

COORDINATED HOUSELESS RESPONSE OFFICE (CHRO)

Board of Director Working Session Minutes

1:30 – 3:00 pm on Tuesday, May 30th, 2023
Deschutes Services Building, Allen Room, 1300 NW Wall St., Bend, OR

Attendance: Commissioner Adair, Chair; Councilor Perkins, City of Bend; Councilor Blum, City of Sisters; Councilor Zwicker, City of Redmond; Chris Ogren, Houseless Response Analyst; Erik Kropp, Deputy County Administrator; James Cook, Community-member; Whitney Hale, Deputy County Administrator; Jack Harvel, The Source Weekly; Tammy Baney, COIC Executive Director; Marissa Cummings, Management Analyst; Eric King, City Manager – City of Bend; Mickie Derting, Strategic Initiatives Manager; Linda Cline, Housing Programs Analyst; Nick Lelack, County Administrator; Peggy Kirkendahl, Community-member; Gustavo Bautista, Central Oregon Daily News; Janice Garceau, Health Services Director; Linda Murrer, Community-member; Richard Coe, The Bulletin; Colleen Thomas, Homeless Outreach Services Team Supervisor; Stephanie Robinson, Grants & Operations Specialist; Chris Doty, Road Department Director; Eliza Wilson, HLC Chair and Director of Runaway Youth; Jill Martinusen, Community-member; Kevin Dahlgren, Community-member; Sarah Ladwig, Community-member.

1. **Introductions and Agenda Review**

Chair Adair called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm. Participants in the room introduced themselves.

2. **Approval of Minutes**

Erik Kropp reviewed minutes from the January meeting. Chris Ogren reviewed April minutes for the board.

VOTE: Councilor Perkins motioned approval of the January and April Minutes. Councilor Blum seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mayor Richer was absent.

3. **Discussion on Structure of CHRO, including Host Entity**

Councilor Perkins opened the discussion by asking board members to answer the question “what is it that the CHRO Governing Board does?” The board discussed, and Councilor Blum expressed her perception of the role, explaining that the board exists to guide the pilot project, but that the board will need to agree on how the plan gets implemented before the work can really get started. Councilor Blum continued, and explaining that given her limited experience with homelessness, the value she adds as a board-member is focused on helping facilitate discussion between service providers and local governments, ensuring the CHRO budget is spent appropriately, and keeping the office on track with the

work plan. Councilor Blum expressed that she does not foresee the Board as being “hands on”. Councilor Perkins agreed.

Commissioner Adair expressed a desire to see more data on shelter beds. Councilor Zwicker echoed Commissioner Adair, also expressing a desire for more data. Commissioner Adair asked Mickie Derting if she could read the slides that Councilor Perkins displayed on the screen aloud for the room. Mickie introduced the slide to the group, titled County and cities Coordinated Houseless Response Office, and depicted a venn diagram showing the intersection of the CHRO with the efforts of Cities, the County, and Supports and Services. The group agreed they want to see more data.

Commissioner Adair noted that the Advisory Group was a priority, and she’d talked to several individuals over the weekend that weren’t included in the original Emergency Housing Task Force. Commissioner Adair also noted that while community involvement is important, she has heard feedback from providers and doesn’t want to create another separate group. Councilor Zwicker agreed about not needing another large group, but that the advisory group should be able to help inform elected about what’s happening in their communities. Councilor Perkins agreed that the Advisory Group was a key component, and should be made up of people across the Housing Continuum, not exclusively service providers. Commissioner Adair expressed interest in having a Forest Service Representative on the Advisory Board. Councilors Perkins and Zwicker also expressed an interest in specific seats, like a grant writer and an affordable housing developer. Councilor Blum asked the group how they will balance having such a large board with the desire to not create more meetings. Councilor Perkins suggested that the CHRO Board may be able to submit a request to the Homeless Leadership Coalition to add members to their board, and then that board could serve as the advisory committee.

Councilor Perkins noted that the CHRO Board was in the initial stages of exploring the idea of COIC becoming the host entity for the CHRO and welcomed Tammy Baney to the dias. Tammy Baney joined the group and explained that COIC is available to serve the cities and county in whichever way would be most helpful to the CHRO. Tammy explained that COIC could lean in with a high level of support, or provide a minimal level of support and that COIC is ready and able to assist the CHRO at the Board’s Request.

Councilor Perkins suggested the creation of subgroups to help move progress forward on key CHRO topics. Councilor Perkins suggested two subgroups, focused on governance and leadership. Councilor Zwicker noted her support for the subgroup concept. Councilor Blum noted her opinion that the CHRO should be regional, and thinks partnering with COIC is a step in the right direction.

Councilor Blum asked Councilor Perkins what her expectations were in terms of subgroups, and noted that she wasn't sure what additional expertise she would add to the groups.

Councilor Perkins asked Tammy Baney what partnership with COIC would look like. Tammy explained that COIC would have to check in with and get approval from the COIC Board, but that it is fully equipped to support the CHRO in whatever the community needs. Councilor Perkins asked if IGAs would need to be redone. Councilor Blum said the Board should decide whether or not they want to partner with COIC and let staff figure out the formalities. Councilor Zwicker noted that the structure of the office necessitates a discussion about governance, and noted the CHRO might look different under COIC's leadership. Nick Lelack noted that more informed decision-making would come from discussions in the subgroups.

