

AGENDA

AD HOC on Homelessness & Solutions AGENDA FOR MAY 9, 2023 AT 3:30 PM



Lansing City Hall, City Council Conference Room
124 W. Michigan Avenue, 10th Floor

To provide input or ask questions on any item that is listed on the agenda,
members of the public may contact the City Council at city.council@lansingmi.gov or (517) 483-4177 prior to the meeting.
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Council Member Brown, Chairperson

Council Member Hussain, Vice Chairperson

Council Member Spitzley, Member

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Minutes**
 - A. March 28, 2023
 - B. April 25, 2023
4. **Discussion/Action:**
 - C. DISCUSSION - Committee Recommendations and Reporting
5. **Public Comment on Agenda Items (Up to 2 Minutes)**
6. **Other**
7. **Adjourn**

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MINUTES
Ad Hoc on Homelessness & Solutions
Tuesday, March 28, 2023 @ 3:30 p.m.
City Council Conference Room, 10th Floor City Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brown called the meeting to order at 3:30pm

PRESENT

Council Member Jeffrey Brown, Chair
Council Member Adam Hussain, Vice Chair - excused
Council Member Patricia Spitzley, Member

OTHERS PRESENT

Renee Richmond, Council Staff
Lisa Hagen-Lawrence, OCA
Dr. Adenike Shoyinka, Medical Health Officer ICHC
Kris Drake, Executive Director, ICHC
Roselyn Williams
Marcy Doozan
Cheryl Campbell
Sara Fase
Shelia & Steve Antes
Chrstopher
Mike Karl
Greg Pratt
Tesha Reeves
Judge Cynthia Ward, 54A District Court
Ulices Rosa, 54A District Court
Michael Lynn
Farhan Sheikh-Omar
Kyle Richard
Jody Washington
Linda Appling
Gail Sawyer
Schnika McKissic
Sherri Davio
Linda Karl
Belinda Fitzpatrick
Jeffrey Filip

MINUTES

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPITZLEY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 14, 2023, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 2-0.

PRESENTATIONS

Ingham Community Health Centers

Dr. Shoyinka acknowledged the great turnout from the public, introducing herself she is the Chief Medical Officer for Ingham County and they are a federal health center and department that gives them the opportunity to provide a range of services up to primary care. ICHC is essentially a comprehensive primary care and can provide other care as needed, created patient center so providers can give and overcome barriers. They have 11 sites throughout Lansing with one dedicated to those experiencing homelessness under 330H program that provides federal grants, and others with Behavioral Health Services, Substance Abuse, General Health, and Nursing Services within Holy Cross. Adding the Community Health workers are the main connection to those that walk in, once they do they get a housing assessment, and whether they need food, vouchers, legal resources, clothing, etc. Councilmember Brown asked that she talks about Holy Cross is that their facility, she stated no, they are just located in the building and just lease space. Councilmember Spitzley asked out of the 11 sites where are they located. Mr. Drake indicated all 11 are throughout the Greater Lansing area, some free standing and some in schools like Eastern, Sexton, Pattengill, Gardner, and Everett. Willow Community Health Center on Pennsylvania, the one at Holy Cross, Birch Community Center on Jolly, and the Human Services Building holds the Women's Health Center, they also have a mobile dental service.

Councilmember Brown asked if the New Hope Health Center at Holy Cross is only accessible by those at Holy Cross, Mr. Drake responded no those who identify as homeless can access any location. Councilmember Spitzley stated for the ones located in the schools she is worried about accessibility but sounds like they are off major bus lines, Mr. Drake confirmed and they offer vouchers as well. Councilmember Brown asked about any other organizations besides those mentioned that they are partnering with. Dr. Shoyinka restated there are 15 of the 330h federal funded to specifically provide services, there are other free clinics that they've partnered with in the past but were dismantled during the Pandemic. He continued Spartan Street Medicine included vaccinations, minor wound care and referrals to the ER when needed.

Councilmember Brown asked they had a number on how many homeless, Dr. Shoyinka said that is difficult to give a certain number, when you think of housing one indicator is number of those who use more than 30% of income, that is 1/3 of our population, East Lansing is #1 and that is at 48%, Lansing is at 46%. Councilmember Spitzley mentioned EL is skewed because of the students. Councilmember Brown asked how many served at new hope and Dr. Shoyinka said in 2021 it was 2,250 which would be 8% in all 15 sites across the state, with approximately 30,000 served total in all programs. Councilmember Brown asked for clarification when she mentions statewide, Dr. Shoyinka repeated that ICHC is federal funded in the 330h, there are 15 sites and they share one with New Hope. Adding that in Michigan they service 30,000 and that is our 2,250. Councilmember Brown asked how many patients, Mr. Drake answered appropriately 20,000 – 30,000 and nearly 2,250 of them are homeless. Dr. Shoyinka stated they don't have numbers for 2023, in 2022 it was about 2,137. Mr. Drake included in 2020 was about 2,259 (hard to say because of COVID). Dr. Shoyinka added that 2019 and 2018 would be close to the same but shelters couldn't take as many people because of isolation. Dr. Shoyinka concluded that even though they don't do direct care they identify homelessness as a public health crisis and want to make sure they are having conversations with the right people.

