

# AGENDA

## AD HOC on Homelessness & Solutions AGENDA FOR JULY 25, 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](mailto:city.council@lansingmi.gov) or (517) 483-4177 prior to the meeting.  
view on: <https://www.youtube.com/@lansingcitycouncil4446/streams>

---

Council Member Brown, Chairperson  
Council Member Hussain, Vice Chairperson  
Council Member Spitzley, Member

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Minutes**
  - A. July 11, 2023
- 4. Presentations:**
  - B. Rawley Van Fossen, Chair of the CoC and Executive Director Capital Area Housing Partnership
  - C. HRCS Department; Kim Coleman, Toni Young, Joe McDonald, and Delvata Moses
- 5. Discussion/Action:**
  - D. DISCUSSION - Committee Recommendations and Reporting
    - i. Resolution establishing Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness & Solutions #2023-014
    - ii. 2023 Committee Minutes
- 6. Public Comment on Agenda Items (Up to 2 Minutes)**
- 7. Other**
- 8. Adjourn**

Persons with disabilities who need an accommodation to fully participate in these meetings should contact the City Council Office at 517-483-4177 (TTY 711) 24 hour notice may be needed for certain accommodations. An attempt will be made to grant all reasonable accommodation requests.



**MINUTES**  
**Ad Hoc on Homelessness & Solutions**  
**Tuesday, July 11, 2023 @ 3:30 p.m.**  
**City Council Conference Room, 10<sup>th</sup> 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 – unexcused

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Renee Richmond, Council Administrative Assistant  
Lisa Hagen-Lawrence, OCA  
Matt Staples, OCA  
Jordan Hankwitz, ED&P Director  
Barb Kimmel, ED&P  
Norma Bauer

**MINUTES**

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 27, 2023 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 2-0.

**DISCUSSION/ACTION**

**DISCUSSION – Committee Recommendations and Reporting**

Councilmember Brown explained the Ad Hoc Committee to Mr. Hankwitz and Ms. Kimmel and asked them to address some of the topics identified to share how they are addressing homelessness.

Ms. Kimmel explained in EDP the development office is the conduit to which HUD/ESG funds flow from HUD to HRCS. And then the development office is also the fiduciary for MSHDA grants for the CoC, the development office then acts as the fiduciary MSHDA's ESG funds, both the ESM and ESF funds (match and federal component respectively). Last night Council approved three MSHDA grants that EDP will be the fiduciary for, including the shelter diversion grants. Those are awarded to the CoC and they act as the fiduciary for MSHDA and CoC. Which means the CoC spends money and then request reimbursement from EDP and then they ensure the grantees/sub recipients have provided proper documentation and what they are requesting is eligible and provide funds and draw funds from trust.

Councilmember Brown asked what the ESG (Emergency Solutions Grant) services. Councilmember Hussain and Ms. Kimmel stated outreach. Ms. Kimmel added for them emergency shelter and outreach prevention these are the activities covered by the city ESG, but this is the HUD ESG goes to HRCS that goes for emergency shelter and outreach prevention and MSHDA ESG funding can be used for emergency services and outreach. Councilmember Brown inquired what is ESM/ESF used for. Ms.

Kimmel responded it can be used for emergency shelter and outreach. Councilmember Brown asked what does outreach mean, and Ms. Kimmel is unsure and suggested to ask an agency that provides it like Advent House. Adding also provide outreach funding thru HRCS to child and family services. Mr. Hankwitz asked Ms. Kimmel to expand on what it means that they are the fiduciary as opposed to the ones actually implementing and administering these programs.

Ms. Kimmel mentioned they act as a financial Conduent between MSHDA and the subrecipient. Councilmember Brown asked who acts as the quality assurance, Ms. Kimmel answered they do. Councilmember Brown asked if people have complaints with services who do they voice them to. Ms. Kimmel indicated they could to her or to MSHDA. Councilmember Brown asked what the current pathway is for someone experiencing homelessness, how are they informed to get ahold of you. Ms. Kimmel stated she did not know but can say they have adopted the MSHDA policies/procedures and assumes that each agency has their own policy and procedures to provide to people.

Ms. Kimmel stated she herself received one complaint during a planning board meeting, on the rescue mission, regarding their treatment of people who are non-gender conforming. Councilmember Brown asked if they are the fiduciary that houses the programs then they go to HRCS. Ms. Kimmel responded not all of them, the city receives ESG funding and that goes to HRCS from HUD, Councilmember Brown inquired are they fiduciary for that as well, Ms. Kimmel answered no, HRCS manages the funds and expense the funds, works with finance to draw the funds down and then they approve those draws, adding they are pretty hands off the HUD ESG. Councilmember Hussain confirmed that they administer home & CDBG. Ms. Kimmel confirmed, adding that this year for the first time they did a monitoring of subrecipients with HRCS or the ESG grantee. Councilmember Hussain stated generally speaking what is your perspective on the planning side what can we in the city do to get better to get after the issues and preventing homelessness, the ultimate charge of the body of this committee is to make recommendations.

Ms. Kimmel suggested that the Committee meet with the CoC and discuss their policies and procedures, she's heard some comments and looking at past minutes, there is a lot of things said so talking to the CoC directly, to understand what they are doing related to getting funds out to the community, related to awarding funds within their organization. Councilmember Hussain agreed that would provide some clarity and help make recommendations on what they are trying to get after and what they can be doing "better" as well as their partners. Ms. Kimmel also suggested talking to HRCS, it's her understanding their role used to be more hands on but unsure now. Also, the Development office is not out in the community but they attend as many CoC mtgs as they can. The City does have a membership on the CoC and a voting seat which is Kim Coleman. Also, regular funding has not increased, ESG funding has remained stable throughout the years because not a lot of money, yet more people are homeless than before, she thinks increasing the dollar amount would be good. Two CoC members did apply for the shelter diversion grant that is a \$500,000 grant spread over two years, it was Advent House and Child Y& Family Services awarded and they will act as the fiduciary that will help them divert people from shelters and look at different solution like doubling up families. They hope to touch a total of 500 people in the 2 yr. Councilmember Hussain mentioned HRCS will be at the July 25<sup>th</sup> meeting, and Ms. Kimmel continued that shelters are full, more shelter space is needed. In the development office in the HOME ARP plan they have set aside money for increasing shelter space that is non-congregate and also set aside CDBG funds that is poised to go out to the community. Increasing the amount of permanent supportive housing units is desperately needed. Also have HOME ARP funds to utilize in conjunction with the low income tax credit deal to maximize the number of supportive housing units.

Councilmember Hussain asked in terms of units of supportive housing in the City, and units of affordable housing based on studies, what do you believe is our need, do you have a number. Ms. Kimmel said a number is unknown, she hasn't pursued that, but can say the shelters are full and HRCS housing people in hotels, and we still have people sleeping on the streets, in cars, in encampments. Councilmember Hussain inquired on a conversation recently as last night, asking what her opinion on

city sanction encampments is, there are some individuals that just don't want to be in housed. Ms. Kimmel stated it's her feeling proceed with caution because when you sanction encampments you are bringing a large population together and some or most don't want to be together that is why there are separate encampments, when you bring them together then you have possible conflicts, you'll need security cost and other costs. Added, that they can at least try, it would give them somewhere to wash up, take a shower, use a toilet but there are potential problems that could come along with that.

Councilmember Brown mentioned with the HOME ARP and different funds it was said that they should reach out to regional partners because what they are hearing is that there are no shelters they are coming to Lansing and over populating. Is your office looking at working or talking regionally to look at funds or to pull funds. Ms. Kimmel responded that can happen but expect the developers that apply for the funds to do that when they are on the forefront of their planning to reach out to those entities and ask if they would want to contribute, including that is something they could assist with, and since they are still designing the RFP they could even go as far as to weight the scores. Councilmember Brown asked if they've been doing any additional research with being a fiduciary, at looking across the country and innovative models, Ms. Kimmel said not her department, she is down 1/3 of the staff and has had no opportunity to do any research.

Councilmember Brown asked if there were any updates on the warming/cooling centers, Ms. Kimmel said she knows the administration is discussion it and believes Ms. Coleman is the lead. Councilmember Brown asked Ms. Kimmel if they are tracking where their original residence was, she answered that is tracked through HMIS, and suggested to invite the current Chair of CoC, Rawley Van Fossen at Capital Area Housing Partnership and maybe sent along a list of the data you are interested in so the HMIS can pull the data for you.

