table shaping our work for years and we really are excited about leveraging that across the state. And then again, we're always committed to equity and inclusion and that's also part of this grant. So speaking about this grant, the Youth Homeless Systems Improvement grant is the grant that we wanted to talk about. And again, my name is Fedora and then this is Lauren, so I may ping to her and also may ping to Eric as we go through some of the slides here.

(00:10:48):

So this is a new grant and many of you have heard me talk about the Youth Homeless Demonstration Program grant. So here in Texas, we have six of them, which is really focused, which is a HUD funded programs that are focused on youth homelessness and this very special population of young people experiencing homelessness. And this is kind of a sister grant because what happens at the national level is many local communities aren't really ready to implement the YHDP program because they don't have youth at the table, they don't have the partnerships and

they don't really have the infrastructure to support a YHDP program. So that means that probably many of our local communities who would love to apply for this extra funding really don't have that capacity. So this specific grant is not about housing youth, it's not about paying for those resources, it's really about building the infrastructure and the capacity of the community of the state so that those continuums of care could eventually apply for that funding.

(00:12:00):

So we're really excited about this opportunity because we definitely know that there's a need in Texas to build that infrastructure and build that capacity to really strengthen services and support for youth experiencing homelessness. So it has three main objectives, and I'll go through TNOYS approach to each one of these objectives here in a second. But the first objective is to improve the capacity of youth in the community. The next one is to establish partnerships to bring together system partners who also work with youth who are living in unstable housing to improve the centralized or coordinated assessment system, also known as coordinated entry systems and to improve data collection and then assess, address and improve equity. So when we talk about systems improvement, TNOYS is a systems improvement organization. We really know that this system is made up of multiple entities, providers, continuums of

cares, local communities, schools, state agencies, and really everyone needs to work together in order to make sure that we are serving young people across the state.

(00:13:11):

What's really, really exciting about this grant is that they are including statewide or across community project proposals to really emphasize that need for coordination across communities, across systems collaboration as one of our strategic priorities and has been for years. And so it's really good to see this at the federal level, that funding, because a lot of the funding was really localized to a continuum of care versus a statewide approach. So we plan to take that statewide approach to improve systems for youth and young adults and improve that homelessness response system for young people, really kind of high level by working with our statewide network of providers as well as the critical partnerships that we have with state agencies such as the Texas Interagency Council on Homelessness. We also convene the statewide collaborative on homelessness and we have long established agency partners. We're also the state leader of really authentically engaging youth and young adults and making sure that their strengths are being elevated and that they're really being positioned to the best outcome.

(00:14:23):

And then working with the Texas Homeless Network to improve our data capacity. So the first objective is around planning. And our goals here, if you can see that this is the beginning part, is language directly from the grant. So the federal government, every YHD pre program really works to embed young people with lived experiences in the planning of every project. This is the biggest barrier that most communities face, right? Because the federal government head requires continuous of care to have young people at the table shaping the program. And what we see when we are working with our YHDP programs and our community partners is that many people start up off strong, but then the ongoing work of maintaining that authentic youth engagement is where folks lag. And then also some people are struggle to even get youth at the table. So the entry points can be really challenging.

(00:15:31):

How do we get young people at the table to plan this programming? And then how do we also maintain that level of authentic youth engagement? Throughout the programming, we often see that people with lived experiences can be tokenized. You're just sitting at the table, you're not really shaping the table. And the work that TNOYS does is to really shift that to make sure that the people who are experiencing the programs are actually at the table informing, advising and working hand in

hand with people to create better services and supports with them. So as I mentioned before, we have our established young Adult Leadership Council, which we have partnered with to actually design this project. And again, that's something we would've done regardless, but it's also critical for this grant application. And so we plan to scale our expertise as a state leader on authentically engaging and supporting youth through training and technical assistance.

(00:16:31):

As I mentioned before, this gap in really learning how to work with youth is the biggest gap that we see, and it's where most continuums of care struggle. We facilitate the statewide collaborative on youth homelessness. And one of our subgroups is providers, specifically the continuums of care and their local partners who are implementing YHDP. And what we hear from them consistently is this inability to maintain these connections with the young people experiencing homelessness. Often there are some equity issues where they're not being paid for their time. There are multiple factors that we can delve into if you have questions, but this is the biggest pain point. And so this is something that TNOYS is the expert on and can come in and really provide support on. So our blueprint of youth engagement is modeled after our engagement roadmap and it really works to move

organizations, providers, communities, through stepping stones on how to authentically engage young people.

(00:17:42):

We have models on how to pay them, how to compensate them for their time, how to have them be part of government roles and leadership and other skills like that. So we plan to do that technical assistance and training, build out those tools, build out critical tools for statewide continuums of care as well as other providers. And then also inform all of those products through statewide listening sessions with youth, young adults, providers, and state agencies. So that's really high level what we're planning to do with the first one. The second goal is around partnerships. So again, this grant is really highlighting the need for cross-system collaboration, bringing critical partners to the table such as K through 12 schools, higher education, juvenile justice, child welfare, employment services. Luckily, this is what TNOYS does, right? We have done this for the 40 years that we've been around.

(00:18:39):

We have long established partnerships with like DFPS. We facilitate the Peaks Camp, which is for young people aging out of care. We've done work to improve their preparation for adult living program. We sit on the PPP and the CARP, so we know how

we work hand in hand with the department there. With the office of the governor, we've been working to improve the capacity to address and respond to commercial sexual exploitation of youth, specifically with housing and homelessness with HHSC. We have a long history of working with PEI programming and CRCG's, TJJD. We're focused on regionalization and capacity and needs assessment for youth exiting JJ Systems with TEA. We did many years of that training and technical assistance with McKinney-Vento liaisons. Many homeless liaisons are part of our network as well as with the Workforce Commission and the Higher Education Coordinating board. We have our ongoing work to address youth disconnected from school and work, and we're part of the Texas Opportunity Youth Network where they also represent. And so we're working to really scale these partnerships and then also amplify the work that the TICH does, our statewide collaborative on youth homelessness, as well as the nonprofit, the Texas Nonprofit Council, which I sit on, and that's an office of the Governor group that works with the Interagency Council.

(00:20:07):

The third is around coordinated entry systems. What we hear from young people often is coordinated entry for them is often flawed. Meeting with getting services and supports is also often very lacking for them, and they're often re-traumatized in the

process where they have to repeat their story multiple times, often extraordinarily traumatic stories. So what we want to do is really coordinate with the continuums of care to, especially those implementing YHDP, which are Travis, Harris, Bexar, McLennan, Tarrant and Dallas and interested in applying for YHDP. And some examples are Balance of State and El Paso to improve that coordinated entry system and really come up with some youth specific assessment tools along with the ongoing evaluation process, a prioritization plan for youth experiencing homelessness, as well as conducting a statewide survey to better understand the needs of youth experiencing homelessness in coordinated entry. The fourth objective is around data.

(00:21:20):

And this is really focused on HMIS and HMIS improvement, which we very willingly admit that we are not the experts on. Luckily we have partners who are the expert on HMIS. So we'll be working to partner with the Texas Homeless Network and the Texas Data Sharing Network to really advance data interoperability, to identify where systems are overlapping, what clients need to have been sharing in this collaborative analysis of each data system. And then also following these analysis, create a roadmap on how to move toward interoperability between these youth serving data systems. We also want to expand the network of youth serving providers that enter data into HMIS and assist

them in working towards a more collaborative care coordination across the state. And then finally, with regard to equity, we are the experts in really having young people at the table. We do all of our research and our work with young people in a youth participatory action research approach where young people are the ones facilitating and actually shaping the study questions.