DISCUSSION/ACTION

DISCUSSION – Rosalyn Williams; Lansing Resident Advocate Discussion Human Relations & Community Services and Red Tags

Ms. Williams said she is here as a resident of Autumn Ridge, Councilmember Spitzley asked if she was talking on behalf of HRCS or not. Councilmember Brown said no her and him have been in conversation about red tags and she is facing homelessness. Ms. Williams continued that AR has 600+ units and she was pink tagged Nov. 2019 with a simple violation of the ventilation needing cleaning and the complex didn't get it done. Adding the unit next to her is horrible having mice and bed bugs and she paid to have it cleaned because she didn't want it in her place. But it is still not up to

code and AR never shows up when you call, now seeing pests, on Feb. 24th the furnace went out and AR brought her two space heaters to heat bedrooms upstairs and living area, she had to turn the oven on it was red tagged by code and she was told to leave. Councilmember asked if between it being pink and red tagged to best of her knowledge was code there, Ms. Williams responded yes that Dave Klein always comes out. Ms. Williams indicated to was injured and Councilmember Spitzley asked if it was onsite, she answered yes, they had some palettes out that covered some ground and it was wobbly and she stepped on it and it tilted and broke. Councilmember Brown asked where she's been staying since February and she said a hotel, that they offered a City hotel but that one is horrible so she went to a different one, she was told she still can't go home, Consumers shut gas off, maintenance took the tag off, so she can't live there. Councilmember Spitzley asked if she's spoke to the Housing Ombudsman and asked for a yes or no, Ms. Williams said yes and he told her he couldn't do anything for her. Councilmember Spitzley asked if he's provided counseling or your rights, she said no she's been doing it on her own.

Councilmember Brown asked what her experience with the City has been, she said they offered to pay her BWL, but she calls one person they say someone else will call back and nobody ever does, and Mr. McDonald asked her if she looked at Zillow and HRCS is no help.

Councilmember Brown and Spitzley confusingly asked about the City hotel, and Ms. Williams said she didn't want to say the name and just knew what hotel they wanted to send her to and it is off S. Pennsylvania by the car dealership. Councilmember Spitzley stated that they've been dealing with AR for some time and didn't know if she could speak, Ms. Hagen-Lawrence stated that litigation is no longer active.

Councilmember Spitzley asked Ms. Williams if she had three suggestions what were they, and Ms. Williams replied:

1. take red tags and offer to residents who want to be homeowners despite credit
2. make people that run the programs live in them
3. do your job, make people accountable and talk to the people

DISCUSSION – Committee Intention

CM Brown said he was going to bypass this as the intention of the committee has been stated several times.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike Karl spoke on HMIS again and gave a handout to the Committee of guidelines and said he handed out to people and added that if the homeless ask for a HMIS number they are threatened to be removed.

Sheila Antes spoke on three family's homes are red tagged and code won't release because the landlord doesn't have property listed as a rental, he's taken \$40,000 from these families that put money into fixing issues. Advent House said they would only help women/children so the men are sleeping in cars. She continues that every time she calls Joe McDonald he doesn't call back. Councilmember Brown asked if she escalated the call to Director Coleman of HRCS, Ms. Antes said no, she hasn't heard that name. Councilmember Spitzley regrettably stated the person that spend \$40,000 on repairs doesn't own the house and the landlord doesn't have a rental certificate, it is the responsibility of the landlord.

Mike Lynn spoke on financial accountability to the landlords and hitting them in the pocket, they've been having red tag convo's since 2019. Councilmember Spitzley agreed and stated they were fining and sending notices to Autumn Ridge. Mr. Lynn acknowledged that Code is extremely understaffed, and Councilmember Spitzley said it is budget time and Council speaks through resolution so it will be looked at. Then asked Ms. Hagen-Lawrence to share the penalty of removal, Ms. Hagen-Lawrence

responded it is a criminal misdemeanor with \$500 fine and 90 days in jail but has not seen any recently but is limited in her role.