Ms. Kimmel added she believes supportive housing is the key and have to be able to create supportive housing that supports people in many ways, not just teaching life skills but also employment skills and all kinds of supportive skills and funding is going to be an issue, she believes in the HOME ARP they have approximately \$300,000 set aside for supportive services to be used by 2029.

Councilmember Brown inquired if there was a grant writer to look at the different funds speaking on the non-congregate housing, isn't it more costly for a large warehouse style, Ms. Kimmel said it is a dormitory style. Councilmember Hussain asked Ms. Kimmel to define non-congregate, she responded non congregate shelter means that an individual or family will have private space or access to a private bathroom.

Councilmember Hussain indicated to Mr. Hankwitz that he had some point highlighted any thoughts on any of these. Mr. Hankwitz stated he pulled out code related stuff and feels Code is cause and effect (as an example a red tag is the cause and the effect is not having a place to go). Mr. Hankwitz the gave the committee an update on their request from June 26<sup>th</sup> on owner occupied vs rental:

Red Tags – 653

Rentals – 245

Owner/Occupied – 408

Pink Tags - 300

Rentals - 245

Owner/Occupied - 55

Continuing, being early in his tenor there are some red tags in upward of 20+ years, they are working on identifying the oldest properties, on internal policies & procedures, they are working on a re-bid on code top/bottom. Councilmember Brown asked how long the process is until you feel you have overall summary. Mr. Hankwitz finished stating they are going back to the bid for RFP hope early fall/winter, they don't want to make monumental changes that won't create consistency and expectations.

Lastly, Councilmember Hussain asked if they know if all permits for the SIMTOB properties have been pulled, and Mr. Hankwitz indicated he is going to leave that to OCA to respond to.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Norma Bauer stated she admires and appreciates how Ms. Kimmel can sort through all this, there are so many diverse problems and demographics. She mentioned both Mike Karl and the original Homeless Angels as well as Dave Muelle who built Cottage Lane Senior Housing. She finished by saying understanding and showing compassion is needed in having these conversations.

**OTHER**

**ADJOURN**

Adjourned at 4:24pm

Submitted by

Renee Richmond, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on

DRAFT

**Ad Hoc on Homelessness and Solutions Committee  
2023**

**Topics to consider based on 2023 meetings:**

1. Review and discuss Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
2. Review and discuss the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT).
3. Review and discuss City of Lansing Supported Agencies and funding allocation amounts.
4. Review and discuss regional outreach and collaboration. What are other municipal partners doing to address homelessness crisis and how is HRCS working with our regional partners.
5. Ensure Lansing Housing Commission and other agency's that administer vouchers in the region to ensure timely payments and better access.
6. Review and discuss Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program which aids chronic homeless with disabilities etc.
7. Review and discuss 24 hour warming and cooling centers.
8. Identify the total number of affordable housing units in the region. i.e., Lansing vs East Lansing, Holt, Mason, Grand Ledge, Dewitt, Okemos, and Haslett.
9. Discuss advocacy and legal support for residents of Lansing having difficulty with "slumlords" and code compliance issues.
10. Review and discuss how the City of Lansing collaborates and/or provides support to Lansing residents/ Lansing School District students and families who are facing homelessness or are currently homeless.
11. Define and discuss required soft skills and DEI training for provider agencies by an outside organization that is not receiving HRCS funds to help the homeless and other vulnerable populations.
12. Review and discuss a Medical Respite model to triage and serve people facing homelessness or who are currently homeless.
13. Review and discuss eligibility, process, and documentation requirements for those seeking homeless services.
14. Review and discuss the exact job description and duties of the Housing Ombudsmen.
15. Review and discuss policy and procedure of pink and red tagging properties and how the city what system is in place to address homelessness because of being tagged. Further are there any additional systems in place for people with disabilities whose home is being tagged.
16. Review and discuss legislation that will hold landlord accountable for temporary housing when their property is out of compliance.
17. Review and discuss how city of Lansing is collaborating and coordinating care for people with mental health issues who are facing or currently homeless.
18. 54-District Court Eviction Diversion Program reports 60% of people facing homelessness document having a disability. How is the city of Lansing addressing the barriers "disabilities" causing homelessness.
19. Review and discuss current state and federal legislation and potential changes needed to address homelessness.
20. Update on pink/red tags of owner-occupied vs rental from Code. Review and discuss.
21. Review and discuss any input HRCS have provided to Rep Emily D. relating to housing and homelessness as the front-line city department.

**Resolution #2023-014**

By Council Member Wood

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Lansing

WHEREAS, the City Council has a duty to represent the citizens of Lansing and ensuring a safe and healthy community; and

WHEREAS, an Ad Hoc Committee on the Homelessness and Solutions will be established to review policies, services and resources to recommend assistance to connect the homeless to those services and resources; and

WHEREAS, the Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness and Solutions will meet with service providers in the community and city staff to address the best path in providing direction to the homeless population in the City of Lansing.

NOW BE IT RESOLVED, Lansing City Council President Wood appoints Council Member Brown as Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Homelessness and Solutions, Council Member Hussain as Vice Chair, and Council Member Spitzley as Member.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Homelessness and Solutions will report their findings and recommendations to the Committee of the Whole no later than September 11, 2023.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, with the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness and Solutions, the Council President has also reviewed the functions of all the standing committees and those functions are consistent with the duties outlined in Council Rule 16.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Homelessness and Solutions will meet on the days and times set by the Committee and will be dissolved by December 11, 2023.



**Minutes**  
**Ad Hoc on Homelessness & Solutions**  
**Tuesday, January 24, 2023 @ 3:30 p.m.**  
**City Council Conference Room**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council Member Brown called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

**PRESENT**

Council Member Brown, Chair  
Council Member Hussain, Vice-Chair  
Council Member Spitzley, Member- excused

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Sherrie Boak, Council Office Manager  
Lisa Hagen-Lawrence, OCA  
Matt Staples, OCA  
Judge Cynthia Ward, 54- A District Court Judge  
Jody Washington  
Tamara Carter  
Ulises Rosa, 54-A District Court Advocacy

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment at this time.

**DISCUSSION/ACTION**

**DISCUSSION – Establish the AD HOC on Homelessness & Solutions Goals and Timeline**

Council Member Brown read the resolution into the record;

WHEREAS, the City Council has a duty to represent the citizens of Lansing and ensuring a safe and healthy community; and

WHEREAS, an Ad Hoc Committee on the Homelessness and Solutions will be established to review policies, services and resources to recommend assistance to connect the homeless to those services and resources; and

WHEREAS, the Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness and Solutions will meet with service providers in the community and city staff to address the best path in providing direction to the homeless population in the City of Lansing.

NOW BE IT RESOLVED, Lansing City Council President Wood appoints Council Member Brown as Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Homelessness and Solutions, Council Member Hussain as Vice Chair, and Council Member Spitzley as Member.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Homelessness and Solutions will report their findings and recommendations to the Committee of the Whole no later than September 11, 2023.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, with the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness and Solutions, the Council President has also reviewed the functions of all the standing committees and those functions are consistent with the duties outlined in Council Rule 16.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Homelessness and Solutions will meet on the days and times set by the Committee and will be dissolved by December 11, 2023.

Council Member Brown started the conversation with talking about the plans for the Committee and asked Council Member Hussain for his thoughts on goals.

Council Member Hussain began by stating Review policies, services and resources to recommend assistance to connect the homeless to those services and resources;

-Meet with service providers in the community and city staff to address the best path to addressing homelessness (we also need to include some of the top advocates in our community that work on behalf of the homeless population, and engage members of the homeless community)

- Will report back to COW by September 11th

- Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness. Our HMIS analyst position has been vacant since September 2021. Who manages HMIS and how is this vacancy affecting the efficacy of HMIS? We need to ensure we are following federal law when it comes to our HMIS system.
- [Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool \(SPDAT\)](#); supposed to be used by Continuum of Care by law. This is an assessment tool for front-line workers at agencies that work with homeless clients to prioritize which of those clients should receive assistance first.
- Inventory of and audit City of Lansing Supported Agencies. What are the services being provided? Is there unnecessary duplication? Have we conducted a void analysis to determine what services we are not providing that we should be?
- Regional outreach and collaboration. What are our municipal partners doing to address the homelessness crisis? How do we partner?
- Work with LHC (Public Housing Agency) and others that administer vouchers in the region to ensure timely payments and better access.
- Delve into Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Program which provides rental assistance for hard-to-serve chronic homeless individuals with disabilities and chronic homeless (two-person) families with disability issues with a Housing First approach. How many units does Lansing/Ingham County have? Do we know what the need is in terms of units? Who do we partner with to increase the number of units?
- Address the idea of a 24-hour warming shelter

Council Member Brown agreed, noting that fact finding will be handled, what is the true accessibility and talking to speaking to homeless individuals for accurate examples, what are the qualifying eligibility to receive services, and start with groups with the City. This would include HRCS, City housing services and programs, and then work out to agencies and advocacy groups; DLI, Mayor's Officer, LPD, LFD, HRCS and get the stance on what they are seeing. As an outside agency, they would invite CMH. Council Member Hussain agreed to all statements by Council Member Brown.