(00:22:39):

We know that when young people are at the table, not only advising but actually doing the work, doing the research, coming up with those solutions for their lives and their communities, it is exponentially better. And then we'll also work to scale the positive youth development approach to create supportive youth systems where assets and resources are aligned. We're going to be doing a statewide analysis using these two approaches to really assess outcomes. We will be assessing needs, but here we're going to really focus on outcomes and then also develop some tools and products to really support centering young people and centering their equity when they're getting served by programs. So those are the five objectives. I'll pause here because I've been talking and just let Lauren or Eric, if you want to add anything on those five objectives that we talked about. I think you covered everything.

Eric Samuels (00:23:41):

No, I mean I think you were right on when saying that communities that wanted to apply for youth homeless demonstration projects, they haven't been able to do it because it's exactly what Fedora is talking about, not having a youth action board, youth advisory board in place. And that's really hampered our ability as a lead agency in the balance of state to apply for these funds. So we welcome this opportunity and the assistance from TNOYS because we think it can result in better treatment and better service to people, youth experiencing homelessness.

Naomi Cantu (00:24:12):

How many do you think are going to be interested in the hospice making?

Eric Samuels (00:24:15):

Well, I think, well, we've already had communities that are interested. Denton, for example. It's just we haven't been in a place where we can help one of those communities apply. And also the balance of state, not just one community. So there's a whole different animal there. So I think there will be balance of state communities interested, but also I think there's going to be other communities interested. Fedora mentioned El Paso, I'm sure the government jumped at this chance and this really will lead them to applying for those funds.

Fedora Galasso (00:24:46):

We hear from local continuums of care all the time about how do they start a youth board, how do they really get youth involved and youth at the table? So this is definitely in response to needs that we hear all the time. Many of them are attending the statewide collaborative on youth homelessness and maybe are in that thought, we're thinking about it, but it feels overwhelming. So we know that if we can provide those actual tools that it can be improved.

Michael Wilt (00:25:22):

Maybe six years ago, Austin was elected for some sort of youth homelessness demonstration grant.

Fedora Galasso (00:25:27):

We were the first.

Michael Wilt (00:25:28):

Yeah. Yeah. Is this similar to that?

Fedora Galasso (00:25:30):

That's YHDP.

Michael Wilt (00:25:31):

Okay.

Fedora Galasso (00:25:32):

But when I mentioned the six YHDP sites. So Travis was the first.

Michael Wilt (00:25:36):

Okay. So there was a lot of infrastructure that was built out to support youth homelessness at that time. I think they had a youth advisory council that

Eric Samuels (00:25:44):

They did.

Fedora Galasso (00:25:45):

Yeah. Which unfortunately they only have one person left of and when you're supposed to maintain it, so YHDP, so this, so YHDP is the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program. So in Texas we have six counties who have applied for it and gotten it. So Travis was the first, and then it was Bexar County and McLennan. And then after that it was Houston and Tarrant, and then just now Dallas got it. So it rolls out with every year. So every year counties get to apply for it. But so many of our counties, so for example, El Paso has applied for every option but never had a youth board or a youth action. The balance of state, we've

been talking to the balance of state for years. Communities want it. But to have the infrastructure, to have the tools, to have the ability to really, that piece around having youth at the table is critical to every application. And not only having them at the beginning, but throughout the process. And that's often where communities fail.

Michael Wilt (00:26:56):

Okay. And then second question, what does that work with Eric look like on the data side of things? What would it look like?

Fedora Galasso (00:27:04):

Yeah, I'll let Eric.

Eric Samuels (00:27:05):

We're working through that. One of the things that Fedora and Lauren have both talked about is they know that their systems of care already, namely within our state agencies as certain people, youth experiencing homelessness that overlap with our continuum of care homeless response. So what we want to do first and you all step in if I say something wrong or you too, Jim, Jim's on the call, we want to first find out where those data points are matching, say between homeless response systems and the DPS or HHSC or whoever. And then map all that out. So create roadmaps. And then after all of that's done, hopefully begin to

share data so that we can better serve youth experiencing homelessness and create efficiencies in that service. So that's the overall goal. We'll also assist as needed to help agencies who don't already use HMIS to begin using HMIS. We'll follow the lead of TNOYS on that and do what we can to help out. So yeah, that's the goal.

Lauren Rose (00:28:19):

And I think what I would add to that is talking to providers across different youth serving systems, whether it's juvenile justice or housing and homelessness services, whatever. What we often hear is a need to identify that a youth has come through their door and need of services, knowing where else they're already getting them, where they've already been and what they qualify for. So housing and homelessness services providers spending a lot of time before they learn that someone's aged out of care, so they are eligible for different resources or reports or that they're currently involved in the juvenile system and are getting certain services that they don't need to be duplicating. And so I think the ideal is to move towards a place where we can identify that they are multi-system involved more quickly. That's not going to happen overnight, but how can we get to that path of being able to identify multi-system involvement closer to real time,

Eric Samuels (00:29:14):

Which would only strengthen a case manager's ability to help that youth or that household because they would have all that information at their fingertips. And what would really be great is in theory down the road that youth will not have to tell that story that's so traumatic over and over and over again because that information will go with 'em. So that'd be huge for that person that's in this situation, but also for us providing service to those folks.

Fedora Galasso (00:29:46):

And even at the high level, we were on office of the governor of work group on commercial sexual exploitation. Even something like DFPS uses an assessment called a cans, and then TJJD uses an assessment call the cans, but it's different. And those two things don't talk to each other, right? Those two systems. So it's like you have a youth doing constant assessments and then also agencies who should be able to share data super easily are not. So just even some of those, what's a quicker way to help with some of that data sharing along with that roadmap to identify some of those issues and that agencies are facing as well.

Lauren Rose (00:30:37):

And then I think also just getting that baseline understanding of who the young people experiencing homelessness are and where could we have prevented it because how many of them truly were previously in care in the justice system or whatever it may be. And just getting that better understanding, not easily accessible information right now.

Fedora Galasso (00:30:54):

And we worked with homeless liaisons or we work with them, and this is something that we hear all the time from homeless liaisons is like they don't know who this young person is getting services from and who's in the community that can provide that support. So just there's a lot of lack of information that many people, that many service providers, both agency as well as local providers just need access to that better data.

Desiree Viramontes (00:31:28):

So I was a homeless liaison for seven years, but there's a lack of access across the state because you've got some grants that go through federally through education, but there's only 87 sub-grants out of 1,247 school districts. Similarly with the youth programs for the housing, it gets funded by county. So then only the students that are within that county are able to access services. You have PAR research and data, how can that be

leveraged to impact the entire state? So every student that's experiencing homelessness outside of the county that they're living in can have improved outcomes.

Fedora Galasso (00:32:06):

Well, that's our goal. Yeah.

Desiree Viramontes (00:32:08):

How are you going to do that? How is the data and the research going to come together? How's that disseminated?

