



**Human Rights Commission
Meeting Minutes
Housing Equity Committee
June 28, 2022
Virtual/Electronic Meeting
6:30 pm**

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1. WELCOME

- a. CALL TO ORDER
 - i. Committee Chair, Wolfgang Keppley, called the meeting to order at 6:42 pm
- b. ROLL CALL
 - i. Wolfgang Keppley
 - ii. Mary Bauer
- c. MISSION (recited by all): *Act as a strong advocate to justice and equal opportunity by providing citywide leadership and guidance in the area of civil rights.*

2. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

- a. PUBLIC COMMENT
 - i. None
- b. COMMISSION RESPONSE TO MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC
 - i. None

3. MINUTES

- a. None

4. WORK SESSION

- a. Emergency housing and service provider referrals
 - i. Commissioner raises possibility of research project looking at success for those seeking emergency housing while struggling with mental health/substance abuse
 - 1. HRC has worked with Code for Charlottesville in the past, which created the Charlottesville Housing Hub, allowing housing agencies to share resources with one another
 - a. Commission might be able to do something similar
 - 2. Potential HIPAA issue of sharing mental health resources
 - 3. Commissioner asks Todd about potential of getting in contact with Code for Charlottesville
 - ii. OHR Director defines wraparound services (mental health/substance use disorder/etc. supports) and says that examining this continuum of care system would be a good idea
 - 1. Asks Commissioner to elaborate on their ideas about the Code for Charlottesville system
 - iii. Commissioner suggests different ideas for addressing housing equity in

Charlottesville:

1. Identifying service providers involved in continuum of care and provide wraparound services
 - a. Community outreach; qualitative approach asking service providers about gaps in the system
2. Creating a diagram of where people are often referred to and a flow chart detailing the process
3. Asking Code for Cville to work with the HRC to create a platform for service providers to communicate with each other
- iv. Commissioner suggests the Commission look at the broader system of care to find causes of gaps in the system
 1. OHR Director agrees that getting background information is important
- v. OHR Director summarizes similar work already done in this area:
 1. Ashley Reynolds-Marshall has in the past held three large meetings with TJACH and 40+ service providers creating a list of priorities
 - a. First two called "Rumbles"; last was a summit
 - b. In a previous meeting's agenda packet
 2. Thomas Jefferson Area Coalition for the Homeless (TJACH) led by Anthony Haro has an assessment of the system of care that is a few years old
 - a. Currently in a strategic planning process
 - b. Would be a good idea to invite Anthony Haro and others in the continuum of care system to talk about their plans
 - c. Anthony Haro delivered a presentation to Council recently that is likely available online
 3. Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) managed by TJACH already exists as a system for care providers to communicate
 - a. Currently has ~25 partners, but not all wraparound services are on it
 4. Director suggests Commission spend time with providers like TJACH, look at notes from the summit, look at notes from the two meetings TJACH held with people experiencing homelessness, and examine any past TJACH studies to get a better idea of the current situation and circulating ideas
 - a. Could also invite other agency leaders providing wraparound services
- vi. Commissioner says filling gap of communication may not be needed at this moment, but the Commission could likely help in different ways
- vii. Commissioners recognize that this is not their area of expertise, so accessing these resources would be helpful
 1. TJACH listening sessions were probably not recorded to maintain privacy, but the takeaway notes should be available
 2. OHR Director can send the notes from both listening sessions, which are attached in the 5/19/2022 regular meeting agenda
 3. OHR Director has a diagram not for public consumption for what he identifies as holes in the system

- a. Will check with Deputy City Manager to see if this diagram can be more widely shared
- viii. Commissioner asks OHR Director for any significant priorities decided upon at the Rumbles or summit
 - 1. Director reads priorities from summit notes:
 - a. Need for year-round emergency shelter (some specialized to address specific physical/mental health needs)
 - b. Wraparound services, including transportation, should be bolstered for the population
 - c. Operational needs, like capacity of service providers
 - d. Need for planning and coordination
 - e. Funding
 - 2. These themes are fairly common across conversations with other service providers
- ix. Commissioner raises what the Commission can do to be helpful and effective without inserting itself into these issues having not had previous knowledge or experience
 - 1. Goal is to support service providers' work

5. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

a. PUBLIC COMMENT

i. Anna Mendez

- 1. Executive Director of Partner for Mental Health
- 2. Works closely with the OHR
- 3. Addresses Commissioner's concern about the HRC's place in the conversation and agrees with OHR Director's comments and suggestions
- 4. Says that the Commission could possibly help with an analysis of barriers or social factors preventing individuals from accessing housing
 - a. Understanding commonalities between people barred from housing will help providers recognize the cracks in the system

ii. Commissioner asks Anna about how people get barred

- 1. PMH does not turn anyone away
- 2. Every service provider has their own rules regarding which people they bar and what process their clients must go through
- 3. PMH has had four clients barred from emergency shelter because they were deemed by service providers as "unsafe"
 - a. PMH was able to find these individuals long-term room at affordable suites
 - b. Indicative of a pattern that some people who could be served under the current system are being barred

iii. Commissioner recognizes it would be difficult to obtain information about individuals, though it is probably possible to obtain information from each service provider on the nature and consequences of their requirements for service provision

- 1. Anna says individual information is supposed to reside in the HMIS

2. Not all individuals' profiles are complete/comprehensive
 3. OHR does not currently have access to HMIS, though the OHR could possibly request a report from TJACH on individuals who have been barred
 - a. Information can be de-identified before being released to the OHR
- b. COMMISSION RESPONSE TO MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC
- i. Chair brings up other topics to be addressed by the committee:
 1. Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME) testing
 - a. Some other Virginian HRCs had conducted testing with HOME; could look into this for Charlottesville to look at landlords
 - b. OHR Director says the Commission could invite Directors from the Northern VA HRCs who have done HOME testing to a Charlottesville HRC meeting
 - i. They have not done testing in-house because it requires many people
 - ii. They have only been doing testing by phone since the pandemic
 - c. Commissioner says it may still be worthwhile to get in contact with a NoVA OHR to have the option in the future and ask about how they conduct their testing
 - d. Another Commissioner supports looking for more information about HOME testing
 - e. OHR Outreach Specialist has asked briefly about HOME testing, but nothing in depth
 - f. Could reach out to the Offices of Human Rights in Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, and Prince William to see how any of those Offices with enforcement power are testing
 - i. VA Beach/Newport News Offices have staff liaisons instead of Directors
 - g. Current questions:
 - i. When do these Commissions believe they will be able to return to non-phone testing?
 - ii. What is the cost, timeline, and recommended scale of testing given the Charlottesville OHR's size?
 - iii. Do they do anything with testing landlord responsiveness during a lease instead of the initial extension of a lease?
 1. Maybe not necessarily a home tester, but perhaps they have a way to measure systemic discrimination
 - h. OHR staff can reach out to other OHRs with these questions
 - ii. Wolfgang and Mary will look through the information that is publicly available about the TJACH report and Anthony Haro's Council presentation

- iii. Chair asks for other ideas for action items
 - 1. Could reach out to Anthony Haro to ask about what the HRC can do to support housing equity in the city
 - a. Can talk to HRC Chair about having the full Commission meet with Anthony Haro for August regular meeting
 - b. OHR Director says FHAP amendments may take up the entire August meeting, so this communication could possibly start with asking Anthony in what capacity he would like to meet
 - c. Committee Chair will reach out to Anthony Haro and keep other committee members and Director informed

6. NEXT STEPS

- a. Wolfgang
 - i. Look through previous information regarding housing inequity and barriers to housing in Charlottesville (notes from Rumbles, notes from summit, TJACH report and other studies, Anthony Haro's presentation to Council)
 - ii. Reach out to Anthony Haro about setting up a meeting with Commissioners regarding housing equity and the Commission's place in ameliorating the system
- b. Mary
 - i. Look through previous information regarding housing inequity and barriers to housing in Charlottesville (notes from Rumbles, notes from summit, TJACH report and other studies, Anthony Haro's presentation to Council)
- c. Todd
 - i. Reach out to other Virginian OHRs with questions about HOME testing:
 - 1. When do these Commissions believe they will be able to return to non-phone testing?
 - 2. What is the cost, timeline, and recommended scale of testing given the Charlottesville OHR's size?
 - 3. Do they do anything with testing landlord responsiveness during a lease instead of the initial extension of a lease?
 - a. Maybe not necessarily a home tester, but perhaps they have a way to measure systemic discrimination
 - ii. Ask Ashley about sharing of service provider/systemic gaps diagram

7. ADJOURN

- a. Meeting adjourned at 7:31 pm