Council Member Hussain referred to the recent arrive of public and noted that there was public comment at the Council meeting on 1/23/2023 and those same people are present and he would like to hear their public comment now.

Council Member Brown noted each member of the public would be given two (2) minutes and Council Member Hussain disagreed and asked not to time the speakers, but then added it is up to the Chairperson.

Ms. Washington spoke on her experience with working with the homeless in the community, her frustration with the funding being given but services not being provided and asked for research into agencies on what they are doing with the funds they are getting. She expanded on educating the homeless when they are provided housing, to teach them how to maintain their homes. She then provided statistics on low income housing units with Grand Ledge having 2 multi-family and Council Member Hussain asked how many units in those and she was not able to provide that but stated the Committee should research that. She then expanded on the numbers:

East Lansing – 7

Holt – 4

Haslett 3

Williamston -2

Lansing- 57

Meridian Township-0

Ms. Washington provided examples of services the homeless should be provided.

Council Member Hussain stated that the Committee should plan to have LHC, CMH, LFD, CATA, CADL and the Cardboard Prophets.

Ms. Washington asked them not to include Homeless Angels, and she would compile a list also and provide at the next meeting.

Council Member Brown acknowledge the information and stated the Committee will take inventory, ask for documentation on the services the agencies provide, who are the individuals doing the services. He also intends to individually go into the shelters and area to see what is happening. Ms. Washington recommended he visit shelters unannounced, and added that if HRCS cannot address the issues the department should be eliminated, and not to rely on anyone who receives funding from COC.

Council Member Brown added he will also include and add the court systems to the invites so they can provide documentation on what is taking place.

Mr. Rosa provided an updated on the court program and his role as the eviction diversion facilitator. His goal is to work with the families to help them elevate themselves so they don't need eviction funding.

Council Member Brown wrapped up the meeting by detailing to the public that the Committee needs to report by 9/11/2023 and dissolve 12/11/2023. This allows for 13 meetings before the 9/11/2023 date with the last one being 8/22/2023. There are options to add meetings after that if needed, but the last meeting he will invite people for input will be 7/25/2023 allowing the Committee two meetings to finalize the report.

Ms. Carter voiced her concerns on the access to funding the need for an organization that can provided funding. Council Member Brown stated his intention is to invite groups that provide for support services, one on one support, to make sure there are life skills, advocacy and they have the means to access what is available.

Council Member Hussain asked to prioritize who Council Member Brown invites and start with the people on the front-line, and Council Member Brown agreed.

**Adjourn**

Adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

Submitted by,

Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee February 28, 2023



**MINUTES**  
**Ad Hoc on Homelessness & Solutions**  
**Tuesday, February 28, 2023 @ 3:30 p.m.**  
**City Council Conference Room, 10<sup>th</sup> 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, - excused

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Renee Richmond, Council Staff  
Lisa Hagen-Lawrence, OCA  
Matt Staples, OCA  
Jennifer West, LSD  
Rose Taphouse, LSD  
Belinda Fitzpatrick  
Jason Gray, Seventh Day Homelessness Outreach Advocates  
Ulices Rosa – 54A District Court Advocacy  
Jody Washington  
David (guest)  
Daniel Arnold,  
Gabriel Biber, Haven House  
Tamera Carter, Lake Trust CU  
Tessa Reeves, Lake Trust CU  
Julie Reinhardt, Downtown Lansing Inc  
Linda Appling  
Gail Sawyer

**MINUTES**

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 24, 2023, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 2-0.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Arnold introduced himself and is attendee to listen and take information back to the streets.

Ms. Carter stated she works at Lake Trust CU and have members that encounter roadblocks and experiences with landlords and is attendee to listen and share information.

Ms. Washington stated she brought a guest to share his story and that she intended to bring guest to future meetings as well so the committee could hear their stories.

David stated he is nervous talking in front of groups but has gone from tent to tent, been homeless on the streets, and in shelters and now has a place and goes to the doctors at CMH or New Hope, but they cancel his appointments repeatedly. He doesn't believe the agencies are there to help, it takes 4-6 weeks to get a return call, adding that he feels he talks to someone different each time and has to start all over again. Ms. Washington asked him to speak on his transportation issues. David stated he can't get a bus pass because he needs the bus to get money, they say they will help him but he said they don't.

Councilmember Brown thanked him for sharing and asked what he would say is causing his struggle, is it not working. David said he is not working and the agencies don't seem to want to help him and I have to walk. Councilmember Hussain thanked David for sharing his story and for being nervous said he did very well.

Mr. Biber stated he is from Haven House in East Lansing and wanted to listen to the presentations and see how they could help.

Ms. Appling stated she lives in the City of Lansing in Eaton County and urged the Committee not to forget those that are in Eaton County. She continued that everyone always talks about Ingham and not Eaton. Ms. Appling mentioned that assisting people and allowing them to put money into escrow may encourage landlords into doing repairs, as well as adding that legal representation for those being evicted is needed.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **PRESENTATION – Lansing School District**

Ms. West stated she has been with the LSD for 23 years and a resident of Lansing for three decades on the southside, Ms. Taphouse stated she has been with LSD for 28 years. Councilmember Brown asked that they explain what their program is. Ms. West spoke on the following and handed out cards with the information and a QR Code:

The Families Overcoming Rough Times (F.O.R.T.) Program is a new program that assists Lansing School District students who are living in temporary or inadequate living situations.

The F.O.R.T. Program assists qualified students with:

- transportation to and from school from wherever the student is living
- access to the free meals programs at the school
- uniforms and clothing necessary for the child to attend and participate in school
- school supplies to the student
- cap and gown so they may participate in graduation commencement
- enrolling students within 24 hours even when the student does not have birth certificate and other vital record
- & many other needs that the student may need so that they may fully participate and achieve at school

Ms. West continued that in a typical they see maybe 500 cases in a full year, but into February already of 2023 and it is between 500-600 already in temporary or no housing. They are seeing a lot on the streets and try to get them connected with hotels, or like the Advent House. They are doing summer camps to build resilience to the trauma they see, education support, and mental health support for students as well as staff. Ms. West referenced a large packeted, stating that even to access free mental health they have to read all this first and that is a barrier along with transportation, bus passes, clothing, food, etc. the list goes on.

Ms. Taphouse concurred and added that the program gives them a chance to graduate, go to college, and be successful. Laundry is also a hurdle because hotels don't have access for that, some families don't speak English or read and the communication is difficult so we've started provided cell phones when we can.

Ms. West talked about families losing their house and being red tagged, losing jobs, domestic violence, and the older siblings are couch surfing and then the absences rise and even just missing two days a month is astronomical with a child. Councilmember Hussain spoke that the numbers are catastrophic and they see it in his school district but not to that extent, there is a need for affordable housing and to take this regionally as well as in the city. Ms. West indicated they are doing gas cards when they can, the best outcome is if they can stay in the district they started even if they temporarily move out so they don't have to make new friends, adjust to different teaching.

Councilmember Hussain informed the group that the committee's intention for the first few months is to listen to the presentations and then maybe locally through ordinance, budgetary, or community partners come up with a solution and report out to Council in September.

Ms. West continued that they are probably under reporting the amount, and Ms. Taphouse added that they have the opportunity to identify those at risk but parents are protecting their kids and finding shelter on their own and then are no longer eligible for assistance. Ms. West finished that at the end of the day they are an education entity and are doing everything they can to remove barriers, they do not hire mental health professionals but are contracting those services. Councilmember Brown asked Ms. West if they could send that list of providers to them, and they agreed.