Fedora Galasso (00:32:13):

Yeah, I think at this point it's really building out that roadmap so that we can actually seek change. Because a lot of that is kind of huge system changes, but at this point we still don't even know what we don't know around some of the data gaps and things like that. But go ahead, Eric.

Eric Samuels (00:32:33):

I was just going to say that we are going to have to do that. So I don't even know that acronym PAR.

Desiree Viramontes (00:32:39):

It's a participatory action research. So I'm a researcher. Yeah,

Eric Samuels (00:32:43):

Well, so we're going to have learn, we have to learn about things we don't know and then learn how that data is collected. And I should say this, we all understand that these data sharing agreements are not easy to develop, and especially with state agencies, we know it's going to require a lot of work. So we're not going into this with this view that, oh, this is going to be easy. We'll start sharing data. That's why there is going to be that lead up to build up that roadmap using school district data. I'm not sure how that will benefit.

Desiree Viramontes (00:33:19):

I mean the data that you're collecting and the research you're collecting, how is that going to be disseminated so that it helps all students in the state? That's my question.

Fedora Galasso (00:33:28):

Are you more talking about this one focus, the white part and stuff like that? Got it. I think when you said data, I think we were going back to that's pure data number stuff that we were thinking about, talking about this qualitative research it. So TNOYS uses the youth participatory action model in every research project that we do. We've done listening and learning with youth across the state for we do at minimum a hundred youth every year. We embed that in everything that we do in trainings,

technical assistance, recommendations that we may make to agencies and legislators, any education that we do. So it would be embedded throughout our work. And this specific one focused on equity is developing a training, a cultural competency program for providers and state agencies that really centers the equity of youth experiencing homelessness. And so we have a six session training program that's really focused on thinking about the connections of a youth experiencing JJ or neurodivergency or commercial sexual exploitation and how those are intersections and how that really can affect how a young person shows up in services and supports and planning really across the gamut. Does that make sense? Okay, awesome.

Lauren Rose (00:35:07):

We generally publish like that. So we just released late last year a report from listening to youth and providers who've experienced sexual exploitation and the housing and homelessness services providers who serve them. So that's on the website. And then we presented that collaborative

Desiree Viramontes (00:35:29):

Its a mixed method opportunity that you guys have with the quantitative data that's being collected that you guys talked about at the last meeting. And this PAR stuff that you have could be leveraged to help. For instance, giving that

information to all homeless liaisons would then you're impacting every single student that's enrolled to have access to that. You see what I'm saying?

Fedora Galasso (00:35:49):

Yeah. So we used to run the McKinney-Vento conference for many years, and so we embedded all of that training in there. But definitely developing those tools and products are a part of this kind of overarching grant. And so for example, when we partnered with the Department of Family and Protective Services to update their preparation for adult living program, we used YPAR to actually work to develop their actual training protocol that they use with youth transitioning out of foster care. So we have a long history of really embedding what we're learning into the products.

Eric Samuels (00:36:32):

To your point with the quantitative data too, and we haven't even talked about this, we could look at that data to assess maybe how the coordinated entry system is working. So for example, our youth are having to wait longer than other folks for permanent housing. If they are, then why? What should we do to change that? Or should we change that or should they

Desiree Viramontes (00:36:53):

And are there grants that are going through to these counties actually effective?

Eric Samuels (00:36:57):

Yeah, you would have

Desiree Viramontes (00:36:58):

Access to knowing that.

Eric Samuels (00:37:00):

Yeah, that we could get down to that. Ultimately, we wouldn't be the ones to decide that, but we could make recommendations for sure.

Desiree Viramontes (00:37:09):

It's all possibility.

Eric Samuels (00:37:11):

No, it's exciting.

Naomi Cantu (00:37:14):

I was going to bring it back down to some more basic information. What is this grant due?

Fedora Galasso (00:37:20):

So it's due February 10th,

Naomi Cantu (00:37:23):

I think. Okay. And how much you applied for?

Fedora Galasso (00:37:26):

So we can apply for up to 2 million and it's a 30 month grant. At this point. We are still fine tuning it, but it will be 1.5 to 2 million. I think we are going to go for the full amount because the big needs around the data and stuff like that. Yeah.

Naomi Cantu (00:37:47):

And then the grant is goal is to fund all of these objectives?

Fedora Galasso (00:37:52):

Correct.

Naomi Cantu (00:37:54):

Okay. And then I did hear about the demonstration program. So youth demonstration programs. Is one of the goals in here overlapping with the demonstration programs, like you're going to help El Paso apply or what would that be under?

Fedora Galasso (00:38:07):

No, it would be part of the first one around planning of really building out a community's ability to work with youth since that's so critical to the YHGP program. But really everything that we're going to do, if we can improve the coordinated entry system and the data gaps and really make sure that the local communities have partnerships that are really on board and ready to partner with them. For YHDP, it would every community's ability to be a viable competitor for this.

Naomi Cantu (00:38:41):

Okay. And is this the first time it's available?

Fedora Galasso (00:38:45):

This specific grant? Yeah, because they took funding from YHDP and put it in this grant because they wanted to really focus on systems improvement.

Eric Samuels (00:38:58):

I'll say also, even if this doesn't result in a community receiving one of those YHDP grants, it still can have a really positive impact through improving coordinated entry in other ways, especially if we get that lived experience involvement in our planning and our grants going forward.

Jeremy Stremmler (00:39:23):

Just a reminder, as we move forward the meeting to state your name, so we keep track of the people talking for the record as we, so when you read it later, it makes sense.

Naomi Cantu (00:39:35):

Thanks Jeremy. Alright.

Fedora Galasso (00:39:41):

Are there any questions from folks on the phone?

Marcus Butler (00:39:47):

Hey, this is Marcus Butler with the Texas Juvenile Justice Department. A lot of what you were talking about describing, it sounds purely familiar to the SIM mapping efforts that are going on at HHSC. I mean the SIM mapping means more towards the lines of juvenile justice involved youth, but have you come across any of the mapping groups throughout the state that are collecting a lot of data in regards to juvenile justice population?

Naomi Cantu (00:40:18):

What does that stand for?

Marcus Butler (00:40:20):

SIM mapping Sequential intercept model. Sequential intercept model. Yeah, a lot of what you were describing they're doing.

There's been a couple of groups like in the central region, there's one going on in Lubbock. There's one that's occurred down in Houston, one in the Dallas Fort Worth area, and they're doing a lot of the work that you're describing except it's more on the juvenile justice side. And they may be a good information point for you guys because they're collecting a lot of data, a lot of information.

Eric Samuels (00:40:57):

Yeah. Over at HHSC.

Fedora Galasso (00:41:00):

Yeah. Yes. We are actually working with TJJD. We just, we're still waiting to hear though, with TJJD to do kind of some work around systems improvement mapping for youth experiencing homelessness. But we did,

Lauren Rose (00:41:20):

I was going to say we have participated in a couple of those local SIM mapping meetings, I guess if you would call it, but also I think Fedora alluded to it, have a proposal out with TJJD and Meadows that would be pulling together the results of most of those mappings to help with some of the legislative requirements to flesh that out that TJJD got this year. So we

were part of those discussions at the state level and a couple of the community level discussions.

