

CITY COUNCIL
BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MINUTES

September 5, 2019

The City Council Business and Community Affairs Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met for a regular meeting at 4:00 p.m. in the Executive Conference Room located at 201 West Gray on the 5th day of September, 2019. Notice and agenda of the meeting were posted in the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray and at www.Normanok.gov twenty four hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Councilmembers Wilson, Bierman, Petrone, Scanlon, and Holman
ABSENT:	Councilmember Carter
OTHERS PRESENT:	Mayor Clark Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager Ms. Michelle Evans, Homeless Program Coordinator Ms. Lisa Krieg, CDBG/ Grants Manager Ms. Jeanne Snider, Assistant City Attorney II Ms. Beth Muckala, Assistant City Attorney II Ms. Tara Reynolds, Administrative Technician III Major Ricky Jackson, Staff Services Bureau Lt. Cary Bryant, Community Outreach Captain Shawn Hawkins, Uniform Support Division Major David Teuscher, Operations Bureau Ms. Jamie Meyer, Administrative Technician III

Item 1, being:

PRESENTATION OF THE CLEVELAND COUNTY CONTINUUM (COC) OF CARE EFFORTS TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS.

Ms. Michelle Evans, Homeless Program Coordinator, highlighted Norman's recent accomplishments regarding the five CoC Renewal Applications that were submitted for the 2018 funding; they were accepted and over \$415,000 was awarded. Emergency Solutions Grants awarded funding to two agencies totaling \$16,733, and this year that number was \$177,000. We have developed a By-Name List for veterans and chronic homeless and are certified as Quality Lists by Built for Zero national partners. The Built for Zero initiative that was started about five years ago has housed 70 Veterans and 176 chronic homeless individuals and families. Norman is the 7th in the nation to have reached all of the criteria for the benchmarks. Additionally, Norman is the first in the state of Oklahoma to effectively end veteran homelessness.

Ms. Evans said that there are weekly coordinated case management meetings here at City Hall with over 40 participating organizations with nationally acclaimed Best Practices.

Item 1, continued,

Ms. Evans spoke about the Point in Time (PIT) count and how important it is in almost every jurisdictional area. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that communities receiving federal funds from the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants program conduct an annual count of all sheltered and unsheltered people the last week of January. Norman coordinates this annual counting event with Oklahoma City. We do this to help prevent the duplication of numbers. The definition of sheltered homelessness refers to people who are staying in emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, or safe havens. Unsheltered Homelessness refers to people whose primary nighttime location is a public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for people. In 2018 the PIT total count was 364, and of those 227 were unsheltered and 137 were sheltered. Then in 2019 the PIT total count was 347, and of those 215 were unsheltered and 132 were sheltered.

Ms. Evans explained how the By-Name List is a critical component in understanding who in our community is experiencing homelessness at any given time. This list is updated daily and monitored as people's housing status changes. It also ensures that each person can be followed through the system to ensure they receive the help needed. The current homeless statistics for the Norman/Cleveland County are 62 chronic individuals, 69 at-risk individuals, 2 non chronic veterans, and currently zero chronic veterans. The housing first approach offers permanent, sustainable, affordable housing as quickly as possible. Then a resource list is available which includes services such as food pantries, shelter stays, job assistance, housing, health care, transportation, life skills, and case management. This is a community-based support system and our goal is that the response is consistent across all sectors in the community.

Ms. Evans spoke about the prototype response strategies and goals for helping those in need. The first one is humane displacement and our goal is to assist people living at an encampment with finding sustainable living options. The second strategy is having a short term accommodation and the goal is to reduce wear and tear on the existing site and help the group locate a more permanent solution within a set time frame. We also have a long term arrangement with a goal to obtain permanent housing and case management long term for the individual and to help reduce the recidivism rate. All of these response strategies will also keep in mind the rights of property owners and safety of the general public here in Norman.

Councilmember Petrone asked how many encampments does Norman currently have and wants to know what the County is doing to help Norman.

Ms. Evans stated that there are currently 11 encampments that they are aware of and the County is working with the Sheriff's office.

Councilmember Wilson asked if we could have a trash truck go by the encampments to help clean up those areas.

Lieutenant Bryant said that is a very fine line to walk because that picking up trash would appear to be condoning this type of behavior. As well as the additional cost.

Councilmember Wilson is concerned about the environmental effects the encampments are having in Norman. She asked Ms. Chapman to speak on behalf of Bishop's Creek.

Item 1, continued,

Karen Chapman appreciated the opportunity to be recognized and speak. She is concerned about the quality of Bishop Creek. Mainly speaking to the litter, and the human waste that will eventually get in the watershed and then it will go to the creek. She would like to see people moved out and then have maintained sanitation facilities and trash cans set up.

Lieutenant Bryant explained that Bishop's Creek, along with several others have already been identified through the DEQ and they have been working with other environmental experts to rectify these issues.

Ms. Evans spoke about the Homeless Expo concept and how it was first implemented on November 2, 2017, at the Andrews Park Pavilion. The goal of the Expo is to provide the necessary documents such a birth certificates, state ID's, social security card applications along with social security benefits. These are all needed for obtaining jobs and housing. We also help with vaccinating, chipping, and registering of pets. This is another example of something that is a first and is putting Norman, Oklahoma on the map. This Expo costs about \$5,000 for one year and they are always looking for additional volunteers and funding.

Ms. Evans continued with the break-down for outside and local funding sources for the CoC. She also stated that The City of Norman General Fund provides a total of \$175,000 for disbursement by the Social and Voluntary Services Commission through an application process. Those awards were made in August of 2019.

Ms. Evans would like to move forward with giving presentations to potential community partners and discuss HUD goals verses City goals.

Ms. Krieg would like to propose having a three-member councilmember committee to work with the CoC, and asked if there would be any interest.

Councilmember Wilson would support this and will help in any way.

Item 2, being:

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS:

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK

MAYOR