#### PRESENTATION – Seventh Day Homelessness Outreach Advocates

Mr. Gray started the homeless outreach in 2017 with Greg Pratt, he was discharged from the Army and after two years got addicted to pain medication, hit rock bottom, and then found Christ. He had everything to be happy about, wife and kids and then was homeless, saying it can happen to anybody. He continued he is a vet and has trouble getting mental health, if the VA says they don't have the resources, then who does.

Councilmember Brown as an advocate on a typical week what services and obstacles do you see. Mr. Gray responded they handout sleeping bags, food, wood, call ahead for shelters to get beds. One struggle recently during the code blue is turning people away. He indicated he went 'under cover' and Holy Cross denied him and then dodged his calls when he followed up. Councilmember Brown asked if they had beds available during the code blue, and Mr. Gray said they told him no. Hotels aren't any options for homeless so they end up in red tagged homes, under bridges, in parks all places they can't be, and that he is currently trying to get tents but they are expensive.

Councilmember Hussain thanked Mr. Gray and stated that himself, Councilmember Brown, and Mr. Pratt sat down and discussed a few things. Speaking generally he is wondering what the biggest issue is, whether HMIS, mental health services, service providers, etc.

Councilmember Brown thanks Mr. Gray for coming and speaking to the committee.

#### **DISCUSSION/ACTION**

##### DISCUSSION – Committee Intentions

Councilmember Hussain asked if items for the next meeting have been determined. Ms. Richmond indicated that Sparrow Hospital and Cardboard Prophets have confirmed and McLaren is still pending. Councilmember Brown mentioned the next meeting is March 14<sup>th</sup>, and the schedule is the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month.

**OTHER**

Ms. Reeves spoke that this is dear to her heart and that she was homeless at one point, a teenage single mother and still hearing the same problems of no resources. Councilmember Brown asked what her biggest barriers, Ms. Reeves stated judgement that people had toward her and transportation as she would need a job near the bus route and sometimes had to take three different buses.

Councilmember Brown lastly questioned what training of soft skills are being done for the providers, everyone gets burnt out and it leaves a negative impact, are they just processing the numbers.

**ADJOURN**

Adjourned at 4:53pm

Submitted by

Renee Richmond, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on March 14, 2023



**MINUTES**  
**Ad Hoc on Homelessness & Solutions**  
**Tuesday, March 14, 2023 @ 3:30 p.m.**  
**City Council Conference Room, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor City Hall**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council Member Brown called the meeting to order at 3:31pm

**PRESENT**

Council Member Jeffrey Brown, Chair  
Council Member Adam Hussain, Vice Chair  
Council Member Patricia Spitzley, Member – arrived at 3:34pm

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Renee Richmond, Council Staff  
Lisa Hagen-Lawrence, OCA  
Matt Staples, OCA  
John Shaski, Sparrow Hospital  
Mike Karl, Cardboard Prophets  
Linda Karl, Cardboard Prophets  
Gail Sawyer  
Daniel Arnold  
Belinda Fitzpatrick  
Michael Lynn  
Councilmember Jackson  
Norma Bauer  
Jody Washington  
Sherri Davio  
Tessa Reeves

**MINUTES**

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 28, 2023, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 2-0.

**PRESENTATIONS**

**Sparrow Hospital**

Mr. Shaski is the Government Relations Officer and has been with Sparrow for 15 years, throughout 127 years they have provided compassionate care partnering with various local organizations like Cristo Rey, Holy Cross (which used to be VOA).

Councilmember Spitzley arrived at 3:34

Mr. Shaski continued they also operate a mobile clinic staffed by physician and family medical residents to help bridge the gap. Councilmember Brown said he hears the vision and the support with the health

center but is looking on if there is an uptick and what is the hospital doing. Mr. Shaski stated that trends have been consistent with 5-10 patients per day in the ER for services. Councilmember Brown asked about during COVID, Mr. Shaski did not know specifically during 2020. Adding that they come in seeking shelter, food, respite, over the counter medications and they see a modest increase in cold weather, during the polar vortex years ago we had a number seeking shelter in the lobby. Mr. Shaski mentioned Joan Jackson Johnson and how she had a way with people and would come in and talk with people, was amazing and yielded respect, he continued to read a comment from case management:

There is difficulty in the homeless population when they have medical needs and a homeless shelter is unable to accommodate. We do encounter many of these very vulnerable, and often very ill, adult patients. In the Detroit market, the Salvation Army has initiated a "Medical Respite" clinic. This innovative approach to care transitions of the homeless is something completely lacking in the mid-Michigan area

Many of the Medical health plans subsidize this type of setting. The Sparrow case managers have referred cases to the medical respite site when the patient has the appropriate subsidizing health plan. This type of setting allows a homeless individual to recover and heal in a supportive setting, connects them to medical care, and transitions them to the appropriate housing situation when recovery is complete.

Mr. Shaski indicated in his roll he is aware the state is focused on number of issues, medical respite care centers, and they will advocate for those. Councilmember Spitzley asked what the cost breakdown for respite clinic and partners are, Mr. Shaski didn't have specifics and would be happy to dig in and check, he will follow up with Ms. Richmond.

Councilmember Brown indicated he would like to have Mr. Shaski return to speak on medical respite, Mr. Shaski responded that he didn't know if Sparrow would lead the charge on that and suggested Ingham Community Health.

Councilmember Hussain inquired about the UM takeover, everybody talks about disruption but not preventing and hope that Sparrow and McLaren continue to care and be concerned. Councilmember Spitzley asked if a representative with McLaren was present. Ms. Richmond stated she received confirmation but has not seen anybody. Councilmember Spitzley continued that she has heard that EMTs and EMS are told to go to Sparrow and not McLaren, so it is like there is only one hospital. Mr. Shaski stated that Sparrow is a Trauma 1 hospital and on the night of the MSU tragedy they also had three traumatic vehicle accidents and if the next nearest is Grand Rapids and Ann Arbor.

Councilmember Brown asked if there is any vision for supporting homeless directly, Mr. Shaski said he did not know, but it is a concern and this is their city too and these are their community members. He finished with staff challenges he is unaware of what more can be done but is open for ideas.

#### McLaren Hospital

No one present.

#### Cardboard Prophets

Mr. Karl gave a brief introduction, he's been doing street outreach since 2010 and after being with the Homeless Angel, in 2017 decided to do something separate. He is the founder of Cardboard Prophets along with his mother Linda Karl who runs the Capital Area Diaper Bank. He proceeded to handout a folder to the Committee Members. Stating that the biggest hurdle is to get a category 1 for homeless, there is way too much paperwork from the State of Michigan (SOM), in the packet there is a verification form and they need this and an HMIS card# to be documented. The shelters like City Rescue Mission (CRM) do not use the number, using religious exemptions but still get money from the city.

Councilmember Spitzley commented if they are claiming religious exemption how are getting money from the state and city, and the people aren't documented, Mr. Karl voiced he didn't know, but then they can't get to the next level. Councilmember Brown asked as an example if he is homeless and goes to

CRM and not documented he can't get housing support, Mr. Karl said not without the HMIS but you can still go to CRM. Councilmember Brown asked what other shelters, Mr. Karl indicated Holy Cross and Advent House. Councilmember Brown asked Mr. Shaski if Holy Cross is the shelter connected to the health center, Mr. Shaski confirmed.

Mr. Karl continued that the shelters aren't following the process, stating that Tim Bays owns a mortgage company that owns one of the hotels so he is benefiting, saying holding people for a year then moving to personal properties. Councilmember Brown asked if he had documentation on this, and Mr. Karl referenced the pink binder clipped portion of the folder he handed out. Mr. Karl said there is a scale from 1-10 rating the severity of homelessness and 4 is chronically homeless. Receiving permission to share Sam's story he stated she has been homeless 100 times but things were missing, on paper she qualified for housing (9+), put in rapid housing in Todd Dowrick homes that didn't meet habitability standards, sewage in basements, electrical not done so Sam went back into the system. Councilmember Spitzley asked when you go to CRM you have to demonstrate homelessness for x amount of day, Mr. Karl confirmed.

Councilmember Brown asked how Capital Area Housing is and Mr. Karl responded they control the housing money. Councilmember Brown said if he has this case study why are these groups passing money and the system broken how do we have these fiduciary's passing money, Mr. Karl did not know.

Mr. Karl said he brought a guest, Jessica to give her story if the committee allowed.

