

# Central Florida Commission on Homelessness

## Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

May 13, 2008

Heart of Florida United Way  
Dr. Nelson Ying Center, Orlando, FL

### Members Present:

Interim Executive Director, Yvonne Vassel; Housing Committee Chair, Steve Kodsi; Robert Ansley, Carmen Dominguez, Gene Daniels, Mitchell Glasser and Brent Trotter.

### Members Absent:

Paul P. Partyka, Andy Rosario and Michael Wenger

### Guests:

Gary Langford- Principal, North Highland Consulting Group

#### I. Welcome and Introductions

- Central Florida's Commission on Homelessness Interim Executive Director, Yvonne Vassel welcomed all in attendance and asked members to introduce themselves.
- Present also was Gary Langford, Principal of North Highland Consulting Group. Langford told the Committee that his company will be conducting "visioning" sessions with the Commission and its committees and he will attend future meetings.

#### II. Overview of Commission and its Plans

- Vassel said the permanent Commission on Homelessness was created in February 2008, and the Housing Committee's responsibility is to create more housing options for people who are homeless or on the verge of becoming homeless.

#### III. North Highland's offer to work with the Committee

- Langford will come up with the Vision statement. He suggested the Committee should have one more meeting then try to make a Visioning meeting soon afterwards. He also suggested creating a list of to-do's without allocations of funding for the following Housing Committee priority:
  - Examine current shelter & housing policies to promote changes that allow easier access by a wide range of the homeless.

#### IV. Discuss the Role of the Committee in Ten2End

- The Committee was provided with a copy of the Final Recommendations of the Housing Committee of the former Central Florida Regional Commission on Homelessness. Vassel mentioned that the intention of the current Housing Committee is to maintain the same structure and recommendations proposed by the former Commission.
- Vassel asked the Committee to review the report, decide how much of each one of the tasks recommended can be tackled as soon as possible, and provide future feedback.

#### V. Housing Recommendations and Priority List

- The Committee was also provided with a draft copy (version 1) of the 1<sup>st</sup> Year TEN2END Committees Priorities list for the Central Florida Commission on Homelessness 2008. This working document was developed by Vassel with the intent of providing guidelines. Vassel urged the Committee to review the same for any additions/changes and be prepared to report during the next meeting.

- Chairman Kodsi shared his insight on how housing issues, code enforcement fines, permit fees, etc. has changed.
- Carmen Dominguez shared her insight on the need to see old buildings, old shopping centers, etc. as an opportunity for development of housing.
- Vassel shared her insight on the situation where jail-released convicts end up sleeping on the streets because they are being released after midnight and have no way of connecting with housing authorities or getting anywhere due to lack of money.
- Kodsi said the Committee should summarize “what” and “who”, and communicate the same so we can have short/long term focus. He asked members to review the list of priorities and come up with a short plan in the next couple of meetings.
- Vassel suggested the Committee also create a list of things that can be done without funding, such as contacting people, going to locations, etc.
- Kodsi suggested seeking assistance and funds from big banks and hospital CFO’s.
- Robert Ansley asked if the members of the Permanent Commission will be on the Housing Trust. Vassel said most likely they will.
- Mitchell Glasser mentioned some difficulties of the Housing Trust Fund, such as the need for it to be self perpetuating.
- Brent Trotter affirmed that there needs to be a focus on the philanthropic community.
- Trotter and Glasser agreed the Committee should not create another level of bureaucracy.
- Group discussion took place on how can services be best provided for those living in the woods, as well as the need to create transitional housing for the chronic homeless.
- Kodsi said there are hotels being converted into transitional housing at a cost of 40 beds at a budget of \$80,000.
- Trotter said he would like to see housing being directed to working women with children. He also said we need to look if we can get some kind of property tax rebate or reduction from the county for the units.
- Glasser shared his thoughts on available units listed on MLS.
- Glasser encouraged members to review a short-version report on the working poor by Dr. James Wright, UCF Professor. Vassel to provide copy to the Permanent Commission and send the link by e-mail to members of the Committee.

**V. Future Meetings/Locations**

- Group agreed to meet twice a month; every other Tuesday from 3:30-5:00 p.m.  
**Next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 27, 2008**

**VI. Adjournment**

- There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.