



EVANSTON HOMELESS TASK FORCE MINUTES-DRAFT

April 1, 2011

Present: Alderman Dolores Holmes, Alderman Ann Rainey, Sue Calder, Co-Chair; Karen Singer, Co-Chair; Joyce Bartz, Debbie Bretag, Sidney Caselberry, Walter Cody, Paola Flores, Kav Hagopian, Paul Hamnn, Oscar Hawthorne, Karen Hunt, Bill Kolen, Janice Lindquist, , Rev. Velda Love, Kate Mahoney, Kevin Mott, Sue Murphy, Paul Selden, Soo Shim, Dorothy Williams, Dan Lewis

Absent: Joe Liss

Staff: Sarah Flax, Housing and Grants Administrator, Alisa Dean, Community Intervention Coordinator, Officer Ron Blumenburg, Mary Ellen Poole, Housing Planner

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 am

II. Approve Minutes

A motion to approve the March 4, 2011 minutes passed unanimously.

III. Welcome & Introductions

A. Co-Chairs, Sue Calder and Karen Singer welcomed the Task Force and introduced the panel.

IV. Unfinished Business

N/A

V. New Business-Snapshot of Evanston's Homeless Population

A. Joyce Bartz, District 65 spoke on the causes she sees of homeless youth in the school system. The problem has increased 100% since last year and there are around 225 kids registered as homeless.

B. Britt Shawver from HOW discussed the mission of HOW and what she sees as the critical areas to focus on:

-Prevention is key.

-Education and Skill development

C. Don Baker of YOU

-There is a window of opportunity during the crisis to really help youth, but many times there are no resources in which to do this. Counselors at YOU have been reduced from 4 to 1 full time person.

D. Paul Hamnn from the Night Ministry.

- There are very few services specifically directed towards youth, especially youth that are not wards of the state.
- Youth are the invisible homeless because they have learned how to blend in with the neighborhood.
- Trust building is very hard when working with youth
- Shelter system is very adult centered
- Housing First does not work for youth.
- Lack of emergency beds
- Lack of ID's
- HIV/AIDS
- Lack of credit from parents abusing their credit without their knowledge

E. Oscar Hawthorne, ETHS

- 40% of students are on the free/reduced lunch program
- This is a growing need and it is at a crisis level
- Alternative education programs and Saturday school has been helping with the graduation rate.

Questions/Comments from the Task Force and other participants:

- Paola Flores spoke about the immigrant population experience and the lack of services for non-citizens.
- Judith Treadway spoke about relaxing the guidelines for some families
- A question about what housing does work for teens/youth. Answers included aftercare workers who follow the youth after they leave the shelter and transitional living where agencies can hold the lease.
- Alderman Holmes asked about coordination between agencies and schools. One answer was that there are too many small agencies not communicating with each other. ETHS could use more dedicated social workers.

VI. Communications

The next meeting will be Friday May 6, 2011 at 7:30 am. Location: Parasol Room at the Civic Center.

VII. Adjournment-The Meeting adjourned at 9:00 am

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ellen Poole, Housing Planner