

Advocacy Committee 2-2-2010

Present: Margaret Haywood, Service Providers Commission; Tedd Peso, Homeless Youth Constituency Group; Joyce Coffee, Domestic Violence Constituency Group; Kathleen Molnar, Prevention Constituency Group; Lonnie Fulton, Consumers Commission; Randall Doubet King, Alliance Board; Erin Ryan, Discharge Planning and Interim Housing; Maggie Connell, Latino Council on Homelessness; Megan LaFrambois, Permanent Housing Constituency Group; Keith Richardson, Consumers Commission; Angela Hicks, Black Caucus; Beth Tumiel, ONE; Cynthia Bradley, Wraparound Services.

Alliance Staff: Nicole Amling

Introductions

Committee members introduced themselves.

Business

The minutes were approved as written.

Advocacy Agenda Updates

Nicole talked about what's happening in Washington. The Senate is working on their job development bill (the House passed one in 12/09). Though seemingly unrelated there are efforts to get the appropriations for the National Housing Trust bill to be included. There are also attempts to get an additional \$1 billion of HPRP funding included.

The President sent his budget request to Congress yesterday. Our goal will be to expand McKinney-Vento funding so we can continue to do what we're doing and fund new activities in the HEARTH Act.

The state is still in fiscal crisis. The Governor is scheduled to give his budget address on February 17 but it's been postponed the last several years. Housing Action Illinois has advocated for a name change for the Emergency Food and Shelter Program-it's being changed to the Emergency and Transitional Housing Program to better represent how the funds are actually used.

Tedd Peso announced that a bill for transitional youth jobs has been introduced and is in committee. This might be a way to start a transitional jobs program for youth in Chicago. He will pass along information on the bill to Nicole.

2010 Alliance Policy Priorities

Nicole thanked the constituency groups for getting back to her with their feedback. She detailed the changes that were made-mainly wording and focus rather than substantive changes. The group made and passed a motion to approve the policy priorities so they can be sent on to the Board.

Advocating for a Responsible Budget

-Call-in day: On 1/13 we had 29 calls (more than Nicole's goal of 20) advocating for HB 174. Per the Responsible Budget Coalition (RBC) 20 calls per hours per legislator were recorded.

-RBC events: They're having a Springfield rally on 2/17. They're also doing a photo campaign called "We Can't Wait"-you can download a form, take a photo of yourself with the completed form, and upload your photo.

-Statewide Survey: The Alliance did a survey about 5 months ago that was very helpful but is also now out of date. The Alliance is now partnering with SHPA and HAI to develop a new online survey. Randall encouraged

people to participate in the survey since he recently heard the new Illinois head of Human Services speak about the need for an additional 6% in cuts. Since there are some programs that can't be cut this will mean much larger cuts for other programs that can be cut.

Survey question areas

- Services provided
- Geography covered
- Actual budget cuts and client impact (including turn-aways; numbers and percentage)
- Are you experiencing delays in payment: how long, how much is owed, have you taken on debt to manage? If so, how much?
- What would happen to clients/services with additional cuts?
- Is there a way to track the "secondary" impact (ex. increased length of shelter stay, more time homeless, etc.) caused by the cuts?
- Should we ask about changing trends in the population agencies are seeing?
- Open ended space for feedback and comments

-March 24th: There will be an 8-10am reception with legislators and then attendees will go on to lobby their representatives. Nicole asked if people are interested in attending. We talked about the cost and logistics of attending. The Alliance is arranging \$50 hotel/motel rooms for the night of the 23rd.

Discharge Planning Committee: The group is changing the way they're approaching the issue with their first meeting of 2010. The shift from population focused groups to issue focused groups is an attempt to make some progress on common issues across the different populations. The group will be meeting on 2/5 from 2-4 at Facing Forward to End Homelessness (Formerly Interfaith Council for the Homeless) located at 642 N Kedzie.

2010 Census: Nicole talked about the importance of the upcoming census. The Alliance is going to conduct a training on 3/3 for agencies working with homeless people since census staff will be out to start counting at agencies at the end of March. The training is really focused on people who might be missed in the traditional count.

Announcements

-The Night Ministry and Chicago Coalition's homeless youth group recently met with the Mayor. He said he wants to form a commission to look at youth housing issues.

-Bridget Baker is leaving Beacon and will no longer represent the Homeless Families Constituency Group on this committee. Someone else from that constituency group will join to represent them.