Greg Pratt spoke on that he is with 7th Day Adventist Outreach and every Thursday is handing out sleeping bags, food, jackets, and hand warmers. He believes the Mayor needs a city of emergency for the homeless, he witnessed that pass Friday four LPD officers evicted a homeless person out of a shed without calling a social worker. Finished that there are only two shelters for men, they are all full and in winter nowhere to go.

Cheryl Campbell spoke on being homeless for two years, advent house paid for a hotel, but HMIS report is blank and shows she is a single person and she had six people in her family that are right now in a hotel. She is working two jobs, kids aren't going to school no what to get there, averaging three hours of sleep because all of them are sleeping sideways on the bed. Finishing that she qualifies for rapid housing but nothing in the HMIS report.

Councilmember Spitzley stepped out of the meeting at 4:42pm. Councilmember Brown paused the meeting with no quorum present at the time.

Councilmember Brown reconvened at 4:46pm

Councilmember Brown asked if she contacted HRCS, Ms. Campbell said no.

Farhan Sheikh-Omar spoke on the only difference now is the news is covering this and the mayor is not standing up because nobody has a plan on how to fix, need a concrete plan moving forward. He continued maybe hire outside investigator to look into it, it's a disgrace what's happening in this city.

Schnika McKissic is a resident of Lansing, works for the school district, a health science master, and receiving disability section 8 voucher and is being evicted from 212 E. Cavanaugh Rd which has never been up to code. She moved into the home in 2019, LHC was supposed to inspect and owner stole \$20,000 because nothing was ever fixed. Ms. McKissic paid upfront and doesn't own anything and she was forcefully removed and evicted on February 6, 2023.

Jody Washington spoke on the HRCS meeting tonight at 5:30pm and asked Ms. Richmond if she could look up the locations. Continuing that America's Best and Causeway are the worst hotels possible. She is told from Advent House they run out of money all the time and she doesn't understand how when they get so much.

Kyle Richard spoke on his great love for the city and he was a teacher at Sexton. Knew people at Autumn Ridge and the recent letter to the Fledge from the City is disgraceful. Adding to not discount the power of their voice and letterhead, City Hall could've opened during the Code Blue for a 24/7 shelter.

Linda Appling spoke on the city establishing legal aid for those evicted and red tagged, the City of Detroit has it, and Councilmember Spitzley stated Wayne County does too. Ms. Appling continued that the bus services in the city are horrible.

Pat walked out at 5:03, guy upset at being ignored, no quorum.

OTHER

ADJOURN

Adjourned at 5:11pm

Submitted by

Renee Richmond, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on



MINUTES
Ad Hoc on Homelessness & Solutions
Tuesday, April 25, 2023 @ 3:30 p.m.
City Council Conference Room, 10th Floor City Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Brown called the meeting to order at 3:30pm

PRESENT

Council Member Jeffrey Brown, Chair
Council Member Adam Hussain, Vice Chair
Council Member Patricia Spitzley, Member - excused

OTHERS PRESENT

Renee Richmond, Council Staff
Lisa Hagen-Lawrence, OCA
Erika Brown-Binion, Executive Director Refugee Development Center
Mark Pierce, Executive Director Disability Network Center
Ulices Rosa, 54A District Court
Judge Ward, District Court
Jazmine Anderson
Belinda Fitzpatrick

MINUTES

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 11, 2023 AND TABLE MARCH 28, 2023, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 2-0.

PRESENTATIONS

Refugee Development Center; Erika Brown-Binion, Executive Director

Ms. Brown-Binion gave an overview of the RDC, they have been around for 21 years, they exist because Lansing is a welcome space for refugees, they are the largest program with about 400. When they first arrive, they have the support of case management, most come in speaking different languages so they teach them English, tutoring from k-12, all this is within the first 90 days. They help find employment and to be self-sufficient, in finding apartments or housing. They have a home visiting program for new families with an interpreter and help navigate housing and help with health education along with housing education. Most refugees come from Afghanistan, Syria, Sudan, Iran, Iraq, and more.

Councilmember Brown asked what she is seeing in Lansing and how it's effecting the RDC from the past 10 years, does she have any solutions. Ms. Brown-Binion acknowledged they don't see much homelessness compared to the general population. For the most part culturally refugees live in larger family units than typical, and they emphasize the prevention stages that is one reason they added the housing navigation so they engage in home ownership and not land contract to get taken advantage of.

Councilmember Hussain asked in terms of regional partners who else is opening up or is it just mainly Lansing. Ms. Brown-Binion noted resettlement happens all over like, Grand Rapids, Greater Detroit, Kalamazoo, Battle Creek, and Traverse City. Once they first resettle most end up staying and building roots, only a few may move.

