



Edmonton Leadership Committee to End Homelessness

July 18, 2008

8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

**Heritage Room, Main Floor, City Hall
1 Sir Winston Churchill Square, Edmonton**

Present:

Linda Hughes
Jay Freeman
Carmel Harris*
Susan McGee
Dr. Gerry Predy
Elexis Schloss

Linda Cochrane
Roger Gouin
Councillor Karen Leibovici
Spence Nichol*
Bruce Saville
Anne Smith

Hal Danchilla
Keith Harding
Karen Mackenzie
Fred Pheasey
Franco Savoia
Bob Westbury

Katie Soles – Soles & Company
Marilyn Fleger
Colleen Wilson – Brennan Communications
Judy Walz - Mayor's Office

* denotes designate

Regrets:

Bruce Bentley, Tony Franceschini, Hope Hunter, Archbishop Richard Smith, Cliff Supernault Don Wheaton, Jr., Shelley Williams, Janet Skinner, Eric Newell

Call to order: 8:08 a.m. – Linda Hughes

Linda reported she and Jay will be meeting with Jean Wilkinson and Larry Scarbeau next week. The Provincial report to the Minister is due in October.

Opening Remarks – Linda Hughes

- Introductions
- Agenda was approved
- Minutes of June 24 were approved

Cost of Homelessness Study – Jay Freeman

- The draft Edmonton Cost of Homeless Report was presented.
- The annual cost per homeless person in Edmonton is comparable to Calgary's. However, Calgary stratified the number to distinguish between the cost of homelessness amongst the chronically homeless and other homeless persons. It is generally accepted that the chronically homeless account for 50% of the costs of serving the homeless. We have not established what percentage of our population is chronic. Calgary numbers were not firm but had to be estimated. We may want to look at presenting our numbers in this same way.
- What are not incorporated right now in our report are police costs and the costs of incarceration. Chief Boyd indicated they are still prepared to provide the information but there are challenges in identifying whether the person is homeless. The police are a month out from being able to provide the data. Therefore we are missing a big piece.
- RSM Richter & Associates did not receive data from sufficient Edmonton agencies providing shelter to the homeless, therefore they used bed data from Calgary. Similarly, they used Calgary data for the Remand Centre. Clearly we need to get the right information, but it has to be Edmonton based. Jay and Linda will call the agency people and get Edmonton based information.
- Jay will check to see what miscellaneous costs were captured in the study. We must bear in mind this is not a scientific study, but does capture order of magnitude. The Committee questioned whether there should be a factor bump to allow for this. We may want to err on the side of being low but may need to list what is not included in the report as narrative.
- Personalized stories may be necessary. It is incumbent for us to get the stories out. We must be careful not to leave the assumption that ending homelessness will eliminate costs but may allow for reallocation of work. Reports needs more work on both number side and communication side.

Consultation with Homeless – Katie Soles and Marilyn Fleger

- More subtle stories will be advanced before the report is released. Community Engagement Committee will be meeting weekly to work on the media strategy.
- Very specific aboriginal information was gathered. Pictures were shared from the Aboriginal consultation event.
- Colleen discussed the Community Engagement Strategy.

Katie and Marilyn – Powerpoint Presentation on Survey of Homeless Citizens

- They presented the results of the consultation with more than 60 homeless people. See Attachment 1
- Perhaps we could continue to use these questions in the future to monitor the face of homelessness.
- Many interesting issues were raised by the interviews including: When people lose their children to government care, they can also lose their home as housing is

funded by number of children in the home. There is no daytime place for people to sleep if they have nighttime jobs. A lot of homeless people are working. A number of recently housed people have started working.

Implementation Agency – Jay Freeman

- Jay reported that Robert Baldauf of Myers, Norris, Penny lead discussion at the last Executive Committee on implementation.
- The presumption was some agency would be tasked with implementation of the report.
- Key attributes of an implementation agency were discussed; locally based, well positioned to work with public, private and not for profits, readiness, management, adequately funded, competently staffed, nimble, have to be measured and capable of leveraging private sector investment. Capital Health, City of Edmonton, the Provincial government, United Way and Homeward Trust were names put forward as the implementation body.
- Discussion ensued around what this agency would do. There would have to be some type of implementation plan between this agency and other agencies that are currently doing the work.
- The role of the Leadership Committee once the plan is released was also discussed since interest has been expressed by Committee members in continuing some form of relationship or oversight of the process.
- Homeward Trust was discussed as a candidate for overseeing the implementation. Their mandate now is to address homelessness. A recommendation on the floor from Executive Committee is that Homeward Trust be entrusted with the implementation of our Plan.
- It was asked what other resources would be required for them to carry forward. Calgary had a transition plan that looked at figuring out what resources would be required. This would be necessary for us to prepare. It was noted that any organization that took on this task would need adequate resources. A clear understanding of the governance protocol and how we tie in everyone in a meaningful way would be necessary.
- The implementation organization would need to coordinate with the existing agencies. If we follow the Streets 2 Home model they have the central coordinating function that contracts with various agencies. The implementation agency would not be responsible for delivering all the services but for coordinating and training. The broad representation from community needs to be maintained. The responsibility for homelessness needs to be placed on the community as a whole.
- Susan reported Homeward Trust's governance role is to meet community needs. There is a real eagerness by their Board to take this on.
- Streets 2 Home success lies in the City having the funding and the power.
- Everyone must rethink what they are doing and work with the implementation agency to make this happen.
- It was suggested that The City of Edmonton needs to be considered as the implementation body.

- Susan indicated she could make a presentation to the Committee for a broader understanding of the streams of money that Homeward Trust manages and what that means.
- Further time to consider the options on this decision were deemed necessary.
- Linda indicated we are driven by Calgary's recommendations to start early on to implementation and we were looking for endorsement to go down this road to explore the options. We may need to spend more time with language and framing about the principles and governance of what this needs to be.
- More thought needs to be put into the Terms of Reference for the oversight agency. This will be discussed in further detail at the next Leadership Committee.

Housing First Action Centre – Jay Freeman

- The creation of a program like Toronto's Streets 2 Home was discussed. Iain De Jong from Toronto is prepared to provide his services pro bono and he and his staff will help work on development of a program in Edmonton.
- The Committee was asked to consider formalizing the relationship with Iain to help develop Edmonton's model.
- Discussion ensued on whether we are ready to commit to this approach. The question of who is going to work with Iain and what will the final product look like were discussed. It may require two individuals. One could be hired as a consultant and the other would probably have to be someone working in frontline services.
- An Advisory Committee may need to be established to work with Iain.
- The Committee endorsed entering in to an agreement with Streets 2 Home to develop a similar program in Edmonton. Any announcement surrounding this would be premature. No date for Iain's arrival has been established but it would need to be before fall. This will not likely occur before the next scheduled Leadership Committee meeting.

Next Steps

- Implementation will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Adjournment & Next Meeting

- Adjourned 10:10
- August 21 - 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. at Bissell Centre