Important Dates

February 5: Discharge Planning meeting 2-4pm

February 17: RBC Rally in Springfield

March 3: Census Training 9:30-11:00 at CMAP in the Willis Tower (formerly Sears Tower)

March 24: "We Can't Wait for Housing: A Statewide Day of Action"

April 6: Advocacy Committee meeting 10-11:30

Advocacy Committee Minutes
April 6, 2010

Present: Margaret Haywood, Keith Richardson, Joyce Coffee, Randall Doubet King, Beth Tumiel, Erin Ryan, Claire Sloss, Tedd Peso, Megan LaFrambois, Cynthia Bradley, Lonnie Fulton

Alliance Staff: Nicole Amling

Introductions:

Committee members introduced themselves.

Business:

Minutes from the February meeting were approved. There are three open seats for the Advocacy Committee-those representing Homeless Families, Council on Latino Homelessness, and Chronic Homeless constituency groups. Nicole will be having discussions to select representatives this month. New members should be present at next meeting.

The Alliance Board of Directors approved our 2010 Policy Priorities.

Advocacy Updates:

McKinney-Vento

Because of the HEARTH Act, McKinney-Vento funding can be spent in new, creative ways. However, to assure that these resources comes from additional funding rather than taking away from existing programs, the Alliance is pushing to have the 2.4 billion in authorizing legislation (a huge jump) in the final budget. Two House Reps are circulating a letter to ask for the increase. Six Chicago area Representatives signed on to the letter: Judy Biggert, Danny Davis, Luis Gutierrez, Mike Quigley, Bobby Rush, and Jan Schakowsky. The Alliance is also working with Durbin and Burriss to circulate a similar letter through the Senate.

Collaborative Voucher Proposal

A new program that would make two pots of vouchers (totaling 10,000) was proposed by the President in his budget address. 4,000 of the vouchers would be allocated for chronically homeless individuals, distributed by a PHA, and have to be tied to services provided by SAMHSA. 6,000 of the vouchers would be allocated to homeless families, distributed by a PHA and have to be tied to schools and other social services. It would be a national competition to get the vouchers and they would be administered by the Chicago Housing Authority. The Alliance is talking to legislators to make sure that this proposal is in the final budget.

Health Care Reform

The recently passed legislation expands Medicaid coverage to people with incomes up to 133% of the poverty level (and estimated 650,000 people in Illinois.) The coverage will

start in 2014 and even though the federal government will heavily subsidize the expansion, Illinois will have some additional cost.

HEARTH Act

Regulations for the HEARTH Act are supposed to be released in May. Chances are they will be coming out this summer.

TANF Emergency Fund

Illinois is eligible to receive close to \$3 million dollars of TANF funds to help families going through the recession (short-term benefits, transitional jobs, and TANF cash assistance.) In January, Illinois had only applied for 1% of our available funds. By the end of March, Illinois had applied for 25%. The funds pay for only 80% of the service, so Illinois is concerned that they will not be able to come up with the 20% match. The program ends at the end of September. There are some efforts to extend it for another year.

State Budget

Quinn's proposed budget includes a 1% "surcharge" to fund education because his budget made drastic cuts to education line items. This surcharge didn't go over well in the press or the General Assembly. Though the proposed budget doesn't cut our line items more, it doesn't restore funds that were cut last year. There is a rumor that the legislature will pass a 6-month budget, and then wait until after elections to raise taxes.

Communication with National Alliance is strong. Nicole will forward the National Alliance E-newsletter to Advocacy Committee members.

Recent Advocacy Events:

We Can't Wait for Housing

The event was successful. It was a bi-partisan event and attendees talked to 20 legislators. There was also good turn-out from community organizations. This was in part due to the collaboration with SHPA and CCH. It was useful to develop relationships and remind legislators of our message, even though the budget probably won't be passed until the fall. It's also important to remind legislators about the magnitude of our issues downstate and how homelessness might present differently in rural communities.

In the future, we should think about having a gathering targeted towards consumers who attend.

Alliance Census Training

There was good turn-out for the event. Organizations have reported that the process in their shelters has been going smoothly. The committee was reminded of the importance of communicating to others that census data determines how much federal money comes to Illinois.

Discussion of U of C Advocacy Report

The committee decided to ask the researchers from the University of Chicago to come to the next meeting and review the results of the study with them. The committee brainstormed options for using the report to increase the strength of advocacy efforts within the Alliance. These included: asking U of C to talk about the results to the larger Alliance; conducting another Advocacy Workshop; advertising advocacy as professional development; putting advocacy into job descriptions/having a staff dedicated to advocacy, etc. There is a particular challenge in engaging front-line staff and consumers in advocacy efforts.

