



TOWN COUNCIL
Committee to Assess Homelessness in Hyannis
Selectmen's Conference Room

Monday April 3, 2017
MEETING MINUTES

I. BUSINESS

A. Roll Call:

Members present: Chair of Committee Councilor Jennifer Cullum, Vice President of the Council, James Crocker Jr.; Councilor Frederick Chirigotis; Member at Large, Deb Krau. **OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Paul MacDonald; LT. J. Challies; SGT. J. Ellis, Barnstable Police; Mark S. Ells, Town Manager; **ABSENT:** Councilor James Tinsley, Councilor Debra Dagwan,

Chair of the Committee Councilor Jennifer Cullum opened up the meeting at 6:05. Councilor Jennifer Cullum, Chair of the Committee explained the meeting that was held with Rose Evans and Deb Krau and herself and others that represent Social Service agencies in the area, at the last meeting of this kind the individuals that had attended the meeting were asked to bring to the meeting some suggestions for Hyannis, the part of the meeting that interested her the most was the discussion of the possibility of Deb Krau having a seat at the table to represent Barnstable in the Regional meetings that are held. Committee member representing the Committee as well as the town of Barnstable; Deb Krau feels that the regional network did not want just a resident, Beth Albert stated in the meeting it would be the Greater Hyannis Civic Association representation, Ms. Krau believes the Greater Hyannis Civic Association does not need to have a seat on the regional network; but she does feel that the regional network does need four positions added, one from an individual that does not make their living in social services from the Upper and Lower Cape and also the Mid Cape; a hospital personnel representation to be able to do the planning, the discharge, follow-up, she feels it is not the best use of her time, and felt that the position was not one that was welcomed with open arm. Lt. Challies does have a position on this committee and will do fine on it as a representative of the police; Ms. Krau said she will do fine.

Chair of the Committee Councilor Jennifer Cullum said the problem she has with the Regional Committee is that it is too large and feels there should be representation from the Greater Hyannis Civic Association, and there are more voices that we need to add to it. Ms. Krau sated she does not know what the Committee actually does, there is a lot of reporting, but no structure or agency centered plans to move forward. Chair of the Committee Councilor Jennifer Cullum stated that Rose walked away from that meeting with a list of things she may have written down, however the meeting did not produce a plan or an action plan as to what to do next, it was a very loose meeting with no results. Ms. Krau asked about the outreach worker, and what happened to the funding for that when Housing Assistance Corporation had the contract for the NOAH Shelter there was funding for an outreach worker, now that Catholic Social Services has taken on and renamed it Joseph's House, what happened to the monies that was for the outreach worker. Ms. Krau asked Rose to look into that as well to make sure that the funding for outreach workers is continued, outreach workers are crucial to this, and if it goes away all the efforts is gone as well. Chair of the Committee also asked for an update on the Day Program, which at the time of the meeting the information was not ready available but would be gathered and reported.

Chair of the Committee asked the Police Chief, Paul MacDonald, his reaction to the meeting that was held, he disagrees with Deb Krau that a representative from the Greater Hyannis Civic Association is necessary, most of the homeless issues are right here in downtown Hyannis, he believes that someone from Downtown Hyannis should be on that board, it may be a regional problem, but it all filters into Hyannis.

Ms. Krau stated that that group does not meet anyone or anywhere outside that meeting.

Town Manager, Mark S. Ells mentioned that he has sat on that board before for 4 years. SGT Challies asked what is the purpose of that Board what is its mission, Town Manager Ells said he believed it was to secure ideas and grants that were available for the social services here in this region; so it was a group of individuals who worked in the social service agencies that formed this committee to go after funding that was available to them, as well as bringing a regional group together to discuss the 10 year plan to end homelessness; it is his belief that maybe that report and plan is over ten years old now so they are possibly looking at that to re do that report based on today's information. Ms. Krau said they meet every 2 months, but other than those two meetings there is no communication between anyone until the next meeting. Rose thought she had left us priorities for importance, but not everyone that attended got that message so there was some without information. Councilor Chirigotis mentioned that they bring them here because there are not any other shelters around. Ms. Krau echoed the same statement as Councilor Chirigotis, adding there is not another shelter anywhere on the Cape, so maybe if this shelter was not in Hyannis, then either would the amount of individuals needing services would be here either.

