

**Central Florida Regional Commission on Homelessness**  
(A collaboration of Orange, Seminole and Osceola counties & the City of Orlando)

**Meeting Minutes**  
**June 11, 2007**

**Meeting Location:** The Salvation Army, 416 W. Colonial Drive, Orlando.

**Commissioners Present:** Pastor William Andrews; Keylor Chan; Dr. Richard Baxley; Orlando Deputy Police Chief Val Demings; Cara Eule; Meredith Griffin; Thomas Griffin; Dr. Brenedette Hardy-Blake; Evelyn Herrera-Jackson; Warren Hougland; Allan Jones; Steve Kodsi; Bryan Malenius; David Medley; Paul Partyka; David Porter, Co-chair; Diego “Woody” Rodriquez; Margaret Sanders; Tracy Schmidt, Co-chair; Waldemar Serrano; Paul Sladek; Krissy Todd; Brian Wilson.

**Commissioners Absent:** Richard Burton; Rabbi Steven Engel; and J. Marsh MacLawhorn.

**Introductions:** Orlando City Commissioner Robert Stuart welcomed attendees and Major Sam Henry, Salvation Army area commander, gave the invocation.

Commissioner Stuart welcomed members of the Central Florida Regional Commission on Homelessness, and special guests: Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer; Orange County Mayor Richard Crotty; and Orange County Commissioner Mildred Fernandez. Representatives from the offices of U.S. Sen. Mel Martinez, U.S. Rep. Ric Keller, U.S. Rep. John Mica, and State Rep. Scott Randolph were also recognized.

(Orlando City Commissioners Daisy Lynum, Phil Diamond, and Sam Ings arrived after the introductions and sat in the audience).

Co-chairs Tracy Schmidt and David Porter were also introduced.

Mayor Dyer welcomed the commissioners and other attendees and said the top recommendation of the Orlando Mayor’s Task Force to study homelessness (the group formerly chaired by Commissioner Stuart) had been to create the regional commission.

Mayor Crotty said homelessness is a regional issue and he was pleased to not only have the three counties and the city involved in this effort, but to see the diverse group assembled to do the Commission’s work.

Commissioner Stuart introduced special guest Philip Mangano executive director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness.

**Presentation:** Mr. Mangano said the fact this region had brought together four political and jurisdictional entities to shape its attack on chronic homelessness was an “historic one.” He also said “Business as usual will not get the job done.”

He cautioned the Commission to not regard the issue as so enormous they would become overwhelmed. Instead, he encouraged it to look at other plans created and instituted by communities all across the U.S. and to practice “the art of legitimate larceny” by taking those ideas and making it this region’s own.

Mr. Mangano also noted that Florida had received more than \$66 million in homeless – related funding from the Federal government last year. He said that looking at how this money is spent in Central Florida is one way of seeing how the issue of homelessness can be reshaped.

He said more and more communities are looking at providing supportive housing for the homeless as the best way to tackle the difficult issue. He said the old system, which focused on providing temporary assistance, results in large health care and law enforcement outlays without reducing the number of chronically homeless individuals.

He noted, for example, that cost-benefit studies show the cost of providing supportive housing for one homeless person is between \$13,000 and \$25,000 per year. On the other hand, in communities that focus on temporary solutions, the cost per person for health care, temporary shelter and law enforcement services was at least \$100,000. “We need to refine our strategy to hit the bull’s eye,” he said.

He concluded with a direct statement to the new Commission: “Others will know a lot more about homeless people than you will...but you may know more about how to end homelessness than the people who’ve been on the frontline.”

Mr. Mangano concluded his presentation at approximately 1:22 p.m. and left to meet with the Orlando Sentinel’s editorial board.

**Commission Business:** Following a brief break, the Commission convened for its first regular meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Commission Co-chairs Tracy Schmidt and David Porter each introduced themselves with short biographies.

Ms. Mayanne Downs, Orlando city attorney, gave a brief presentation on Florida Sunshine Laws as it relates to the Commission. She said that, although the Commission is not technically required to comply with the law, it is best practice to follow its basic tenets: meet in public; do not make private deals with anyone; be aware that all written material having to do with Commission business could be subject to public scrutiny; and, although Commission members can talk privately with each other, no decisions should be made outside the public realm.

Co-chair David Porter introduced Staff Coordinator Yvonne Vassel.

Co-chair Tracy Schmidt went over the Commission's mission and guiding principles (included in the member notebooks).

David Porter handed out sub-committee signup forms.

Commissioner Stuart went over the items included in the member notebooks.

The Commission members discussed the proposed date of the next meeting, July 19 from noon to 2 p.m. Several members expressed the desire to change the day from a Thursday and the time to an earlier hour. A proposal to hold the meeting at different locations in the three counties and Orlando was also met with some protest. There appeared to be consensus that the Orlando metropolitan area is the most convenient location for a majority of Commission members. The co-chairs promised to consider the request.

**NOTE:** The date of the next Commission meeting was changed to **Tuesday, July 17 from 10 a.m. to noon**, in the 9<sup>th</sup> floor Overlook Room at Orlando City Hall.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:10 p.m.

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