Councilmember Jackson left the meeting at 4:00pm

Jessica stated she became homeless the end of 2021 due to a domestic violence situation, was dropped off at the Causeway Hotel by CPS and they paid for three days. She reached out to Holy Cross and they advised her they were not a domestic violence shelter and wasn't able to help, so Jessica reached back out to CPS and they extended her another two weeks in the hotel. After that ended, she went to America's Best saying it is not a safe hotel and holy cross continued to refuse her help or put her on a hotel program. Councilmember Brown stated for the record why do we keep giving money if this continues to happen and this began in December 2021. Councilmember Spitzley asked if anyone from HRCS contacted her, Jessica said no. Continuing, Jessica was passed to the Advent House still with no verification or HMIS ID, they used all her funds to pay for the hotel from Dec 31 to June 15, she was on a Section 8 waitlist and found her funds were being used illegally. Every time she asked a case worker, she was told they'd look into it and then she got a different one. Until Mr. Karl reached out and put pressure on them for an ID, they said they couldn't. Jessica added that by using her funds illegally they put her "address" as Holy Cross not the hotel.

Councilmember Brown commented he was on the HRCS Board and they had grants.

Jessica added she finally got a Section 8 voucher but was told by the LHC it would be 9 months to get it because money going to Holy Cross and that when she found out they changed her "address". The first three months were paid upfront but for some reason she had late fees and the apartment complex told her they were aware that LHC is always late and even though she was incurring \$50/monthly late fees she wouldn't have to pay. Jessica finally added that she received assistance from a gracious person and paid the apt. complex.

Mr. Karl added the big issue is when not documented is messes up everyone, he reference the folders he gave the committee and there is a list of names and numbers for them. Councilmember Spitzley asked him for three things they should do. Mr. Karl responded:

1. First issue is HMIS, every person in a shelter should have an intake and get an ID
2. He challenges them to walk up to just one homeless person in a shelter and ask for their HMIS ID, more than likely they won't have one

3. Address the demerits received in shelters, like if someone misses chapel they get a demerit and if it happens again they get another.

Councilmember Brown thanked Jessica for sharing and Mr. Karl for his presentation and stated he would like to look through the folder and possibly have him back to a meeting. Councilmember Spitzley asked Jessica if she's spoken to the Housing Ombudsman, Jessica didn't know there was one.

### **DISCUSSION/ACTION**

#### **DISCUSSION – Committee Intension**

Councilmember Brown is waiting on a few follow-ups and will confirm with Ms. Richmond.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Washington expressed her gratitude towards Cardboard Prophets and all she's learned from them, and commented that CoC is broken, Housing Ombudsman is worthless, the grants are a joke.

Mr. Lynn mentioned that the passion out of this committee is amazing and can't wait to see the actions that come out.

Ms. Davio mentioned she has worked in housing and care, she loves what Cardboard Prophets are doing, unsure how she can help but has the skills to do so and has volunteered with Habitat for Humanity, Sparrow Nest, etc.

Ms. Bauer mentioned she has seen people sleeping in the corner at Sparrow lobby, Cedar Place is terrible, locks broken, and there are lots of places that the homeless aren't counted, so keep an eye out.

Mr. Arnold spoke on his approval and likes what is happening in this committee.

### **OTHER**

#### **ADJOURN**

Adjourned at 5:10pm

Submitted by

Renee Richmond, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on March 28, 2023



**MINUTES**  
**Ad Hoc on Homelessness & Solutions**  
**Tuesday, March 28, 2023 @ 3:30 p.m.**  
**City Council Conference Room, 10<sup>th</sup> 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  
Rosalyn 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. 24<sup>th</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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 May 9, 2023



**MINUTES**  
**Ad Hoc on Homelessness & Solutions**  
**Tuesday, April 11, 2023 @ 3:30 p.m.**  
**City Council Conference Room, 10<sup>th</sup> 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  
Matt Staples, OCA  
Hope Lovell, LoveJoy Community Services  
Brooke Hall, CMHA-CEI  
Sara Lurie, CEO CMHA-CEI  
Norma Bauer  
Jazmine Anderson  
Paul Anderson  
Tasha Reeves  
Gail Sawyer  
Ulises Rosa, 54-A District Court

**MINUTES**

Councilmember Brown tabled the minutes from March 28, 2023 until the next meeting, April 25, 2023.

**PRESENTATIONS**

Councilmember Brown explained that the Committee meetings are now streaming on YouTube, when speaking please speak up and come to the table, there will be public comment at the end of the meeting.

**CMHA-CEI; Brooke Hall, Housing & Residential**

Ms. Lurie indicated she just wanted to listen to what everyone had to say and that Brooke Hall was the presenter today. Also, their agency is heavily 85% funded by Medicaid so their flexibility is limited, she brought a few brochures for the group and office to have.

Ms. Hall indicated mental health services provided are their main focus and build on support, their support team has 3 staff, they have 23 internal programs. They look for the least restrictive option available, group homes are ok but for some lose the independence feeling. Her team walks alongside the case managers to find what the particular individual needs best. They try to assist in avoiding eviction, but some cannot care for themselves, they provide and directly operation three foster care

homes, less than 30 beds in the tri-county area. Councilmember Hussain asked where they are located as she states tri-county are they in Lansing, Ms. Hall confirmed Lansing area. Councilmember Brown asked how many in the city total, Ms. Hall said less than 40 adult foster care homes, some are smaller with about 6 beds, about 130 on mental health side. Councilmember Brown thanked for the explanation, with CMH so multi-dimensional and her describing the restrictions because of Medicaid, what are her thoughts on why mental health isn't getting or receiving services. Ms. Hall thinks CMH does provide the services, there are many factors, they may not need inpatient care, may not be appropriately cared for in a shelter environment which could upset them. They have Bridges Crisis Unit as a hospital diversion to get connected to services and onto next steps and that's 16 bed short-term stay maximum 14 days. Ms. Hall added peer support shelters are huge, her team only has one peer support staff, Ms. Lurie added they have two peer recovery coaches that visit shelters on a regular basis. Councilmember Brown cited he lived in Oklahoma previously and they had training with the community and development, will or can CMH do anything within the City, Ms. Hall recommended MDHHS.

Councilmember Hussain asked as a tri-county entity what can be done better as a city maybe policy/budget, what are other municipalities doing. Ms. Hall said nothing, supportive housing projects are here, symptom of urban area and stricter laws, need an advocate at the state level. She added that in order for CMH to help folks they need to move to the area, in places like Colorado and California they work with state government to provide housing support like they are, also rural transportation is an obstacle to navigate because need more support than city bus.

Councilmember Brown asked is there any type of place for the individuals that have mental health challenges, and what kind of numbers for example if they have 1,000 people what percentage are in group homes. Ms. Hall was unsure of accurate data but they support between 6,000-7,000 and estimate 200 are housing instability which means couch homeless, staying at friends or maybe a group home. Ms. Lurie added they try roommate matching to see if can bring people together to share rent but need landlords on board. Councilmember Brown asked if any agencies like Advent House or Holy Cross participate to get grant funds, Ms. Hall said yes they ask but they take the lead and CMH offer support. Councilmember Brown asked what they would say is the number one challenge and how is addiction included, Ms. Hall said the state hospitals have closed beds so less inpatient care and CMH has to manage and community goes back to housing that doesn't support the level of care needed, the addiction portion complicates treatment, could have underlying condition or just primarily substance use, it's an in/out cycle through the ER. Ms. Lurie informed the committee that they are currently working on a Crisis Stabilization Center (CSC) as a pilot project, currently they can only observe for 23 hours and cannot detain unless they go through a petition, in the CSC they could have a secured 72 hour unit to keep if it's a substance abuse issue and withdrawal while in a secure unit. Councilmember Hussain asked where they are in a timeline for it, Ms. Lurie again said pilot is starting in May and still developing, they cannot finalize until state finalizes the certificate process, very specific things in a secure unit, doors have to open a certain way, room sizes, etc. Councilmember Hussain asked how many beds, Ms. Lurie responded eventually 12 adult and 12 youth.

Mr. Rosa introduced himself from 54A District Court and had an individual that needs assistance and would like to speak to CMH afterward and handed is card out.

Ms. Bauer spoke on mental health hospitals that were closed due to abuse and at the time legislators didn't understand the same people victimized needed the services from CMH and severely undercut funding. She hopes someone is working on getting funds from legislature and just realized there is a Tri-County Regional Planning Commission and nobody from the City attends and thinks they should.