Announcements:

Joyce Coffee received a Chicago Foundation for Women award.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, June 1
10:00 – 11:30 am
2120 W. Warren

Advocacy Committee Minutes
June 1, 2010

Attendees: Margaret Haywood, Service Providers Commission; Keith Richardson, Consumers Commission; Randall Doubet King, Alliance Board; Beth Tumiel, ONE; Millie Hernandez, Service Providers Commission; Pamela Kerr, Homeless Action; Megan LaFrambois, Permanent Supportive Housing; Kathleen Molnar, Prevention; Jen Patterson, Homeless Families; Tedd Peso, Homeless Youth; Erin Ryan, Discharge Planning; Thomas Williams, Consumers Commission.

Staff: Nicole Amling, Nancy Radner

Guest: Jennifer Mosley, University of Chicago

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Business

-The April 2010 minutes were approved without edits or revisions.

III. Advocacy Update

- McKinney Vento funding is the priority. We're asking for 2.4 billion dollars. Senator Durbin signed a letter in support of the funding-something he doesn't usually do.
- The National Housing Trust Fund bill passed the House last Friday by a narrow margin. It had also passed last year but never made it to the Senate. There's still work to do to get it passed.
- The General Assembly passed a budget last week. Nicole has been trying to get as many details as possible but it's very confusing. The Governor has been given a great deal of power to cut \$7 billion dollars to get to a balanced budget. The cuts will come from Public Safety, Health Care, Education, and Human Services. Providers of services will continue to experience delays in payment. Randall suggested that people call their elected officials and let them know you support the tax increase and let them know about your appreciation for efforts they've made on behalf of our issues. He also said that the Alliance should ask the people on our side what else they need from us right now-data, statistics, more protests, less protests, etc. Beth suggested people invite their legislators to summer events at their organizations.

IV. Homeless Definition Proposed Rule (HEARTH Implementation)

- Nicole explained that the first in a series of proposed rules outlining regulations of the HEARTH Act has been released. The proposed rule has been taken to the Service Providers Commission Executive Committee and draft comments have been prepared. Our comments are not due back to HUD until 6/20/10 so there's time for this group to review and add to them.
- Nicole detailed the proposed changes to the definition of homelessness including how imminent risk will be documented, specific timeframes of homeless and/or housing instability, etc. She also detailed the SPCEC's responses to several questions posed by HUD. The group discussed making sure that the HUD approved form verifying homelessness include room to define/explain anything not included in the checkboxes, adding hospitals to the list of institutions, and softening our comments (to reflect some difference of opinion on the need for documenting the instability) on determining permanent instability.

IV. Discussion of University of Chicago Advocacy Report

18 months ago roughly half the homeless service providers were interviewed by Jennifer and her research assistant. They've been sharing the information with service providers and other interested parties. There was a suggestion that the recommendations be summarized since the report is long and some of the people who received it probably didn't read all of it. The group discussed the following questions:

- Do agencies understand the difference between advocating for their clients/agency and the system-wide advocacy that the Alliance engages in?
- Given the number of agencies that are participating in advocacy why aren't there more people around this table?
- Some people underreported their advocacy and some people thought being a member of the Alliance or attending an SPC meeting counted as advocacy.
- Agencies don't fully understand what they can legally do as far as lobbying and/or advocacy. Some people didn't know the definition and were actually lobbying. No agencies in Chicago reported lobbying on their 990s while 25% of agencies reported lobbying activities.
- In many organizations lobbying/advocacy was concentrated at the very top of the organization. How can we get more people involved?
- Not included in the report was a sense that the south side agencies feel left out of what's happening-this wasn't heard from north and west side organizations.
- Are there ways to develop a culture of advocacy within organizations? The SPC has planned on 2 meetings a year being trainings so this might be a good topic for one of those.
 - Share a summarized version of the report.
 - Brief guidelines on what organizations can do lobbying/advocacy wise.
 - Reminder about what the Advocacy Team and Advocacy Committee are doing.
 - Possibly a panel discussion of people who are doing this well.
 - Consider reframing advocacy as a proactive way to increase PR for your organization.
 - How to engage your Board in advocacy efforts.

V. Advocacy Team Update

- 33 calls on 5/5 call-in day
- 36 calls on 5/24 call-in day

VI. Discharge Planning Committee Update

- The committee meets again on 6/25.
- The Chicago Coalition for the Homeless has asked that we sign on to their efforts with CHA to make changes to their rules about banning residency for people with certain criminal convictions. The Discharge Planning Committee supports this but wanted to take it to this body. Since we were running out of time Nicole agreed to send out an email and conduct a vote to see if the Alliance should endorse.