Fedora Galasso (00:41:53):

We went to the North Texas one and I know that there's, so we've been involved as we can be,

Lauren Rose (00:42:03):

But agreed. I think there's a lot of good overlap here

Fedora Galasso (00:42:05):

And I think that's part of the whole data interoperability of, there's a lot of data out there and the thing is, it's the same young person. It's the same young person who's exiting foster care, who's maybe disconnected from school or work, who exited the juvenile justice system, who is not getting their mental health needs, who's not housed. And so how do we really create some synergy around these data systems so we understand the needs of that one person as they jump from system to system. Awesome. Well, with that, unless there's another question on the phone.

(00:42:50):

So what we are asking is for a letter of support from the TICH for our application. We also are asking for member agencies to,

as we move forward with our projects, to participate in survey responses or listening and learning activities, encourage your colleagues to participate if you can. Again, we have lots of relationships with various state agencies and we'll be talking with them specifically so you're not holding your agency accountable for this support right now. And then also just stay informed about the project. And then also wanted to lift up that our statewide collaborative on youth homelessness meeting is coming up on Tuesday, February 6th. Then we would love for folks to participate. Many of you do, but I think the voting item is the approving of the letter of support.

Naomi Cantu (00:43:48):

Yes. So there's a letter of support on the agenda item. I see that you have drafted a possible letter. Is that

Fedora Galasso (00:44:02):

Super basic. Just so that you could have something to respond to.

Naomi Cantu (00:44:09):

I think what we were thinking about doing was having a voting resolution about support for the grant from the TICH, and then writing that. We did that in the minutes rather than the letter per se. That's what would probably be easiest, especially to get

it ready by February 10th. Okay. So given the proposal, are there any motions to support the grant applications by the TICH for the Youth Homeless Assistant Improvement grant?

Brooke Boston (00:45:03):

This is Brooke on the phone and I moved to approve the grant application to support it.

Naomi Cantu (00:45:11):

Alright, we have a motion.

Desiree Viramontes (00:45:13):

All second.

Naomi Cantu (00:45:15):

Great. Desiree seconds. All in favor, please say aye.

All Board Members (00:45:21):

Aye.

Naomi Cantu (00:45:23):

All opposing, same sign. Alright, so we did approve support. The TICH approves support of that grant application. We can get documentation that that was done at this meeting with quorum. And then hopefully that will support your,

Fedora Galasso (00:45:40):

Yeah, I think that's perfect.

Naomi Cantu (00:45:42):

February. Awesome. Great. Well thanks everyone.

Fedora Galasso (00:45:45):

Yeah, thank you. Appreciate you..

Naomi Cantu (00:45:46):

I thought that was really great discussion and hopefully all those weighty objectives move forward. All right. We have an update from Texas Homeless Network, Eric and Anya.

Eric Samuels (00:46:04):

Yeah, Anya. And I think she might've just joined, and I can really summarize this. You have this sheet in front of you so I don't need to go over everything line by line, but just wanted to point out a few things about what our team has been doing. As you know, Texas Homeless Network, I'm sorry, Eric Samuels, Texas Homeless Network, Texas Homeless Network works on two levels. We're the lead agency for the balance of state continuum of Care, which covers 215 counties. A lot of those counties, rural, some suburban, we help those counties help agencies in those

counties apply for funding through HUD's Homeless Assistance Grant or the HUD Continuum of Care grant. And you can see last fall actually right around our conference time, which made things really tough for our team that was working on that and working on the conference. Jim's on the line. He's shaking his head yes, I'm sure. They helped communities submit 27 applications. Oh, sorry, we can pass these around as needed. Everybody else has one.

(00:47:18):

Eight of those were for new funding for \$3.2 million. And then in total, well, and then we also applied for over 13 million in renewal funding. And overall there was 18 million applied for. If you're adding all those up and you're saying why does it not add up that way? It's because there were other applications submitted on behalf of THN for the dollars required for us to do a planning part of this work, collect data through HMIS and then also through our supportive services only coordinated entry project. So all of that together adds up to 8.2 million and it's huge. When I first submitted an application on behalf of the Balance of State in 2006, we applied for, or we applied for, actually we applied for many millions, but we received 250,000. So it's gone from that to 18.2 million. So they've just done a lot of work and I think I need to acknowledge that. If there's

anything else that you want to say, Jim, you can pop in and say it.

(00:48:30):

I don't want to put him on the spot. Okay. Next I wanted to just thank TDHCA. And I actually thought I had sent a letter out to you, Brooke and Bobby about this, but I've noticed it was in my outbox or in my draft folder this morning, so I haven't sent this, but I wanted to thank you all for working with us to help us administer the emergency housing voucher program across many of the balance of state communities. It was a huge success. I think you can see that 672 households were referred and that was referred to us through TDHCA and in total, THN received 1900 applications or referrals. And ultimately we have 393, well, actually it's going to end up being about 398 households through this program for, well now 918 individuals with that number will climb with those additional households.

(00:49:39):

We worked really closely with DCFD on this, so a lot of those folks are victims of domestic violence that were in shelters and then could move to housing. There were also a lot of veterans in this group and others, and you can see that the top counties we serve were Denton, Galveston, Victoria, and Lubbock. That kind of stands a reason since a lot of those counties are some of the

bigger ones in the balance of state. There were a few other things. I know we received interest from just about every county in the balance of state that we were covering with this project. And Jenny may have to correct me on this, but I think we were able to work with 90 people in 90 different counties for housing. Is that correct?

Jim (no last name given) (00:50:31):

Yeah, that's correct. Of those 393 families, they represent approximately 90 counties across the state.

Eric Samuels (00:50:39):

So that's huge. I mean, and that's just within the balance of state. Of course, in other areas that are major metro areas, they house other folks too. So yeah, TDHCA worked a little bit outside the box working with us on this project and we appreciate that, that well, just that flexibility from the folks that we work with on that. And we hope that they think as much of a success as we think it is. We would love to have more funding to continue to do this. Unfortunately, that funding is going away, but we're very happy that we were able to accomplish this and our team did an amazing job. Just real quick.

Brooke Boston (00:51:26):

Yes, this is Brooke. I just want to echo, we loved the partnership. We thought it was super effective and we can't thank THN enough for helping make it successful.

Eric Samuels (00:51:39):

Yeah, I mean for those of who don't know, the way we operated this, it doesn't typically operate this way. So I was able to work with Brooke and Bobby and we made it work and I think it paid off, so we would love to do more of it.

Naomi Cantu (00:51:56):

And to clarify, the funding, new funding is going away, but these people will stay housed. They

Eric Samuels (00:52:03):

Oh yeah, yeah. I'm sorry. Yeah, yeah. Yes. I'm glad you pointed that out. Yeah, we didn't house these folks and then say, no, your housing is gone. This funding will continue. I just wish we could bring more households into this program because as you can see, we had an overwhelming response.

Naomi Cantu (00:52:20):

And did you say you had 1900 referrals?

Eric Samuels (00:52:22):

That's what,

Naomi Cantu (00:52:24):

Oh, but only 672 met the criteria.

Eric Samuels (00:52:27):

Actually, Jim was, he was trying to straighten me out on this.

Yeah,

Jim (no last name given) (00:52:31):

That's correct. Yeah, that's correct, Naomi. We received approximately 1900 referrals when we would open our referral portal. We opened it about six times between late 2021 and August of 2023. Of those 1900, there are duplicates there. There are folks that would apply multiple times, but the 672 represent the households that we were able to verify and document their homelessness status or at risk status or any other status as a survivor or what have you. And then of those 672 that were referred to TDHCA, some of them did not convert to voucher issuances for a variety of reasons. Generally, they would either lose contact or generally lose contact, and it was conducted virtually. So it's hard to maintain contact with households in Bexar County, for example. But I hope that answers your question as far as the apps that we received.

