COORDINATED HOUSELESS RESPONSE OFFICE (CHRO)
Board Meeting Minutes
11 – 12:30 pm on Thursday, April 25, 2024
Deschutes Services Building, 1300 NW Wall St., Bend, OR

Attendance: Commissioner Adair, Chair, Deschutes County; Councilor Zwicker, City of Redmond; Councilor Blum, City of Sisters; Councilor Perkins, City of Bend; Mayor Richer, City of La Pine; Chris Ogren, CHRO; Eric King, City Manager - City of Bend; Eliza Wilson, Homeless Leadership Coalition; Molly Heiss, NeighborImpact; Mickie Derting, City of Bend; Jean Hrabik, COIC; Kerry Prosser, City of Sisters; Linda Cline, City of Redmond; Brook O'Keefe, City of Bend; Steven Emerson, Deschutes County; Gwenn Wysling, Bethlehem Inn; James Cook, Oasis Village; Geoff Wullschlager, City Manager – City of La Pine; Linda Murrer, Community Member; Councilor Osborne, City of Redmond; John Lodise, Homeless Leadership Coalition; Ben Scott, NeighborImpact; Josh Burgess, Central Oregon Civic Action Project; Rodger Moore, EPIC Property Management; Alex Renirie, Healthy Democracy; Brook Olsen, City of Bend; Dean Harris, Community Member; Denise LaBuda, Community Member; Erik Nelson, COIC; Sharlene Weed, Community Member; Natalie (online).

1. **Call to Order**
   Chair Adair called the meeting to order at 11:00.

2. **Approval of Minutes & Review of Financials**
   Chair Adair reviewed the minutes from the meeting on March 21, 2024, and the financials. Chair Adair noted that dates were missing from the financials provided, and asked that they be included in financial statements, going forward.

   Eliza Wilson issued a statement to correct misstatements made in the public comment from the CHRO Meeting held March 21st, 2024 about the Central Oregon MAC Group. Eliza explained the process regarding the decision-making process, voting, financials, and transparency. Eliza noted that all MAC meetings are open to the public to attend, and invited interested parties to attend the upcoming MAC meeting from 10-11 am on Wednesday, May 1st.

   VOTE: Councilor Blum motioned approval of the March 21st Minutes. Mayor Richer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Point In Time Count Update for Deschutes County**
   Ben Scott presented the preliminary Point in Time (PIT) data for Deschutes County. Ben explained the purpose of the PIT Count, and it's limitations, cautioning the use of singular data points. Ben explained how the process of conducting the PIT Count works and noted that responses to the survey are voluntary. Councilor Zwicker

asked about how those that decline to participate are counted. Ben explained that while the survey was voluntary, there is an opportunity for PIT volunteers to also submit an observed tally that captures individuals who may not be willing or able to complete a PIT survey at a given time. Molly Heiss provided context to Crook County's increase in PIT Count numbers, noting that Crook County's expanded outreach provider capacity increased the accuracy of their count from prior years when counts were not accurate. Commissioner Adair noted the Board of County Commissioners had requested a presentation about the PIT Count in Deschutes County from NeighborImpact in May.

4. **Coordinated Entry System Overview**
   Ben Scott provided an overview of the Coordinated Entry System (CES) and how the system works to move people experiencing homelessness through a process that ends in a placement in permanent housing. Ben explained how the CES works in reality in Central Oregon, and highlighted some areas of opportunity for improvement. Ben shared the phone number to get access to the CES, 541-630-2533, and noted it is currently staffed on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12-4pm.

5. **Housing Placements in Central Oregon**
   Rodger Moore, with EPIC property management, and Molly Heiss, CHRO Ex-officio board member and with NeighborImpact, shared an update about the current state of efforts to place individuals experiencing homelessness into permanent housing. Commissioner Adair noted a nearly 10% vacancy rate in Bend market rate rental properties. Rodger Moore shared that the majority of affordable housing properties are not included in the assessment being referenced, and that Housing Works properties all have multi-year waiting lists. Rodger shared some statistics about tenants in Housing Works properties, and shared that Housing Works is on track to add 100 affordable rental housing units per year in Central Oregon. Councilor Zwicker asked Rodger about Mid-town place, noting it was intended to be built for individuals between 60 and 80% Area Median Income (AMI), but has many tenants below 30% AMI. Rodger noted that Housing Works properties across the board have a high percentage of people below 30% AMI because there is very little housing being built in Central Oregon to support people at that income level. Molly shared how traditional supported housing programs operate, namely Rapid Rehousing (RRH). Molly spoke to the challenges and trade-offs with paying rents above HUD's Fair Market Value, which allows providers to help fewer clients given limited resources and does not set clients up for success once the subsidy lapses, typically after two years. Molly noted that this brief discussion was the beginning of a broader conversation about what the CHRO and local government partners can do to expand options for individuals seeking permanent housing in Central Oregon. Commissioner Adair noted the importance of continuing the discussion with the CHRO in the future.