Councilmember Hussain asked what other revenue CMH receives besides the 85% from Medicaid, Ms. Lurie responded they get state fund dollars, mental health block grants from the state, one that funds the veterans navigation team, money from counties, contracts for providers like McLaren where they have a crisis staff member, and provide clinical supervision to behavioral health staff under contract

with Ingham County Health Dept. Councilmember Brown asked if they were receiving anything from the City of Lansing, Ms. Lurie apologize they do get some to support Bridges and fills the gaps for room/board and funding for the recovery center. Ms. Hall added that room/board is \$1,027.50 based on the SSI rate which is \$900 and apply for a bump through DHHS. Councilmember Brown asked where the 1027 is room/board is for. Ms. Hall said adult foster care home, Bridges is licensed. Councilmember Brown said so limited housing but our hotel program is 2000/mo. so a supportive environment is 1027. Ms. Lurie reminded that it is a congregate setting, and Ms. Hall indicated it has 6 beds shared room, Councilmember Brown asked typically how many people per room, Ms. Lurie answered two.

Councilmember Hussain mentioned Ms. Bauer spoke on cuts, historically what is the biggest they've seen for example state general funding. Ms. Lurie said in 2015 there was a monumental cut and everybody thought they'd be covered by Medicaid and that wasn't the case. The State reduced by 60%, which they had to stop providing some services and closed Richard's Place. Both Ms. Lurie and Ms. Hall spoke that if it happened again programs not funded by Medicaid would likely be shutdown and if you don't spend what they have, they have to return it.

Paul Anderson asked how they can reduce administration and regulatory barriers continuing to face as community. Ms. Lurie responded she had the opportunity to testify at the house health policy committee, and the amount of accountability of reporting and rules is hinderance, eliminate duplication and wonders if they review actual things, for them more flexible dollars.

Councilmember Brown asked about their support for veterans. Ms. Hall again stated the Veterans Navigation team, they work alongside the homeless and Holy Cross, no barriers so can work with anyone, they coordinate directly with the VA. Councilmember Brown asked how many on the team and approximately how many do they serve, Ms. Lurie indicated three staff and close to 100 and staff are veterans as well.

Councilmember Brown commended both Ms. Hall and Mr. Rosa on their efforts and thanked CMH.

#### LoveJoy Community Services; Hope Lovell, Executive Director

Ms. Lovell explained her role and what LoveJoy Community Services does. They are a provider of CMH, been around for about 15 years around when the psychiatric hospital was closing and jumped in to help people, finding away to keep them integrated into the community setting to avoid institutionalization which in their language looks different, 1) hospital, 2) jail, and 3) nursing home. She started working with various CMHs and hospitals to provide care for those who are at risk for institutionalization. This includes those mentally ill (MI), intellectually/developmentally mentally disable, chronically ill and traumatic brain injury, their goal and guide is to provide support to stay in the community whether it is room/board, group home, or home care which we call community living supports (CLS). CLS is a catch net service for example those that are MI whose level of care say they don't need group home and are 24/7 assistance. We assess to see if they need that support of 1 or 2 staff or do room/board setting and give community living support.

Talking about the homeless, they work with hospitals, VA, CMHs many clients some who may be not guilty by reason of insanity, those are highest risk of homelessness coming out of jail. Work with program called NHFT (Nursing Home Facility Transition), let's say you get someone chronically ill go to the hospital and have stroke or something and all of a sudden they look up and can no longer live alone, hospital moves them to a nursing home and the nursing home says no longer can stay, so they reach out to the community to find housing, maybe Burkhardt, hotel program if no funds, maybe if they have a social security number be part of a senior apt if social security or living with a friend or family. When put into apt with no access to care and then 30 days back in hospital, it's a cycle. Ask ourselves how do homeless get home care, worked with VA and Disability Network, hotel programs, see individuals most at risk not just homeless but that have a form of pre-existing condition (maybe a stroke, speech

problems) if they had a home, they could get a script for an agency to go in, to provide service but with no address they are released.

In About 2015 pushed providers to reimage setting and push for choice (roommate/staff, no rules) unless it is articulated in what we call residential providers upland of care. Many providers found couldn't keep people safe with this new policy push and unfortunately ask about numbers and what happened, the level of care got dropped and rates got dropped and they got discharged. If there was availability for staff, they would get some form of CLS and get room/board but didn't happen for everyone. At that time looked at more supportive services module.

In her, personal experience she has traveled the country looking at various housing programs and adult based, goal is to keep people in the community and housed but give support, whether food stamps, guardianship, coordination of bills, care, assistance with doctor appts, being their voice and advocating for them, or if high needs (traumatic brain injury) found that is supportive housing module. This looks different all over, most unique in Detroit area, in the old yellow pages building (old fox building) had approximately 125 units and made all permanent Supportive Housing and on the main level included PACE (Program with All-inclusive Care for Elderly), it's an all-day adult program. In a shelter in the morning you have to get out so in the adult day program was the safety net program to get them access to doctors, physicals, social workers, activities to help get positive socialization and training, very practical skill building,

Detroit looks different than other environments not a lot of places you're going to go to with that high of a concentration of chronic homeless, at risk of homeless, but it works for them. Also seen like Lansing scattered site type of module where providers don't control or own real estate and but contract with landlords and send case managers. It's great it gives choice, however flip side it's difficult to get that intense support for the individual and keep them in housing. Before you know it they are again living in setting as unsafe or maybe uninhabitable, or just not optimal for their safety or remaining housed.

Councilmember Brown asked about Peckham and if they are helping, Ms. Lurie believes Peckham draws from a number of different populations but not viewed the same way, they are more of an employer with skills training. Councilmember Brown then asked if PACE is a government agency, Ms. Lurie responded own entity for the elderly. Ms. Lovell responded they are like an adult day care on steroids, a senior community services like the VOA and do serve the homeless. Adding as an adult foster care provider they pay her, Councilmember Brown asked if they have to be disabled, Ms. Lovell acknowledged yes and over 55.

Councilmember Brown asked Ms. Lovell what she believes for this committee is the gap that needs to be addressed. Ms. Lovell stated the support for individuals with chronic health conditions/needs, because people don't want to come in, the body breaks down and the risk of high cost of care are the frequent fliers and revolving doors through the system.

Councilmember Hussain asked about the housing piece, Ms. Lovell stated with MSHDA requires of developers in the application is amenities, you get points for, urban area, if you are competitive, one mile away from grocery store, or school/bus stop. So when that developer is looking for a space/site this is taken into consideration.

Councilmember Brown asked Mr. Rosa working with CMH and Hope what is the percentage trying to avert eviction. Mr. Rosa stated the data just started to be collected in March and the biggest number he's seen is a little over 100 surveys with 80% women and 60% claiming disability.

## **DISCUSSION/ACTION**

### **DISCUSSION – Committee Intention**

No discussion.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jazmine Anderson spoke about working at DLI and just wanted to learn more, be supportive and an advocate. Councilmember Brown asked what she is seeing from working downtown, she replied that the homelessness population is definitely going up and the winter was hard. Ms. Anderson continued that she spoke to an individual recently and is curious if they know what's available or uninterested in what is sometimes. Ms. Hall spoke on the CMH-DEI "Mental Health First Aid" training available that offers a 7-hour training for professionals, community members, caregivers and families to learn the skills needed to reach out and provide initial support to someone who may be developing a mental health, substance use disorder or experiencing a crisis, the number is (517) 346-5232 or [prevention@ceicmh.org](mailto:prevention@ceicmh.org).

Tesha Reeves spoke on also working downtown at Lake Trust and glad that she came to the meeting it was very informative.