Naomi Cantu (00:53:44):

That's great, thank you.

Eric Samuels (00:53:48):

Okay. The other part of what we do working with the state is statewide initiatives. The last time we were meeting was at our conference last fall. I just wanted to report that. That's the biggest conference. We've had 600 a registrants, speakers, sponsors, others attended that meeting. Our next meeting, our next conference is this September 11th through the 13th at the Houston Omni Galleria. So if you can join us, that'd be great. Hopefully we'll have an interagency council meeting there. I think that is the plan. And if you work at a state agency and you need some time to maybe present on some new programs you have, this could be a good opportunity. Of course, we'll continue to work with HHSC to provide a pre-conference training for the workers across the state.

(00:54:44):

So that was a huge success. I always like to point this out, we are more and more getting people asking us for help. We're not a direct service agency. Well, with the exception of the emergency housing voucher program, which kind of went outside of our scope. But despite that, we were getting calls. I'm getting three calls a day now. I wasn't getting calls before at all. We

had someone else on staff that was getting all of our calls, but now we're just getting more and more calls for help. And this past year you can see how many people called for help and were followed up on. These weren't where there's some folks that would leave us numbers, we wouldn't get back, we couldn't get in touch with them. It's just overwhelming the amount of help that's being requested. So if they're getting to us, that's after they've already called everybody else. So I just think it's good to point this out because there's still a huge need.

Michael Wilt (00:55:44):

Eric, how do you know how they're getting to you?

Eric Samuels (00:55:49):

I don't know how they're getting to us. Well, I think some of them are calling 211 going through the entire list of numbers they get. And I think at the end of that list they get our number.

Michael Wilt (00:56:01):

Could be as simple as them just searching. And then you come up high?

Eric Samuels (00:56:05):

Yeah, I don't know how my name in particular,

Michael Wilt (00:56:08):

Your name?

Naomi Cantu (00:56:09):

They're calling you!

Eric Samuels (00:56:10):

For a long time whenever your first starting the balance of state, people would put my card up in the lobby of all these service agencies. So I got a lot of calls, but they quit doing that. So somehow since this new year has started, they're getting my name, my email, and calling me. And I mean, they're calling people like Jim and others on staff too. It's not just me. We don't know exactly how that's working. We would love to work with the state to streamline that information referral process and we're open to doing that. So we'd love to do that if we can. Anyway, the need is great out there.

Naomi Cantu (00:56:53):

And Jeremy just shared with me that, I mean, we do get calls directly and we

Jeremy Stremmler (00:57:00):

And emails, we of course have a system set up for that, but this past this year, we've received over 8,000 requests for assistance via phone and email that the housing resource center handles. But yeah, and that's just been increasing over time.

Eric Samuels (00:57:22):

We get 'em too, but not that volume. And there is HSSC funded Homeless Housing hotline. So we are trying to work with the entity that is working with the, creating the two in one type system. I think it can be improved. So we would love to do that. So I'm just putting that out there publicly on record. We could help with that. TNOYS could help with that, TVC could help with that. So we would love to do that.

(00:57:58):

So anyway, so just a quick report with our Texas Homeless Data Sharing Network. I'm going to hand it off to Anya after this, but we actually are able to continue this project through this year because of Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation. They have generously funded us for the coming year. We are going to be searching for funding for 2025 and beyond though, so it's like year to year. But that's the way it is with nonprofits a lot. We've already seen over 74,000 Texans that have fallen into homelessness through really the first three quarters of this year. Well, four quarters for some of the areas that are

reporting. Anya will go into this a little bit more, but you can see the two research requests that we've also received recently. And Anya, if you're ready, I'll let you go into it to finish up the report about the data sharing network.

Anya Taylor (00:58:58):

Yeah, thanks so much Eric. And hello everyone. Sorry I can't be there in person to see your faces, but I'm happy to join over the phone. And I am very excited to continue this important work and collaborate with our COC partners to grow and expand the data sharing network over the course of this next year and hopefully beyond. And as Eric mentioned, we are extremely grateful for the generous support of TSAHC for believing in the work that we are doing and providing the necessary support for us to continue this work across the state. As far as general updates for the data sharing network, we did just want to report out some numbers that we have as of now on the state of homelessness in Texas. You may be familiar at this point with our data dashboard, which is a part of the materials for today's call. We actually ran this report in our system yesterday and it showed us that as of yesterday, there was approximately 74,000 Texans that fell into homelessness in 2023.

(01:00:22):

I did just want to point out that right now we are still capturing data from four of our nine participating COCs for that final quarter of 2023. So this would be the month of October through the end of December. And in addition, I know I say this when I present on these numbers, but our data warehouse is not inclusive of HMIS data from the San Antonio COC or the Wichita Falls, COC as they are not currently participating in this project. And so when we state that 74,000 Texans fell into homelessness last year, I just want to make those two caveats and for us to recognize this as a minimum count of Texans experiencing homelessness, I'm hoping to have our data dashboard updated to show the entirety of 2023 within the next week or so. So we will be sure to report out final numbers at our next TICH meeting. But in the meantime, you may just want to, if you use this as a resource or if you're interested in learning more, to pop over to our public facing dashboard, which will be updated to reflect the complete picture for 2023 very soon.

(01:01:56):

In addition to this report and sharing some, like a snapshot of the state of homelessness in Texas, we wanted to just kind of share and report out some of the research requests we have received and the partners external agencies that we are working with to show that not only is this project of value to our COC partners across the state, but this data that we store in our

data warehouse adds value to other entities that are working to serve the unhoused population. And so we are very proud of these partnerships. You can see here on the report that one of the partners we are working with is a collaborative group comprised of the access to Justice lab at Harvard Law School, the University of Houston Law Center, and a group called Connective. And for this particular project, it's an upstream eviction prevention pilot program. Essentially, it is a study to determine whether or not those receiving housing related know your rights information via text remains more housing secure than those not receiving such information.

(01:03:19):

So essentially the idea behind this pilot project is to raise awareness of legal services available to those facing formal or informal eviction, and to keep more Texans housed is the goal. So for this particular pilot project, the aim is to enroll a hundred unduplicated clients for research purposes. And as part of this study to date, we have received 15 clients that have been identified to participate in this study. And out of these 15 clients that we receive, four were identified as matches in our data warehouse. And so on those four individuals, we were able to report back some information we had in the system around these clients for the purpose of this pilot project. Enrollment, of course, is ongoing, and so we anticipate to continue

receiving additional information on clients who have been enrolled in the program and will continue to work to identify matches for the purpose of this study.

