

**CITY OF NEW HAVEN  
HOMELESS ADVISORY COMMISSION  
NOVEMBER 13, 2008  
MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** D. Ecton, N. Hogan, W. Johnston, K. Lum, B. Reisfeld, G. Spinner,  
V. Wilson, R. Plattus

**EXCUSED:** J. Goldblum

**ABSENT:** None

**EX-OFFICIO:** N. Torres-LCI for A. Rizzo (Present), R. Manning-CSA (Present)

**STAFF:** J. Huettner

**INVITED GUESTS:** Kica Matos, Deborah Marcuse, CSA, Fred Morrison, New Haven  
Plan to End Homelessness

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Michelle Caron, NHHR, Becca Allen, Malynda Mallory,  
Columbus House, Brenda Cavanaugh, Community Mediation,  
Richard Cain, SCSU, Timmra Hearn Feldman, Joan Grass,  
Daksha Rajagopalan, YHHAP, John Bethke, Consumer,  
Martine Powers, *Yale Daily News*

Meeting called for 6:00 P.M.

Meeting called to order at 6:02 P.M.

G. Spinner called the meeting to order, and after introductions, asked for a motion to approve the October 16, 2008 Meeting Minutes with D. Ecton making the motion and B. Reisfeld seconding. The motion passed: YES-9: D. Ecton, N. Hogan, W. Johnston, K. Lum, B. Reisfeld, G. Spinner, V. Wilson, R. Plattus, **BY PROXY:** J. Goldblum (11/07/08). NO-0.

Next, G. Spinner introduced the shelter policy discussion by giving a background overview with emphasis on a residency requirement, indicating that no short term solution, given reduced resources (capacity) and increased demand, could be agreed upon, the practice of the CT Department of Correction (DOC) of dropping off those being released and those being paroled who have no history of residency in New Haven should not be admitted to New Haven shelters, unless space is available. DOC drops off at only four state locations (three are the jails in New Haven, Hartford and Bridgeport) with over 2,000 being dropped off in New Haven in the last fiscal year. Direct hospital discharges to shelters

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was also considered inappropriate, as hospital discharge planners should provide meaningful referrals other than homeless shelters as placement for their patients. The Working Group also recommended that CSA communicate with DOC concerning the fact that their current practice was not an acceptable plan. K. Matos responded by indicating that an overall residency requirement would no longer be considered. She reiterated that the need for shelter policies, which grew out of the budget cuts and reduced shelter capacity, particularly with the prospect of the Overflow shelter closing or reduced in the length of time it might be opened. This was particularly the case with Immanuel Baptist Shelter, which would bare the brunt of the problem.

Concerning the discharges from DOC, she indicated that the City wanted to continue the dialogue with the Mayor, Commissioner of DOC, Probation Services, etc. Discussions have included the practice of bringing in persons directly to shelters, without consultation with shelter staff. Additional meetings have produced more constructive dialogue, such as setting aside a certain number of beds, for those on probation or parole, with compensation including providing daytime services to those using the designated beds. DOC has been very receptive to this. It also addresses issues of public safety. She added that we would like more documentation on Yale-New Haven's discharge practices, before going to the hospital. D. Marcuse indicated that she is working on re-entry issues and that DOC discharge planning is variable, and they are directing people to homeless shelters, others land at shelters by word of mouth. She added that housing options are extremely limited, particularly for those who are at end of sentence. K. Matos added that we are working on a comprehensive approach to re-entry to address all these issues (housing, employment, etc.) not just accepting it.

Discussion continued on specifics and different situations that might arise with this type of approach. J. Huettner gave a short overview of CSA's approach to develop a creative strategy to deal with the issues of regionalism, also related to the increased demand for shelter beds from persons from surrounding towns and cities. Additional discussion centered on reinstatement of the State's former policy of providing \$14 a night for residents from other towns to use shelters in other towns/cities that have them. Also, reimbursement for veterans using shelters was discussed. A lot of details still would be needed to be worked out with DOC. G. Spinner brought the discussion to a close by stating that the Commission will welcome input on any follow-up to these discussions.

Under the fund-raising agenda item, K. Matos provided an overview of the Tent City event, sponsored by CSA, to be held on the Green, Thursday, November 20, 2008 from 6 p.m. to 12 a.m. Individuals and groups are being asked to sponsor a tent and raise \$1,000 each to ensure that the Overflow Shelter can remain open through April 30, 2009. Entertainment and a program are being planned, along with food and beverages.

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Other events such as Yale's "ShelterNow" activities, fund-raisers by state legislators and other efforts such as that of the Interfaith Cooperative Ministries, were also discussed, as community and regional wide activities to ensure that the Overflow will remain open.

Next, F. Morrison, the new Plan Project Director, updated the 10 Year Plan activities, including structural relationships, progress to date, on the Plan's goals and future viability efforts to ensure continued staffing and HMIS data system requirements. He also discussed HUD's Neighborhood Stabilization Act resources and how they could be linked to the Plan's supportive/affordable housing goals, as being done in other parts of the country.

R. Manning presented the Overflow update, indicating that the City is close to finalizing its' contract for the Overflow shelter, that includes the site lease and security arrangements. The Overflow shelter did open on November 5, 2008 and he provided an overview of nightly counts for both the Overflow and Immanuel Baptist Shelters. There was further discussion on how the 9% budget cut in the City's portion of other shelters funding, was affecting their operations.

The Homeless Children's Collaborative agenda item was tabled due to the absence of J. Goldblum.

J. Huettner provided highlights of the 2008 Point-In-Time Homeless Count, for New Haven, in comparison with the 2007 totals. The Statewide Count which includes all of the data collected for New Haven, which is 188 pages, can be accessed on the CT Coalition to End Homelessness website: [www.cceh.org](http://www.cceh.org) Discussion centered on how to evaluate supportive housing efforts, related to reduced numbers of those who are chronically homeless. The count is a street count, shelter count done at the same time, which includes veterans.

A request was made to include the 90 Day Length-of-Stay on the next meeting's agenda.

With no further business, G. Spinner entertained and received a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 P.M. (Motion passed unanimously).