Since the residents in Barnstable are bearing the brunt of these services and paying for the majority of them with tax payer dollars, is there a remedial amount that we can ask for or a dollar amount the Town asks for, bearing the brunt of everyone else's situations as well as our own. Why is it solely on Barnstable's backs, Ms. Krau stated if the shelter takes them there is not a whole lot we can do, but if the shelter refuses them, we would have to call the state. The Police Chief stated the salaries for the police officers doing this type of work is well spent monies, however we in Barnstable would like the help of the other police communities to help us out as well, we should not be doing it all, because if the shelter stops taking individuals, there is no plan B. Chair of the Committee asked the Police Chief if the other police stations when they pick someone up that is homeless, do they try other communities and areas before bringing them to you or the shelter, or do they just drop them in Hyannis and leave. How do we ask others to triage them before the drop them off and leave? Vice President James Crocker Jr. said that other communities have the problems like us; the difference is Barnstable solves them, others do not. Chief Paul MacDonald stated he has officers that are specifically trained for this that and that is a lot of why they are brought here, we at the Barnstable Police are training other officers from other police stations on how to handle these individuals.

Vice president James Crocker Jr asked the Police Chief about he felt the winter went overall and if we had lost anyone due to being outside in the cold. Police Chief Paul MacDonald stated he felt this winter was a marked improvement over the years prior, they did not have any deaths related to the cold weather and being outside, however he said there were deaths related to overdoses. Police Chief Paul MacDonald believes that it has been the efforts of this Committee as well as the police and other social service agencies joining together and communicating to get the work done. Vice President James Crocker Jr asked if the police department needed anything from us or the Town Council to make sure that the season of warm weather does not encourage others to set up camps again. Police Chief MacDonald said there are no active camps right now, with the help of the Department of Public Works and the clearing out of the low lying brush areas and other areas that were popular so they are now exposed so the camps are hard to set up, and we are staying on top of them.

Deb Krau brought a document that was sent to her from Heidi regarding Alan Burt who has started a program called Belonging to each other Inc. hey formed a partnership with the churches and dealt with 23 men and women and had a 100 percent success rate in putting them into a program for successful housing, and he is suggesting that other town on the Cape do the same thing. Ms. Krau feels that this should be encouraged and Mr. Burt should take this on the road and explain to other communities how to do the same. Chair of the Committee stated again that Hyannis is not looking to get out of helping any individual that needs help, however other communities should do the same and bear their fair share of this issue. Councilor Chirigotis stated that we would have to look at the regulations concerning motels and hotels that may be able to house these individuals in a setting such as that, but Barnstable has zoning issues and ordinances that do not allow this type of living. Ms. Krau stated this program seemed to have success in Falmouth, so who is to say it will not work in other communities.

Chair of the Committee asked Police Chief Paul MacDonald if there are committees that he currently sits on that gets results in this area, it seems like the Chair of this Committee attends so many

meeting regarding this topic, but there are no solutions coming out. Chief MacDonald credits this committee as one of the areas he sees made a difference in how situations are handled and also the Transitional Living Center meetings made a difference, we may have not gotten everything we needed or wanted, but we at least had an approach that was manageable, and this committee again did so much to bring attention to the issue, and had productive meetings to get things accomplished.

Chair of the Committee would like to have Heidi Nelson, CEO of the Duffy Center, then possibly leaders of other communities like Yarmouth Town Manager and others to ask them how they are handling this problem or what is their policy on the homeless.

ADJOURN: 7:00pm

NEXT MEETING: April 24, 2017, at 6pm Selectmen's Conference Room