Next Meeting: August 3, 2010 from 10am-11:30am

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kathleen Molnar

Advocacy Committee Minutes 8-3-2010

Attendees: Margaret Haywood, Inspiration Corporation, Service Providers Commission; Randall Doubet King, Alliance Board; Millie Hernandez, Casa Central, Service Providers Commission; Pamela Kerr, Interfaith House, Homeless Action; Kathleen Molnar, Emergency Fund, Homelessness Prevention; Jen Patterson, HOW, Homeless Families; Tedd Peso, The Night Ministry, Homeless Youth; Erin Ryan, Lincoln Park Community Shelter, Discharge Planning; Lonnie Fulton, Consumers Commission; Angela Hicks, Institute of Women Today, Service Providers Commission; Cynthia Bradley, Beacon Therapeutic, Wraparound Services

Staff: Nicole Amling

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Business

-The June minutes were approved.

III. Review Progress on 2010 Policy Priorities

-Nicole distributed a handout detailing all the progress that has been made so far in 2010. There was a question about the Cook County prostitution court-it seems like Cook County isn't doing much with it currently.

-Randall mentioned that 7 or 8 Chicago Alderman are not planning on running for re-election. This is an opportunity to reach out to the people who will be running and to talk to them about our issues. The primary is in 2/2011 but it's a good time to talk with the candidates while they're open to hearing from us.

IV. Advocacy Agenda Update

-Federal

1. Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness: The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness completed the first national plan to end homelessness. The new HEARTH Act required this plan and you can download it if you haven't already read it. Goals include ending chronic homelessness in 5 years; preventing and ending homelessness among veterans in 5 years; preventing and ending homelessness for families, youth, and children in 10 years; and creating a plan/path to ending all types of homelessness.

2. Appropriations: McKinney-Vento and Collaborative Vouchers: On 7/29/10 the House passed FY 2011 housing funding including an increase for McKinney Vento (\$2.2 billion up from \$1.98 billion). The extra funds came from revised Section 8 renewals. The Senate now needs to pass it as well. There was an attempt last week to cut funding for HUD VASH vouchers but it was withdrawn. We need to continue to watch for HHS appropriations-they should happen soon.

3. Hill Visits: The group from Illinois that attended the recent National Alliance Conference in DC made 12 visits-Nicole went on 7 of them. The main topics were McKinney Vento and veteran's legislation.

4. TANF: Some critical TANF funding is ending on 9/30/10. Illinois is using the funds for the "Put Illinois to Work Program". Many programs have stopped taking referrals for their programs since the funding will end soon and it's unclear if there will be any more.

-State

1. Budget Update: Governor Quinn signed the budget in early July. Most of our funding was flat from the previous year though there was a 10% cut to youth services from FY10 funding amounts.

2. RBC's Call to Action: The RBC is trying to reach out to grass top leaders (ex. CEOs of hospitals) to talk about the impact of the budget cuts and late payments. The Alliance continues to work with the RBC.

V. Service Provider's Advocacy Training

We reviewed the outline Nicole provided. We made a few small tweaks to it. Tedd has talked with a law firm that is willing to host and present a portion of the agenda. He'll follow up with them on size, dates, and the length of their presentation. We discussed who should be on the ED panel and agreed that it's important to have a good mix and to make sure they have some questions in advance so they are prepared to speak.

VI. Announcements and Updates

- SOAR training: Kathleen and another trainer will be presenting the 2 day training on August 11th and the 12th at Trilogy. There are a few spots left.
- DP Discussion of the federal plan on 8/11 at CSH.
- Discharge Planning meeting: The group meets again on 8/13 at CSH.
- 100,000 Homes Campaign: Chicago's registry week will be August 23rd through the 27th. Chicago is part of this Common Ground national campaign to help house the most vulnerable homeless people.
- Chicago Youth Homelessness Committee: Tedd reported on the first meeting on the new committee which was formed following the Mayor's discussion with a group of homeless youth working with The Night Ministry. There were 25-30 people at the meeting including lots of city folks. They talked about the following goals/issues: funding for youth drop-in programs, funding for transit for youth, the issue of 18-24 y/o in adult shelters, transitional jobs, barriers to completing education, how the city colleges can help homeless youth, and expanding youth shelter beds.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kathleen Molnar, Emergency Fund