(01:04:34):

And then secondly, we are also working in collaboration with the City of Houston Mayor's Office of Public Safety and Homeland Security. We received a research request from this agency towards the end of last year, and essentially the mayor's office in Houston is currently working to build a tool that emergency managers can use to make better data-driven and more inclusive decisions during disasters. This is essentially an emergency management tool, and so the data that we have agreed to share out from our data warehouse will serve as another GIS layer, which will be incorporated into the tool that is currently being built and will hopefully work to inform preparedness and response activities within a 13 county geographic region in the area of Houston. And so where we are right now with this partnership is that we actually received a list of zip codes from that 13 county region in December of 2023. And we are now working with our data warehouse vendor, green River, on pulling a report that will generate information on clients who have received services at a site location in one of the identified zip codes. This is also a partnership that is ongoing for research purposes. So just kind of an idea into the types of

partners we collaborate with on this project. And it also hopefully can give you an idea of the work that we are able to continue now that we have secured funding for 2024.

Naomi Cantu (01:06:35):

All right. That was very interesting.

Jeremy Stremmler (01:06:38):

So that was Anya Taylor for THN and Anya, you're the overseer of the THDSN, at THN

Anya Taylor (01:06:47):

Along with Eric, correct? I serve as the project manager for the THDSN at THN, yes.

Jeremy Stremmler (01:06:52):

Thank you. Yeah, thank

Naomi Cantu (01:06:54):

You. And so for the Upstate Eviction Prevention pilot program, those 15 clients received a text about resources. Is that the idea?

Eric Samuels (01:07:02):

Well, there were, and Anya, you can jump in before if you need, there were thousands of people that received these texts, but they pulled together a representative sample from those thousands to identify. They really were trying to identify how common it would be for someone to fall into homelessness or become evicted. I'm sorry, after receiving these texts. So they had a smaller group that was their representative sample.

Naomi Cantu (01:07:28):

So they sent all these texts and then they checked to see if they were at HMIS after that?

Eric Samuels (01:07:34):

Yeah.

Naomi Cantu (01:07:35):

Oh, I see.

Eric Samuels (01:07:36):

So if they showed up in our system, that means that did that, those informative texts did not do what they were supposed to do. But as you can see, it's a very low rate that a bad percentage

Naomi Cantu (01:07:51):

If they actually all register and then how is the city? Because there's a very strong COC in Houston, but they're coming to you for the emergency.

Eric Samuels (01:08:05):

Well, so we cover that entire 13 county region that COC only covers three of those counties.

Naomi Cantu (01:08:11):

I see.

Eric Samuels (01:08:12):

Yeah. And that COC we work very closely with. They're actually, they were the very first COC to work with us on this.

Naomi Cantu (01:08:19):

Okay, great. Any other questions for Eric or Anya? All right. And with that we can do updates from member agencies First we have Rosy.

Rosy Falcon (01:08:38):

Thank you. And I made some handouts for everybody for our program, so I'm not going to go through all of them, but I do want to highlight and point out a few things. So the first handout covers all of the funding that TDHCA administers on a

regular basis. So this dollar amounts that you'll see here are only our main funding sources, which is our ending homelessness fund, HHSP ESG. The allocation amounts that you see on here don't quite match up or line up with allocations on the website because this is a compilation of everything we have active right now. So you're looking at about three fiscal years for HHSP and I believe four for ESG.

(01:09:25):

I think it's like 19 through 23 is the dollars that you're looking at. The dollars that you'll see on the funding breakdown is only the committed funds. We do have a small pool of funds because we're just finishing closing out our 22 funding cycle. So that's not indicated here, whether on expended or for services provided because we're closing it out and then we will shortly have a small amount of money to reallocate. But we are going to wait a little bit as you'll see next that we're still in the closeout spending for CV. Overall though, most of our funding on a regular basis now that CARES is towards the end is coming from ESG. 89% of our allocation typically is, or the majority of our allocations are typically from ESG funds.

(01:10:17):

We have spent, oh, and this timeframe you're looking at is the state of fiscal year. So it's anything from September 1st to now

with reporting being as accurate as up in November, since we still have some December reporting trickling and through the end of the month. So those figures that you'll see on here are, or at least that's snapshot only September, October, November. So in total we've expended about 5.2 million out of our committed 21.5 million. And that's all inclusive of the state of federal funding. And with that we've helped close to 15,000 people. On our next page you'll see a breakdown of, and I think for some of you it's behind that first page, you'll see the breakdown of the funding by category on these, you'll have two different data points because our EH and HHSP funds are state funded and they work a little bit different.

(01:11:12):

They're a little bit more flexible So as you can see here, the majority of the funds are used for case management or some sort of salary. And those the nine major cities for HHSB and EH is those same nine plus one plus Amarillo, which is our ESG provider. They use that to supplement other programs. So the case management needs for other rapid rehousing programs, some that might cover some COP programs, things like that are being paid out of our state funding. So people served oftentimes will be, or household serves will be lower for this grant only because we cover the overhead for a lot of the other services. Our ESG components, I do want to bring much to one mistake. The

admin amount and the emergency shelter amount were transposed. So we did not spend 45% on administration. We spent at 2% overall. And again, that's from that snapshot of 2019 funds up to 2023 funds. So those two should be mixed. I do apologize for that on there. And that's all I had for our regular funding. I don't know if y'all have any questions before we move on to our CARES. We're ending one cycle and starting another. So the numbers are a little bit lower for this quarter than you'll see for the next stitch meeting, but you will see them combined for homeless programs. This most of our sub-recipients do leverage funding.

Eric Samuels (01:12:51):

So just to clarify, Eric Samuels Texas Home Network, that small slice is the administration?

Rosy Falcon (01:12:57):

That's correct, yeah.

Eric Samuels (01:12:58):

Okay. The bigger one is Okay. Yes, that makes sense. The 2%

Rosy Falcon (01:13:01):

The 2% is the administration and I'll send you some corrected ones so we can send you all, we do not spend,

Eric Samuels (01:13:11):

The blues are very close together so I can see,

Rosy Falcon (01:13:14):

Yeah, when I was going over it today I was like, we do not spend is not, that is not our luxury. You can see too, most of our ESG funds right now are going to funding shelters with CARES being ending and the amount of money that we have had for the past few years ending, we do expect there might be a shift on that. And then we also have various allocations coming in together. So once we go back to our normal allocation and the older money is spent down, we'll see if that changes more into potentially homeless prevention, rapid rehousing.

(01:13:58):

Okay. So our CARES program, so our CARES program right now is simultaneously in close up mode and spending mode still. We've got, as I think yesterday, today we might have a little bit more. As of yesterday we had six active contracts for CARES. We have met our goal for our initial allocation. So initially we were provided about 97.3 million. I believe for the first and second allocations we have spent all of that. We have expended 98.9 million of the 103.6 million, which included the 5.8 that we were reallocated. So Natalie Burtzos, which is our CARES

administrator, is busy closing out and making sure we have everything situated, but also providing a lot of technical assistance to our CARES remaining care sub recipients to spend their money. We do have a little bit of funds that have been returned. So we are working in this week to distribute 'em. I'm very happy to say Natalie has identified already about four other agencies that are willing to take a big chunk of money of that reallocated money. So based on our projections and our spending, we are still in line to fully expend by June, 2024, but it'll be a busy season for the next five months.

Naomi Cantu (01:15:33):

That looks great. And you can definitely tell the difference between CARES and the annual in that shelter is only 15%,

Rosy Falcon (01:15:44):

Annual is 44. Now one of the bigger things why we're hoping that the shift will kind of carry through annual, but this did give us the luxury of a lot of waivers. So now that FMR is not going to be waived anymore, went to waivers are done, we'll see how that impacts and if you are able to keep those percentages where shelter isn't necessarily the biggest funded component of it. Overall, since the inception of the CARES program, our sub-recipients have helped over a hundred thousand people so far. And again, that's the same thing is through November reporting,

but in this case is through, I believe we really began late 2020, early 2021 with actually expenditures. So in that term, those are the people that have been helped with these things.