4. Discussion and Direction on EHTF Strategic Plan; Interim Director; and Implementation Plan Concept

Councilor Perkins began the discussion about an Interim Director for the CHRO. Councilor Perkins noted the challenges with hiring staff generally right now, as well as complications from the possible transition of the Office. Councilor Perkins also noted it would be even more challenging to find the right fit for a role that may only last a few months. Councilor Zwicker noted that a team of staff to support the Office is likely more effective than hiring one individual. Commissioner Adair noted the importance of finding a replacement that the community can trust. Commissioner Adair noted that she trusts Colleen Thomas and Chris Ogren. Councilor Perkins reiterated the importance of Trust. Councilor Blum noted that Colleen Thomas has a lot of respect in Sisters. Commissioner Adair noted that Colleen Thomas is widely regarded across Deschutes County. Nick Lelack noted that staff from Deschutes County and the Cities of Bend and Redmond are available and willing to help the CHRO in the interim.

Mickie Derting reviewed the EHTF Strategic Plan Action Overview. The Board discussed which items they had questions on and made recommendations on moving action items around the task list. The Board discussed removing a few of the action items. Councilor Zwicker expressed a desire for the goals of the CHRO to align with State and Federal goals. Councilor Perkins asked Tammy when COIC would be beginning an update of the High Desert Home. Tammy explained that the current plan to end homelessness is out of date and will be updated in the fall in partnership with the Homeless Leadership Coalition. Councilor Zwicker also noted that the CHRO needs to be fluid and available to support providers as new priorities arise.

Councilor Blum asked about the action items that refer to deliverables from city governments. Councilor Blum noted that the language might need to be changed

where the plan says “Cities will do this”, because any commitments made by cities must be made by a vote of their respective councils. Councilor Perkins said that these action items are just high level and that implementation might look different for different communities. Councilor Blum noted the possibility of sending mixed signals, and shared concern about if providers see that cities say they are going to do something, they will expect it. Councilor Zwicker noted that these are goals and that it’s okay if every single outcome isn’t achieved in 5 years. Councilor Blum said she felt these were action items that the community expects us to achieve, not aspire to. The group continued down the list of action items and discussed moving items to other groups, asked questions about commitments, and corrected typos.

Councilor Perkins asked if the group should create a third subgroup, focused on the Strategic Plan action items. The group agreed.

VOTE: Councilor Zwicker made a motion to create three subgroups, governance, leadership, and strategic planning. Councilor Perkins seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mayor Richer was absent.

5. CHRO FY 23-24 Budget

Erik Kropp introduced CHRO financials. Commissioner Adair asked about the \$225k allocated to program expenses. Erik explained that as a placeholder and that the Office currently does not intend on spending \$225k in program expenses this year, but expects to carry that money into the following fiscal year. CHRO is fund 205. Commissioner Adair asked where the Director’s Relocation Expenses were charged to? Erik said he would report back. Councilor Zwicker asked if the County could take back any of the funds for relocation expenses. Commissioner Adair said that based on her understanding of the agreement made with the Director, the County would be able to get some of the amount back.

6. Next Board Meeting

The Board members each expressed which subgroup they’d like to participate in:

Governance: Councilor Perkins and Commissioner Adair

Leadership: Councilors Zwicker and Blum

Strategic Planning: Councilors Perkins and Zwicker

Commissioner Adair noted she would reach out to Mayor Richer to see if he’d like to participate on any subgroups. Chris Ogren was asked to coordinate meetings with all of the subcommittee members and staff.

Chris asked the group about their preferred meeting times going forward. The group expressed a desire to meet the 3rd Thursday of the month from 11-12:30pm.

7. Public Comment

Public Comment began at 2:55pm.

James Cook – Service Providers need to feel heard during this process and have a way to provide input. The community wants clarity on what the Office's priorities are.

Peggy Kirkendahl – (attached)

Kevin Dahlgren – Kevin spoke to his experience providing homeless services and drug counseling in Portland, Oregon. Kevin said Central Oregon's homelessness is a humanitarian crisis. He said Central Oregon needs to prioritize the by-name list, longer-term solutions, and data tracking. Kevin said he likes to come to Central Oregon often. Kevin said the City of Bend and County need to work together more. Kevin said outreach providers are not doing enough to actually help people.

Sarah Lagwig – Sarah said she was Kevin's friend. Sarah said she really likes Kevin. Sarah asked the CHRO Board to Google San Francisco. Sarah told the Board that the Board needs to respect Kevin and give him an opportunity to come talk to them.

Linda Murrer – Linda said she's glad the Board fired the Director. Linda said that the Board needs to take a new approach to homelessness. Linda said the data, although limited, shows that Central Oregon is losing the fight against homelessness and should hire Kevin Dahlgren to help.

Chair Adair adjourned the meeting at 3:25 pm.