6. **CHRO RFQ Update**
    Chris Ogren shared a brief update about the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process. Chris shared that staff received 7 applications from the process and all applicants were local to Central Oregon. 4 of the applications involved safe parking programs, 2 tiny home villages, and 1 managed camp. Chris shared that a total of $4.5 million would be necessary to satisfy each requirement and ensure operations through 2025. Chris also noted that some of the applications had some serious challenges, like zoning, cost, expectations/requests from partners, and more. Chris shared that the Review Team would be meeting in late April to finalize recommendations to the CHRO Board.

7. **Citizen's Assembly & Central Oregon Civic Action Project**
    Josh Burgess and Alex Renirie shared information about the Central Oregon Civic Action Project and the concept of Citizen's Assemblies, in general. Josh shared that Citizen's Assemblies have been conducted across the world, but are relatively new to the United States. Josh shared how the process is designed to work, and noted that the topic the group has an interest in exploring further was Youth Homelessness. Alex shared information about the deliberative democracy model, and expressed excitement about a future opportunity to share more with the Board.

8. **Public Comment**
    Katherine Osborne shared her frustrations with an experience trying to help a friend in Redmond try to get access to housing after experiencing housing instability.

    Gwenn Wysling shared updates about the BIRCH project in Redmond and shared that it is approaching full capacity.

    Ed Murrer suggested the CHRO audit the MAC group's spending.

9. **Other Items and Adjourn**
    Chair Adair noted the next CHRO Board Meeting was scheduled for May 16th and adjourned the meeting @ 12:32.

Full Statement from Eliza Wilson:

"In the notes from our last meeting, there was public comment made and I would like to correct the inaccurate information provided and perhaps answer some of the questions raised.

I am on the executive committee of the MAC group and am proud of the work that Central Oregon MAC has accomplished in so short a time. There were various concerns brought up by public comment in our last meeting. Statements made insinuated that there were conflicts of interest impeding the MAC funding process. I wanted to share, while Tammy Baney facilitates some of the MAC meetings, she does not vote or make decisions around funding, the MAC group does. Most decisions have been voted on by all MAC members, but at times the membership has delegated votes to the Executive Committee (comprised of the HLC, The region's housing authority and community action agency).

The original request for $84,000 for renovations of the BI to the MAC group was voted on by the whole membership, the Executive committee voted by email regarding funding allocation to BI as it related to rent payments for incoming renters of their RRH project and staff to support renters. Voting by email is common practice among boards, even this one. This was not in an effort to be less transparent, but to meet our goals around housing people experiencing homelessness rapidly, in the tight timeline given by the Governor's office.

All funding allocated by the MAC group are a reimbursement model. This means that when an organization spends the money, they invoice the MAC to be reimbursed. We pay for staff who are currently working and housing for people who are in housing. Data related to how many people are served is closely monitored and submitted to The State.

Our MAC meetings are open to the public and we encourage open communication from community partners regarding gaps in the system and in funding. It is common for attendees to express their support for a program, like how Tammy, a former board member for the BI, expressed support for their request for funding. Just as I have expressed support for funding requests in meetings.

Additionally, the public comment from our last meeting insinuated that the MAC had not posted all the videos for past meetings on the website, but in fact all videos are present because the group at times skipped meetings when we were between funding awards.

The only way for our community or any community to make progress with the crisis of homelessness is to put our differences aside and work together to house people. We cannot shelter people out of homelessness, this is why the MAC group backed a shelter shifting from sheltering individuals to providing them housing. We must invest in housing options. As a provider I understand how hard it is to shift programs, how it can take time to get to full capacity and it can be expensive at first with renovations, however running a housing program is going to be less expensive long term than running a shelter and fills existing gaps. We need to support programs like the BI who was willing to see that they needed to shift their program to fit a need the community has.

I appreciate the questions and encourage interested parties to attend the MAC group meetings. They are virtual and open to the public. The next meeting is 10am next Wednesday."