Naomi Cantu (01:16:41):

Any questions on CARES? And that's great news you're thinking about, you're able to fully expense and hopefully pass.

Rosy Falcon (01:16:51):

Yeah, so far if we maintain our rate of expenditures as we have are going to cut it really close. But we're, we're going to spend everything. As long as money doesn't sit on our side, there's a good chance for spending it. And our CARES team, which is actually now because it's ending, it's Natalie. Natalie is dredging through and taking money and giving money.

Eric Samuels (01:17:15):

Alone. The CARES team. Wow.

Naomi Cantu (01:17:18):

Yes. Our last member joined our multifamily team, so we're very happy for her. But yes, it's, Natalie is our CARES team

Eric Samuels (01:17:32):

Man in 2020 when all this money was coming out and we were determining, I'm sorry, Eric, Samuels,, all this money that was coming out, it looked really daunting and I couldn't have imagined being here in 2024 talking about how it's being spent down

Rosy Falcon (01:17:51):

Right. The last four, the last 4,000,000 of the reallocated. I know the team did a great job with the allocation that we had originally. We did meet that before the HUD deadline, so that's a great accomplishment for them. Okay. Well that's all I had for our regular and pandemic programs. I do have another from a program that is kind of ending to a new pilot program that we received from the last legislature. So this is our transitional housing pilot program for veterans. This allocation is not an additional allocation, although it is a new program. The funding was taken from the HHSP allocation, so \$800,000 for the biennium was marked for this very unique, very exciting because it is quite flexible program to help our veterans that are homeless or it could be at risk of homelessness. The applicants will be able to define or to provide a homeless definition. So we did request that the board allow us to waive the homeless definition that we have on our statute so that this can open up a little bit more for the funds.

(01:19:15):

Each of them we are able to use \$400,000 for four distinct areas in the state to run this program, this pilot program, we did a little bit of research and we have met a lot with the Texas Veterans Commission with Anthony and Amber. That helped us a lot early fall to kind of put all the pieces together, get input because of the amount of funds and the short timeframe we do all of this money has to be up and spent no later than August 31st, 2025. We decided it was better to recommend certain entities that are able to take the money and either create a program quickly because they have the framework to do this or be able to use this money as a supplement because it is \$400,000 per year for four areas. So you're looking at a hundred thousand dollars per area. The four areas that we identified based on the pit count that was available at the time, so it was the 2022, we identified the city of Houston, city of Dallas, the city of Austin, and the city of San Antonio.

(01:20:37):

So with all of these meetings that we had and research that we provided, we did identify four or three entities to be able to take this money and provide the services for the veterans. And those are, it's US vets for the city of Houston. And I should say before I continue on, these are the entities that we have reached out to because they have established peer-to-peer

support networks that provide some sort of housing or transitional housing. They have literacy programs or they have the ability to provide counseling, whether it's mental financial education, which is all that is included as eligible activities and what this money was earmarked for. And so for that it was US bets for City of Houston and City of Dallas and city of San Antonio. We are reaching out to American GI Forum and in Austin we did reach out to Caritas.

(01:21:36):

So far we have gotten commitments to apply from US vets in American GI Forum. We are still meeting and working with Caritas and also all the other agencies to make sure we all understand the deliverables and everybody is set up appropriately. So we do hope to have something to the board by March 9th as far as the recommendation for award. But this is, it still has to go to our board. It still has to go through the previous participation process and kind of all of that. These are just the entities that after a meeting with Amber, meeting with Anthony, meeting with them, we've kind of, we reached the point where they might be interested and we're working through applications through the previous participation process. So if for any reason that any of these don't, we do have additional agencies that have the framework that we could reach out to, but we we're waiting to see what the situation is with these agencies.

Naomi Cantu (01:22:41):

Well that seems very speedy to me too. That's great. Great to hear. Any questions? Any questions? Okay, well thank you Rosie. Appreciate it. Andre, are you still on the phone?

Andre Adams (01:23:02):

Yes, I am. Can you hear me?

Naomi Cantu (01:23:04):

Yes, we can. What is the update for emergency housing vouchers?

Andre Adams (01:23:09):

Okay, thank you. Andre Adams, Section 8 program. So instead of just giving just a quick update on the EHV that I got a little second just to go over a little information, just kind of wanted to share a little bit about the EHV program doing some of my own little research. So basically this EHV program is probably the first special purpose voucher programs within HUD that concentrated on homelessness other than just the Veterans Bash vouchers, family unification vouchers, foster youth initiatives, mainstream vouchers, non elderly and stability vouchers. These were specific just for the homelessness. And what we discovered is this program is leasing at a fast rate faster than any other of the housing voucher programs. And it's partly, I would've to

say definitely due to the unique collaboration between the housing authorities and homeless providers as well as the victim service organizations.

(01:24:13):

This has taught me a lot as well, just administering just the regular Section 8 vouchers. Usually the clientele, you're just basically dealing with the family, the voucher holder, and then the PHA. But with the EHV, I saw a different set of skills that were being used just even amongst staff. Were collaborating with our COC partners that has been eyeopening and has helped each one of us just in working with our EHV voucher holders as well as our regular Section 8 programs. So these vouchers are of course the part of the eligibility requirements. They have to be homeless, homelessness, victim services organizations that help out with those that are fleeing, attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking, and those that are even at high risk of homelessness. So we had a little bit of each one of these and our households that we're working with.

(01:25:19):

And like I said, this has been a tremendous part of working with them because we're able to try new things that were not being done previously for the Section 8 program that, like I said,

we've learned a lot even from our partners just with working with them. So the EHV program, the flexibility and new resources have helped individuals with the higher barriers, those that are unable to secure housing just because of the background. These administrative fees that HUD has allowed the administrators to pay for costs to help the individual retain housing and the service have been instrumental for the owner. Landlord incentives, security deposits, utility assistance, housing search assistance, and even assistance for furniture and household goods.

(01:26:18):

Something that I've never thought about until this program. So just having a voucher itself doesn't really, that's only part of it. Being able to put something in the home where the applicant wants to come home to has been instrumental in itself. We've heard different voucher holders have contacted us and it's been pretty emotional just on the end. So it's good for the caseworkers or regional coordinators to be able to hear those because this incentivized them to continue that drive if they're doing work with the families. As of today, Texas has administered close to 4,500 vouchers for the EHV program. TDHCA was awarded 798 vouchers and as of today, we have assisted 669 families. That number is climbing. We have a little ways to go. We're about 84%. Like I said, we have a little more ways to go,

a little ways to go as far as those that are searching, but we're working on our last remaining, it's like a hundred and twenty, a hundred twenty two families that are out searching for units at this time. And I feel very comfortable that we will meet that goal. We will exceed it for our overall lease up. We will probably go over about 9% of our award.

Naomi Cantu (01:27:50):

That's wonderful news.

Andre Adams (01:27:53):

All right, thank you. There any questions?

Naomi Cantu (01:27:56):

Thank you for sharing about the flexibilities in the program and how that's impacting the families. Rosy shared a bit about the flexibilities and CARES and how that affected outcomes for rehousing, homeless prevention. So it's great to see those at work.