Advocacy Committee 10-5-2010

10-5-2010	Name	Organization/Agency	Representing
X	Cynthia Bradley	Beacon Therapeutic	Wraparound Services
	Joyce Coffee	Family Rescue	Domestic Violence
	Lisa Danielson	Deborah's Place	Chronic Homeless
	Randall Doubet King	Alliance Board	At-Large
	Jill Geltmaker	Heartland Human Care	At-Large
X	Margaret Haywood	Inspiration Corporation	Service Providers Commission
X	Millie Hernandez	Casa Central	Service Providers Commission
X	Angela Hicks	Institute of Women Today	Service Providers Commission
X	Pamela Kerr	Interfaith House	Homeless Action
X	Megan LaFrombois	Heartland Health Outreach	Permanent Supportive Housing
X	Kathleen Molnar	Emergency Fund	Prevention
	Daniel Pasquini-Salazar	La Casa Norte	Council on Latino Homelessness
X	Jen Patterson	HOW	Homeless Families
X	Tedd Peso	The Night Ministry	Homeless Youth
X	Keith Richardson	Northwestern	Consumers Commission
X	Erin Ryan	LP Comm. Shelter	Discharge Planning
X	Beth Tumiel	Mercy Housing	ONE
	Thomas Williams	North Side Housing	Consumers Commission
X	Nicole Amling	Chicago Alliance to End Homelessness	N/A
X	Kimberly Holley	Emergency Fund	N/A

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Business

-The minutes from the 8.3.10 meeting were approved as written.

-Lonnie Fulton passed away last month. He will be missed by this group as well as the rest of the Alliance.

III. Advocacy Agenda Update

a. Federal Items

- i. FY 2011 budget: At the end of last week a continuing resolution was passed meaning that everything continues until the new budget is passed. This is not unusual this time of year when everyone is anxious to get back to their districts to campaign.

b. State Items

- i. Put Illinois To Work: It was originally scheduled to end 9/30/10 but there was a lot of advocacy done to keep it going. The program has created 26,000 jobs in the state. The Governor has extended it through 11/30/10 (with no detail on how it will be paid for) with the hope that Congress will extend it when they come back for their lame duck session.
- ii. RBC: They continue to work on keeping the issue of a tax increase alive to fund education and social services.

IV. Service Providers Advocacy Training

Tedd and Nicole recently met with staff at Quarles and Brady to talk about the upcoming training. They've offered to host the training and to provide food-the space will seat about 60 attendees. They're also putting together some materials on what kind of advocacy NFPs can do and how to craft your advocacy message. We looked over the proposed agenda and, after some discussion, decided to stick with the proposed length of the training. We talked about making sure the ED panel talks about how to engage clients/consumers in advocacy. We discussed who should be on the panel-Erin Ryan agreed to speak, Tedd will speak with Paul Hamann at The Night Ministry, and Nicole will talk with Sol Flores at La Casa Norte. Angels Hicks of Institute of Women Today is willing to be a backup for the panel. Nicole will create a flier and everyone should take the information to their organizations and constituency groups.

V. Preparing for Election Season

- a. Voter engagement: Today is the last day to register to vote in the November elections. Last week was National Homeless Voter Registration Week-sponsored by the National Coalition for the Homeless. Nicole has additional information about an upcoming web training by The Non-Profit Voter Engagement Network on getting out the vote-let her know if you'd like more details on the training. It's going to be held at 1pm on 10/7.
- b. Questions for candidates: The RBC developed a list of general questions to ask candidates-it's been included with today's handouts.
- c. Upcoming elections: Nicole asked if organizations are doing anything to get their clients voting. ONE is going to focus on the spring elections in the city. The Governor's race is critical and will have a large impact on the work we do so people should make sure they're informed about the choices and vote.

VI. Updates and Announcement

- a. Hidden Homeless Event: Nicole attended last week's training/presentation about doubled-up households. HHCS talked about their project in Englewood (the neighborhood was targeted because of the high number of doubled-up households) and what they've learned. They've been using HPRP and PITW to house and employ people.
- b. Chicago Youth Homelessness Committee: The 4 subcommittees (Shelter, Transit, Education, and xxxxx) of this group are meeting now. Nicole and Tedd attended the Shelter subcommittee-there was discussion about some possible new shelter beds and the timeframe for them to open.
- c. Discharge Planning Meeting: Erin announced the next meeting of this group on 10/14 from 2-3:45 at Heartland. There's been discussion about how to get information from clients on their last experience with discharge planning and this will be discussed at the meeting.
- d. Consumer's Town Hall: Keith talked about last week's gathering. They had about 30 people in attendance.
- e. Inspiration Corporation: They're expanding to Garfield Park and the space will be located at 3504 W Lake St. They're currently hiring for restaurant professionals for the training portion of the program and will be hiring for the social services positions after that. They're planning to be open in March 2011.
- f. Next meeting: 12/7/2010