## **OTHER**

### **ADJOURN**

Adjourned at 4:51pm

Submitted by

Renee Richmond, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on April 25, 2023



**MINUTES**  
**Ad Hoc on Homelessness & Solutions**  
**Tuesday, April 25, 2023 @ 3:30 p.m.**  
**City Council Conference Room, 10<sup>th</sup> 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  
Matt Staples, 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 as Amended on May 9, 2023



**MINUTES**  
**Ad Hoc on Homelessness & Solutions**  
**Tuesday, May 9, 2023 @ 3:30 p.m.**  
**City Council Conference Room, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor City Hall**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council Member Brown called the meeting to order at 3:42pm

**PRESENT**

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

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Renee Richmond, Council Staff  
Lisa Hagen-Lawrence, OCA  
Matt Staples, OCA  
Mike Lynn  
Ulises Rosa, 54A District Court  
Rita Dunlop  
Jody Washington

**MINUTES**

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER SPITZLEY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MARCH 28, 2023.  
MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO AMMEND THE MINUTES OF APRIL 25, 2023 TO REMOVE LISA HAGEN-LAWRENCE AND ADD MATT STAPLES AS ATTENDING. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

**DISCUSSION/ACTION**

**DISCUSSION – Committee Recommendations and Reporting**

Councilmember Brown indicated there were no presentations today and wanted to review what's been discussed previously and look towards recommendations and reporting out. Councilmember Spitzley noted the presenters so far have been very helpful but feels input from the Administration or HRCS is needed prior to any recommendations, otherwise what's submitted is delegitimized. Councilmember Hussain agreed and mentioned bringing in County and State officials, the Committee has to report to COW by September 11<sup>th</sup>, but can continue meetings afterward until December 11<sup>th</sup>.

Councilmember Spitzley spoke on last years Ad Hoc and suggested inviting Rep. Emily Dievendorf. Councilmember Brown then confirmed a few members of the Ingham County Board of Commissioners, and Councilmembers Hussain and Spitzley both suggested Rep. Elissa Slotkin, Sen. Sarah Anthony, and Sen. Sam Singh.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jody Washington spoke on that County Commissioners that she has talked to and that they have a bigger voice in the housing decision, it should be more regional and the reps are out there. She continued that one group/department should not be handling the money.

Mike Lynn mentioned he received a call from Krystal at LSJ for an update on the 24/hr warming centers and that the Mayor came back with a 2.2 million dollar cost, with a breakdown of approximately \$600,00 for a facility and \$500,000 for staffing, etc. No address was given and the is was for just one building. Councilmember Spitzley mentioned last years conversation with the mayor was it can't be one place and she had suggested opening Schmidt, Letts, Foster, and Gier Community Centers, but the response was a staffing issue and for people to work overnight was hard to find. Councilmember Brown commented he thought all these may fall with Bishop Maxwell and faith based initiative and getting volunteers. Ms. Washington added maybe open Otto as well, Derek Knox would open, the homeless can't see the alerts on TVs or computers, churches have offered to open up, adding when the fledge opened it was sanctioned.

Ulices Rosa mentioned he is currently trying to help a pregnant/homeless woman get into a shelter since Thursday, and the shelters say no. He also mentioned that the eviction side of things are higher since April 2019, passing pre-pandemic. During COVID people got all this money but nobody helped them be efficient with it, they just spent it and now are getting evicted. He added that he has tried helping over 500 families, need landlords involved, all state shelters. He concluded that they schedule people for eviction diversion but only about 10% may show up. Councilmember Brown asked how many staff Mr. Rosa had, he replied it was just him.

Councilmember Spitzley stated as she recalls the Housing Ombudsman was created as the one stop for all folks, initially was looking at a legal background but not a lawyer, to offer direction and provide help with rental clinics, education and knowing their rights if evicted and/or red tagged, in addition to working with HRCS Department, work with all departments and based out of the Mayor's Office. When the previous administration left, Joe McDonald needed somewhere to go and he was placed in this position and in HRCS. Councilmember Brown asked if Mr. Rosa is working with Joe, Mr. Rosa answered that Mr. McDonald will reach out monthly with some questions, what he does with the information he does not know.

Rita Dunlop introduced herself, she is with RPOAMM, she wanted to come and see how she and other owners can help. Councilmember Brown asked if she's worked with HRCS, she indicated she isn't aware of who they are. Councilmember Brown then asked if her group works with the Housing Ombudsman to help the homeless get placed into units that they may have available, Mr. Dunlop answered at this time they are creating a list, she's received lots of referrals, adding some owners are reluctant to rent/house to the homeless due to they've been isolated and may destroy property and vacant units will not be furnished. Councilmember Brown noted that working with HRCS can help with barriers, and addressing housing, mental health, rehabilitation, etc.

Councilmember Brown asked how many owners, Mr. Rosa answered 135 landlords. Councilmember Spitzley made a recommendation to figure out how much to operate the existing community centers (Schmidt, Letts, Foster, Gier, and Otto). On average Lansing has 10 cold days/year, so to staff, have coffee and a Community Police Officer, maybe an EMS on hand.

Ms. Hagen-Lawrence left at 4:50pm

Councilmember Brown inquired budget wise about taking for example 200k from one department and 100k from another to support eviction prevention and warming centers. Councilmember Spitzley commented they continue with the same issue of too many people doing the same thing. Councilmember Hussain noted Mr. Rosa is doing what the housing ombudsman is doing.

Councilmember Brown asked if funding is going to the housing ombudsman, Councilmember Spitzley stated that is a question for the Internal Auditor.

**OTHER**

**ADJOURN**

Adjourned at 4:54pm

Submitted by

Renee Richmond, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on June 13, 2023



**MINUTES**  
**Ad Hoc on Homelessness & Solutions**  
**Tuesday, June 13, 2023 @ 3:30 p.m.**  
**City Council Conference Room, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor City Hall**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council Member Brown called the meeting to order at 3:32pm

**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  
Matt Staples, OCA  
Natasha Atkinson, Legislative Director for Rep. Emily Dievendorf  
Kim Coleman, HRCS  
Joe McDonald, HRCS  
Toni Young, HRCS  
Ulices Rosa, 54A District Court  
William Walker  
Norma Bauer  
Belinda Fitzpatrick  
Jesse Lasorda  
Trisha Washburn  
Rita Dunlop  
Councilmember Jackson

**MINUTES**

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 09, 2023 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 2-0.

**DISCUSSION/ACTION**

**DISCUSSION – Representative Emily Dievendorf on homelessness overview and intentions for the county**

Natasha Atkinson introduced herself as the Legislative Director for Representative Emily Dievendorf's office. She stated that the Representative is taking a strong stance on not only homelessness but also renter's rights, understanding that housing is a right and that there is work to do to bring equity. They are proposing a homeless bill of rights and renter's bill of rights. When look at renters they have just cause evictions which effect the people that have month to month leases and how they can get evicted and what stands for an eviction.

Councilmember Jackson arrived at 3:34pm

Ms. Atkinson continued that from the people reaching out to our office is on the verge of homelessness, return citizens and discrimination within the housing industry that can prevent people from getting housing, they've been working with nation outside, also discussion relocation issues on red tag houses and know that's been a burden on city. Their office has also had talks with the mayor and about the response with the city to re-house those who are in red tag homes. Noticing with Red tags there are two different circumstances. One is re-housing and asking landlords to take the cost on, and two is red and pink tags where they can provide assistance to the landlords understanding that, in talks with the association of landlords, the majority of those who are housing are not wealthy, so burden of cost is on them as well and how can we alleviate. Their office has heard from Code Enforcement and that if people reached out earlier and explain the situation, both may be able to compromise and get in front of it. The want to balance the scales and protect the tenants but provide the landlords with resources so not having to go that route.

Councilmember Jackson left at 3:38pm

Councilmember Brown asked in talking with constituents where small mom/pop landlords versus the big corporations, if there is support or programs they are putting together. Ms. Atkinson noted in talks they've discussed a requirement that goes along with a renewal to license to rent, possibly require an educational class for the landlords to take and home buyers and have possibly presenters to talk and educate landlords on the barriers to housing, how to properly protect themselves in doing wrong things. Knowing their rights could alleviate the stress of the outcomes.

Councilmember Brown asked Mr. Rosa what group he was working with, and he responded the Rental Property Association of Mid-Michigan (RPAOMM). Ms. Atkinson believes the group they've spoken to is in Ypsilanti. Her office is seeing that landlords want to be accountable, responsible and want to help, and not have constant overturn of tenants. Their Renter's Bill is almost 27 bills packed into one package. There is equity in the bill and not attacking the landlords, clear outline who is responsible for what.

Councilmember Brown asked how the residents find out about the bill, where can they look. Ms. Atkinson indicated the bills are in the proposed phase and have not gone to the housing committee yet. I would recommend reaching out to some of the agencies like Nation Outside, Tony Gant's office or their representative's office. Ms. Atkinson gave the phone number and email for her office which is 517-373-2277, email is [Emilydievendorf@house.mi.gov](mailto:Emilydievendorf@house.mi.gov) also they can find it on the State of Michigan page. They are District 77 and are located in Court Anderson House building, Office #1096. People do not need an appointment to walk in but may need one to have a discussion.