Disability Network Capital Area; Mark Pierce, Executive Director

Mr. Pierce stated he has been with DNC for nine years, they have been around for 47 years and service Ingham, Clinton, Eaton, and Shiawassee Counties. Their Mission Statement is – Transforming thinking to improve the environment and quality of life for people with disabilities. The agency serviced 516 consumers (people), closed out 112, and 30% were minority. One of the biggest concerns is they served 47 consumers that came through direct services and they couldn't speak for themselves. Councilmember Brown asked of those were they homeless and families or individuals, Mr. Pierce responded yes and they only serve individuals, the biggest services is social security benefits, it's a huge piece, whether it's just that or Medicaid.

Mr. Pierce shared a quick story of a person that came from the hospital that had their toes amputated and lived on the street and ended up back in the hospital after being robbed. Social Worker called a transition specialist and they were able to connect with him and get an ID card and into adult protective services. The person is now in the process of getting a checking account at MSUFCU and bringing some normality.

Mr. Pierce added that homelessness means no name on a lease or mortgage, no address for mail. They partnership with other agencies like the Rescue Mission, Haven House, VOA, and more, he then handed out a list for the record that his staff uses to help with hotels or center, etc.

Councilmember Brown asked would he say they've helped about 10% of the people with homelessness, Mr. Pierce noted the big issue landlords, apartments or house that are red tagged, the person with disabilities have no where to go and may access a red tag just to have somewhere to go, they've seen a huge increase because you have interest rates that increase, constraints on Section 8 and the amount of money that is made. Councilmember Brown asked if he was saying people with disabilities are living in red tag houses then having to leave, his response was yes and if they could know ahead of time maybe they could work with them. With the Rescue Mission there is a process they get categorized and some don't understand what is happening. Councilmember Brown asked if he could categorize the people, he services what type of disability stands out that are experiencing homelessness the most, Mr. Pierce said no specific disability stands out but if they have a guardian, they are better off rather than speaking for themselves. In most cases the disability could be emotional, developmental, or intellectual and they don't know what resources they have. Councilmember Brown asked if he would agree there is a gap of support for those with moderate disabilities who aren't able to advocate for themselves, Mr. Pierce agreed adding that during COVID people got assistance with rent and those with disabilities could fill out the paperwork.

Councilmember Hussain asked what he thought the City could do better with the housing navigation, red tags, gaps for service, sounds like these are leading to the increase in homelessness. Mr. Pierce stated trying to find/create enough places ahead of time but it's difficult, there is a 400% increase and if you have 100 homeless how do you find that many. He included just brainstorming but if your unemployed and you get unemployment the employer pays insurance, what if there was red tag insurance, like some people are required to have fire insurance or car insurance.

Councilmember Hussain asked him how other municipality partners doing since you serve four counties. Mr. Pierce said he didn't have a definite answer, rural areas are closed mouth and don't want to talk about it like the inner city is willing. He concluded Lansing, Kalamazoo, places with universities are different they have options not like smaller cities.

DISCUSSION/ACTION

DISCUSSION – Committee Intention for next meeting

The Committee concurred for the next meeting no presenters and to start discussing strategy and how to tackle the issues.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Judge Ward spoke on information she received regarding the special meeting on red tags and questions for Court Administration and what's been filed. She added that numbers were run over the last three years and types of filing for rentals and housing, they are looking over everything and she needs to speak to someone and digest everything before reporting back, she just wanted to give an update.

Belinda Fitzpatrick noted she likes the idea of oca looking into the insurance portion to see if that is possible for landlords to get to avoid eviction. Also, that the term "hoarder" is a protective class and that it's something DNC may run into.

Ulices Rosa requested to ask the presenters a question, Councilmember Brown agreed. Mr. Rosa stated to Ms. Brown-Binion that the refugee's getting work within 30-60 days is amazing and that 90% are experiencing income loss and those are getting hired. Ms. Brown-Binion explained that at the federal level they must find work immediately, whether it's at McDonald's or elsewhere, and most are minimum level wage positions. She added that Peckham helps, some refugee's have PTSD and it may not be their first choice position but it's something, including that self sufficiency is the ultimate goal within 90 days.

Mr. Rosa asked Mr. Pierce who he thinks he handles more of for their evicted people when it comes to disabilities. Mr. Pierce stated there is a stigma around people they don't want to identify as disabled, they do awareness assessments and we would gladly welcome those evicted and please reach out to us, Mr. Rosa confirmed.

OTHER

ADJOURN

Adjourned at 4:24pm

Submitted by

Renee Richmond, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on