Andre Adams (01:28:13):

Yes, definitely. Thank you.

Naomi Cantu (01:28:16):

Any other questions for Audrey or any questions? Great, I'm next. Naomi Cantu HOME- ARP. I'll keep mine very brief. We have divided the funds into rental development and into shelter development as well as into nonprofit capacity building operating funds. And my program has a special population specifically for persons who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness or vulnerable populations. On the rental side, we have awarded 52.9 million in rental development, which we're very pleased about. That's about 249 units that we have obligated. We have about 6.8 million pending in award, hopefully the next one in February. We're trying to get the last one in the nonprofit capacity building operating funds, we have awarded 3.3 million and we are working through that process to get that obligated. And we are working to release the non congregate shelter invitation. So non congregate shelter means that it's not congregate, so it's safer in airborne fire cement. So we have expended or we have obligated about 38 million and we do have expenditures now, which is great. So we have 1.5 in million in program expenditures, which is a tick in the right direction and we expect to see that tick way up towards the end of this calendar year as developments get on the ground and I'll take any questions.

Megan Sylvester (01:30:10):

Alright, when she says obligated, what that means for this part.
This is Megan Sylvester from TDHCA. That means for this
particular program is that they're under contract. So yes.

Naomi Cantu (01:30:24):

Alright, Sean, the new strategic plan to address homeless
update. Homelessness update.

Sean Lonergan (01:30:31):

Yes. Thank you Naomi. Can everybody hear me okay?

Naomi Cantu (01:30:34):

Yes.

Sean Lonergan (01:30:36):

Great. Sean Lonergan, TDHCA. The update is there is no real
update. We continue to have the plan under executive review.
I'll defer to Brooke on the phone if there's any additional
information she has available on the plan status. But otherwise
that is the extent of my update and I'll take any questions.

Brooke Boston (01:31:03):

This is Brooke. I don't have anything else to add.

Naomi Cantu (01:31:07):

I don't have any questions. I'm not seeing any here in the room. So we'll go to the last one on this section. State of Texas 2024, 1 year action plan consultation. Jeremy?

Jeremy Stremmer (01:31:20):

Yes. So Jeremy Stremmer, TDHCA. Simply Opportunity. We're working on our 2024 1-year action plan, which is the plan that governs the use of community planning and development funds from HUD, so CDBG home, ESG, HOPWA, and also our National Housing Trust fund funds. They don't fall into the CBD umbrella, but they are part of this plan. So it's just an opportunity for anybody who wants to make suggestions about how the programs are operated or the types of activities that we're spending the funds on, things of that nature. Just an opportunity for anybody who wants to provide any additional context or suggestions. You can do it here. If you go back to your offices, you think of something, you can send an email to Sean. There's information. Just a reminder, TDHCA operates HOME ESG and NHTF funds, while our friends at the Texas Department of Agriculture operates CBG funds and HOPWA funds. Housing opportunities for persons with AIDS is operated by DSHS. But any of those programs, if you feel you have suggestions or comments about how they're operated or what types of activities they're used for, feel free to let us know and we'll take those into consideration as we develop the draft of the document, which you'll see out for public comment

later this spring. And you can make additional comments if you'd like and move forward with it from there. Allocations don't know when allocations will happen, if they will happen for the plan at this point from Congress, but once the funds are allocated, that's when we'll be able to actually submit a plan. The draft plan probably will have estimates from the previous year so that we can meet our deadlines because we hope that the amount of funding will be relatively similar. But yeah, so if you see a draft and it has estimates and looks exactly like last year's funding might be until they allocate funds for HUD to then provide their formula allocation.

Naomi Cantu (01:33:44):

And this is my. HUD actually just released a guidance document a couple last week that NHTF, as Jeremy said, is not funded directly through the CPD allocation. It's funded through the fees on the GSCs, when you refinance a loan, part of the money goes to NHTF and those amounts they estimate, but HUD is the one who tells the state how much they're going to get that money absent and from Congress will be coming to us. That will still happen. Yeah, that will still happen. So we'll still get something. But HUD estimates that we would get that number in April,

Jeremy Stremmler (01:34:29):

Which hopefully if the allocation amounts can be agreed upon for all of the 12 appropriations bills, hopefully the money for our annual allocations would also come around that same time. But yes, feel free, if you think of something, send an email Lash Sean, you can get to us or to our general info@tdhca.texas.gov email address if you think of something. And we will pass along to our program directors, see what they think about it and have conversations and see if anything needs to change.

Eric Samuels (01:35:08):

So Eric Samuels, Texas Homeless Network. When you say reach out to us about this, you mean us that are in this room with TICH?

Jeremy Stremmler (01:35:14):

Anybody really, really the consultation because it is a public meeting, so I mean if anybody else wants to provide that, but there'll also be an actual public comment period where those public comment will then be on public record, they'll be a part of the document and can be seen what people ask and what our response to those suggestions is. This won't be as informal, provide suggestions, we'll take it under consideration and see what our program directors think.

Naomi Cantu (01:35:47):

And this routinely receives input or updates from ESG, so we're familiar with that, which is in the plan and from HOPWA, which is the housing opportunity person aids through DSHS. And so we're familiar at least with those two, routinely at this meeting.

Eric Samuels (01:36:09):

Eric Samuels, THN. I just asked because I'm meeting with folks Friday from around the state. Wanted to know if I should say anything or not.

Jeremy Stremmler (01:36:18):

You were allowed to Yeah.

Eric Samuels (01:36:21):

I don't know if anything will be submitted.

Jeremy Stremmler (01:36:24):

No, it's alright.

Eric Samuels (01:36:24):

But I can mention it.

Naomi Cantu (01:36:27):

Alright, thank you. We are onto other member agency updates. If anyone wants to update, you can at this time, not seeing any hands up on that one. Any public comment. I know it's right afternoon already. And closing comments. I do not have any closing comments as I am substituting as the chair right now.

Fedora Galasso (01:37:01):

Doing a fantastic job.

Naomi Cantu (01:37:02):

Thank you. We got some business done. Thank you everyone for coming and for your updates and I hope everyone has a good rest of your Wednesday and a good lunch. And with

Sean Lonergan (01:37:13):

Naomi?

Naomi Cantu (01:37:14):

Yes,

Sean Lonergan (01:37:16):

This is Sean, TDHCA. I have a brief closing comment before everyone is on their way and you adjourn. Just speaking in my capacity ministry of support for what people can expect for the next meeting. It'll most likely be in the late spring, probably

May. So just for people to keep an eye out in the coming weeks for that. Just want to get that out there. Thank you.

Naomi Cantu (01:37:41):

Thank you. Sean.

Fedora Galasso (01:37:44):

I just want to say that we have our annual conference coming up, so probably I'll send it to you, Sean, if you want to send it out to members because we have a lot of training around youth homelessness.

Naomi Cantu (01:37:56):

Where's it going to be?

Fedora Galasso (01:37:57):

It's going to be in Houston June 6th. It's on the deck y'all. Sorry. June 4th through seventh. June 4th through seventh. Thank you. So I would love to see you all there.

Naomi Cantu (01:38:10):

TNOYS conference. Yeah. Any other closing comments? All right. And with that we're adjourned. It's 12:13. Thank you everyone.