Councilmember Hussain asked Ms. Atkinson spoke of a 25 bill package and talk a lot about equitable housing which can mean a lot of things. Have they in part of this package do away with exclusionary zoning, asking because some municipalities are moving forward with their own housing code. Adding in reality as an example, if someone is poor, they don't have to live in the City of Lansing. But that said it's difficult to get local partners to take on some responsibilities, so are you looking at that. Ms. Atkinson responded that is a good question for the Representative to answer but what she does know, is there has been talks and no-one has stepped forward to propose that yet. She knows the Representative's position is absolutely not and nobody should be told to live in or not live in a certain area. Councilmember Hussain also asked in talking about landlords financial responsibility, what does that look like. Ms. Atkinson answered the way they are working with LSB (the lawyers that help them) discussing relocation up to certain amount and size, like a family currently in a 3 bedroom apartment and a landlord can't put them in a single room hotel. She added there has to be a cap they are not sure yet and looking for advice on how to enforce, and take into consideration, it is going to be difficult to put a line on a certain amount so might have to be done based on number of units rented.

Councilmember Hussain asked when finding someplace to move a tenant to is it going to be 60-90 days, or when the property is in compliance. Ms. Atkinson stated consideration will have to be made pending how many units they may need. Councilmember Hussain also mentioned that Ms. Atkinson referenced fair housing at the state level, what does that look like, and is that going to be applied consistently across the state or more for municipalities to opt into. Ms. Atkinson stated their fair chance housing is in reference to their housing bill of rights, and Councilmember Brown said Nation Outside advocates for 2<sup>nd</sup> chances and also calls their proposal the same thing. Ms. Atkinson acknowledged that Rep. Aiyash is working with Nation Outside through the housing committee as and once it does pass, they hope it would be state as opposed to municipality.

Councilmember Hussain inquired about any data that says most landlords are small business owners with multiple homes or is it an assumption. Ms. Atkinson responded they got their numbers from MSHDA and unsure how it was collected.

Ms. Atkinson went on to talk about the homeless bill of rights, this will aid the population significantly on how to assist in rapid re-housing, employment, education, etc. Councilmember Brown asked for elaboration on that, Ms. Atkinson stated like the need of the warming/cooling centers, goal is to get funding to implement more workers into working with the homeless and money to agencies who cannot provide for rapid re-housing. Councilmember Brown asked Mr. Rosa to introduce himself and explain what he has dealt with for rapid re-housing. Mr. Rosa said for him it is folks in shelters with section 8, and vouchers trying to get into section 8 housing but because of the red tags they expire can't get in and people on the street can't get into shelters. The evictions most recently the May pre-COVID they had 81 writs, this May 123 writs. 52% increase. Rapids rehousing is just a buzz word nothing is happening rapidly. Ms. Atkinson added they are hoping for budget money to go into programming, fund development as MSHDA had a great program for owners for age stock to allow funding to repair and receive incentives for renting to people with section 8 vouchers, etc. Councilmember Brown stated after some talks landlords are reluctant because of damages, and Ms. Atkinson suggested maybe a deposit for damages.

Councilmember Brown brought up employment and helping those who can and want to work, but may have gaps in history or lack of education, it's challenging enough for those that do have the education but those that are homeless is even more difficult. Ms. Atkinson agreed it is going to be complicated and there will need to be a shift culturally. They hear business owners can't find workers and have had to change hours.

Councilmember Jackson returned at 4:06pm

Councilmember Hussain asked if she had any bill numbers, Ms. Atkinson concluded by handing out a paper with the renter's bill of rights, indicating that it is preliminary and the bill itself is a 27 page package, once available she would send to Ms. Richmond.

Councilmember Jackson left at 4:13pm

#### DISCUSSION – Committee Recommendations and Reporting

Councilmember Hussain mentioned that Councilmember Spitzley has specific recommendations and he'd like to see all the minutes to review for the next meetings discussion.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Norma Bauer spoke on the challenge to provide equitable services like the federal department does. The five social determinates of health are; economically stable, adequate education, adequate health care, do you live in safe housing, and do you live in a safe neighborhood. She continued to note that hoarding is a mental illness as well.

Jesse Lasorda spoke on the town hall meeting on Saturday mentioning red tags and Rep. Dievendorf mentioned no money for code enforcement. He is wondering on the percentage of those that are homeless and at peace at being homeless, that some are.

Councilmember Brown asked Ms. Richmond to get an update on the red/pink tags of owner occupied vs. rental from code if possible.

Trisha Washburn is a volunteer for Nation Outside and spoke on the discrimination of offenders with criminal backgrounds and they are denied employment after being released because of fear of re-offending. How are they going to get job skills, and she believes they need the fair change housing ordinance. Councilmember Brown asked law to speak on that, Ms. Hagen-Lawrence noted a request from the last Ad Hoc on Housing Safety they did a preliminary draft, but it would need significant changes, and then morphed into Public Safety Committee, then to pursue on more state level for consistency. Councilmember Hussain noted he has spoke with Tony Gant and like municipalities like Ann Arbor, he is not willing to pass an ordinance just to pass.

Elinda Fitzpatrick spoke on her multiple monitoring fees and if she had that money, she could repair her homes.

Rita Dunlop spoke that she has 28 units and is open to high risk and looses money even before damages. It is important to get small and large companies on board to help.

## **OTHER**

### **ADJOURN**

Adjourned at 4:44pm

Submitted by

Renee Richmond, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on June 27, 2023



**MINUTES**  
**Ad Hoc on Homelessness & Solutions**  
**Tuesday, June 27, 2023 @ 3:30 p.m.**  
**City Council Conference Room, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor City Hall**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council Member Brown called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm

**PRESENT**

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

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Sherrie Boak, Council Office Manager  
Matt Staples, OCA  
Council Member Kost  
Belinda Fitzpatrick  
Laura Purchase  
Cathleen Edgerly, DLI  
Toni Young, HRCS  
Joseph MacDonald, HRCS  
Norma Bauer

**MINUTES**

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER HUSSAIN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 13, 2023 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

**Public Comment**

Ms. Fitzpatrick spoke in opposition to Code Compliance doing inspections without search warrants.

Ms. Purchase spoke on behalf of Ms. Fitzpatrick's housing situation and animal control conflict with her pets.

**DISCUSSION/ACTION**

**Discussion on Committee Recommendations and Reporting**

The Committee looked at the documents from the Ad Hoc on Housing from 2022 as templates and boilerplates for their reporting.

The Committee discussed on expectations including recommendations, policies, recommendations to State and neighboring agencies.

Council Member Spitzley reviewed the 2022 bullet points and asked the Committee to consider reviewing this Committee minutes from 2023 for topics. She also asked testimony from the

administration on what they are already doing for homelessness moving forwards. If this Committee makes recommendations they can advise if things are already being done or if some of the recommendations cannot be done. Council Member Brown stated the administration was invited and were not able to attend and asked for a list of questions in advance for them to respond and not attend. Council Member Hussain stated it needs to go to the Mayor to instruct them to attend, and if it is clear that the department is not willing to attend. Council Member Brown will follow up with Ms. Richmond and forward that to the Mayor's office for participation in the process. Council Member Hussain asked Council Member Brown to review the minutes and topics to consider. Ms. Boak asked if they wanted handouts from all residents

Council Member Hussain asked to invite to the July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting and if they cannot attend that one, then have a special meeting so they can all attend. Council Member Spitzley and Brown concurred. The Committee asked to invite departments that address the warming centers, HRCS, EDP staff that handles the programs (Barb Kimmel and Doris Witherspoon) to address homelessness, Neighborhoods and Citizen Engagement, and EDP for housing. Council Member Hussain reiterated a bullet list from the minutes, and Council Member Brown stated he could have it turned around quickly and get back to Committee.

### **OTHER**

It was reiterated to the Committee that the Budget Priorities are due October 1<sup>st</sup>, and Council Member Brown chose 9/11.

Council Member Spitzley referenced a resolution that was done in 2022 and proposed a possibility of doing a resolution again this year from this Committee.

### **Public Comment**

Ms. Bauer spoke on a housing situation that was brought to her attention on possible discrepancies with housing benefits for different individuals in the same units and spoke in support of Statewide rent control.

### **ADJOURN**

Adjourned at 3:57 pm

Submitted by,

Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary

Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on July 11, 2023