



Council on Housing Stability
December 19, 2023
10:30 PM – 12:00 PM

MINUTES

Members in Attendance:

Eric Adams

Patte Ardizzoni

Mayor Jim Bouley

George N. Copadis

Rob Dapice

Maria Devlin

Mayor George Hansel

Christina Dotson

Melissa Hatfield

Mayor Andrew Hosmer

Katy Easterly Martey

Warren Perry

Chris Santaniello

Miles Whitner

Dominique Rust

Andrew Dorsett

Drew Holmes

Mandy Lancaster

Maggie Pritchard

Rob Dapice

Robert Quinn

Senator James Gray

Rob Rodler

Anne Duncan Cooley

Robert Mack

Chris Santaniello welcomed all Council members. The Council on Housing Stability's meeting minutes on October 24, 2023, were unanimously approved.

Landlord Incentive Program Recommendations for Council Discussion and Vote

Rob Dapice reviewed the recommendations shared with all participants before the December Council meeting.

- It was noted that Housing Choice vouchers are an essential resource.
- There is a long waiting list.
- Despite the scarcity of the resource – they routinely go underutilized – the voucher is perceived as a golden ticket, guaranteed rent payment – however, nearly ½ of the folks

who hold the voucher cannot use it.

- When vouchers are unused and returned – they are distributed to someone else.

Through an analysis developed through interviews and focus groups, the Landlord Incentive workgroup identified what worked and what didn't for NH residents to remain in their community and prevent or exit homelessness.

The future leasing incentive recommendations outlined in the memo are summarized below:

1. Invest in third-party services to support tenant stability and lease compliance: This will promote ongoing retention of tenants in housing, reducing unit turnover and risk of increased rents, and retention of landlords in programs, which is needed for high voucher/program utilization.
2. Make funding available for security deposits, rental application fees, and moving costs: Tenant-based costs to leasing are needed to reduce the financial strain of accessing affordable housing.
3. Maintain incentive payments for new landlords: A flat fee for newly participating in leasing programs should be maintained for its value in welcoming additional owners.

SENATE BILL 518-FN

- Bill: relative to incentivizing landlords to accept housing choice vouchers
- Sen. Donovan Fenton
- Establishes a landlord housing incentive program and fund to be administered by NH Housing.
- The vouchers are limited to:
 - Voucher recipients
 - Public housing authorities

Kara Anne Rodenhizer, Ph.D., Director of Housing Initiatives, Granite United Way(GUW), reviewed the Affordable Housing Incentive Program and its impact since 2020. AHIP is a neutral party that has successfully provided housing supportive services by effectively navigating the needs of landlords, agencies, and tenants. Their initiatives have allowed agencies to focus on delivering their services.

- AHIP supports 220 individuals
- The vast majority are on the seacoast, including Belnap and Merrimack County.
- Funding flexibility is the most important
- More than simply providing someone with housing is required.
- Support services are also critical.

The presentation provides greater detail and can be reviewed [here](#).

When surveyed, landlords identified the following needs:

- Rent repair funds
- Lost rental income

It was noted that a sign-on bonus was the least important.

An increasing # of households are in limbo, cost- and rent-burdened. There is a demonstrated need for folks outside the voucher program: application fee support and otherwise.

AHIP/Granite United Way has access to additional funding to secure a software platform called [Padmission](#), which will support a move from an antiquated landlord list, compile the information in one place, and help G UW partner with organizations that they haven't partnered with in the past.

The Council approved and recommended the Landlord Incentive Program outlined by #s 1 - 3 above and included a 4th recommendation as follows: *Make incentives available to beneficiaries of various federally funded housing assistance programs and allow for programs to be administered by various qualified partners, including Public Housing Authorities and nonprofit organizations.*

The first part would allow eligibility for people getting rapid rehousing or ESG assistance through DHHS. The second part would allow grants from NH Housing to Granite United Way/AHIP or other nonprofits, such as Catholic Charities, to run landlord assistance programs for the people they serve.

Creating Housing Stability Through Lived Experience -Overview and Discussion: The Parole Process and Re-entry Into Society - Drew Holmes, Administrator of Programs, NH Department of Corrections, and Ophelia Burnett, New Hampshire Resident with Lived Experience

Drew Holmes provided a synopsis of the parole and re-entry program from the State Prison perspective, highlighting the frameworks that have been established.

- Probation: a Court ordered sentence issued as an alternative to jail or prison
- Parole: The release of a prison inmate after the inmate has completed part of their sentence in prison
- When an individual is convicted of a crime at the felony level, they are given one year + a sentence. The sentencing includes a "top" and "bottom" (minimum and maximum date that you are released from prison)
- Parole Board: Individuals from the community not associated with the Department of Corrections can review your history and determine your parole terms
- Upon release, the courts can mandate where someone is allowed to live based on county
- The Re-Entry Program is started 6-months prior
- To be released from prison, your home plan needs to be approved and include a PPO (Probation Parole Officer) who will check the residents and ensure that it aligns with your terms of release/supervision.
- Terms can include the following:
 - Supervision
 - Report change of address (PPO)
 - Avoid violating the terms of P/P
- If you don't have a housing plan, DoC will try to identify a shelter or other housing option.
- Workforce Development: Typically occurs in transitional housing
- It's important to remember that Drew's comments are related to the state prison procedures.
- City/county jails are different.
- FIT is willing to have these folks utilize the shelter - would love to have a more coordinated effort to ensure a bed for such individuals.

- FIT has many people annually released from jail, with the shelter being their 'home.' We should seek further information from other jails across the state.
 - Engage someone on a county level to provide deeper insight into a county-level
- Drew identified barriers to accessing services, housing, and primary care continue.

Ophelia provided a detailed overview of her experience with the reintegration process after serving time in state prison.

Digging into the NH Homeless Data

[PIT Count Planning Overview](#) - Mandy Reagan, Bureau of Homeless Services, Division for Behavioral Health, Department of Health and Human Services and HMIS – NH/VT – Meghan Morrow Rafferty

- PIT: Compiled on a National level by all CoC communities
- Required annually
- Administered by HUD
- Required for sheltered and unsheltered persons
- Typically, the 4th Wednesday in January to coordinate with other HUD reporting
- Why January: services providers are maximizing resources

[NHCEH Annual Report Overview](#) - Jennifer Chisholm, Incoming Executive Director NH Coalition to End Homelessness, reviewed the Coalition's Annual Report on homelessness.

In closing, it was noted that "Housing First" may be ideal. However, in the near future, we won't have the resources to meet people where they are.

We need a lower-cost solution, the intermediate step. Pod villages?