



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

Monday August 22, 2016  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**I. BUSINESS**

**A. Roll Call:**

**Members present:** Chair of Committee Councilor Jennifer Cullum, Councilor Frederick Chirigotis, Councilor James Crocker Jr.; Deb Krau; Councilor Debra Dagwan. **OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Lt. J. Challies; Chief Paul MacDonald; Barnstable Police. **ABSENT:** Councilor James Tinsley.

Chair of the Committee Councilor Jennifer Cullum opened up the meeting at 5:35 with public comment. Seeing no one from the public wanting to speak Chair of the committee closed public comment.

The Chair of the committee introduced Heidi Nelson, Chief Executive Officer for the Duffy Health Center to give the committee an update on the homelessness issues in Hyannis from her perspective caring for these individuals at the Duffy Center. Ms. Nelson started out by saying that she has seen a significant change in the environment in and around Hyannis, she would like to defer to the Barnstable Police as well for their take on how the summer went; Chief Paul MacDonald stated that he has seen a significant change in Hyannis, the call volume has dropped, he believes this has a lot to do with the boots on the ground this summer as well as the Crime Street Unit officers out in force this summer, along with the police presence on Main Street. The calls we used to receive from merchants have dropped significantly. The camps that once existed are no longer occupied; however there are still two camps that are on private property, he has met with our legal attorneys to find out how to go about removing them, so those discussions are ongoing still but he hopes that the resolution is in the near future. The outreach workers working alongside the officers has greatly improved the Hyannis area.

Elizabeth Wurfbain also has seen a significant drop in the individuals that used to be around the merchant stores has greatly decreased, and she does not receive as many calls regarding problems in the stores on Main Street, and she also believes that the officers presence on Main Street has helped that out greatly and she would like to see it continue, it has benefitted the store owners as well as our visitors that come here.

Ms. Nelson stated this is what she has heard as well from others, that this summer was a positive one. She often asks people what their feeling is, and she has not heard any problems or complaints, it is not completely problem free, there are still issues and problems, but she believes that the reason the issues are not lingering ones is because the speed in the process in getting the individuals the services they need has been expedited so individuals are receiving treatment faster because of the cooperation of the outreach workers and the police; It has made a huge difference in treating these individuals and getting them the help they may need or the services they need.

She also feels that there are less people, but we still have the population of "street people" but they are still here and around, but they are making themselves less visible to the public and to others, so they are hiding or staying with others to avoid being on the street during the day. Ms. Nelson said that she has also heard that there were camps being put up in Yarmouth, she could not confirm the locations and asked Chief MacDonald if he knew, he stated he had not heard. Councilor James Crocker Jr. said if the camps are appearing in Yarmouth, that is not good, as Barnstable cares about the homeless no matter what town they may be in now, Councilor James Crocker Jr. does not want anyone on the streets. Ms.

Nelson has not been able to connect with the Council of Churches or Vin Fin as of yet to get an update from them, however she was able to reach out to Izzy's Team; they are the church individuals at the Federated Church and do the giveaways, they also have a strong presence at the coffee house and that is where most of the connection happens and the conversations start and the treatment begins.

Ms. Nelson handed out a "Summary of Outreach Activities" (see below)

### Summary of Outreach Activities

July 2016

This is a summary of Derick from Noah and Duffy Health Center's case managers outreach encounters. This includes Outreach by Rick and Arlene, Arlene's outreach with Dr. Field, services provided to homeless patients when they come into Duffy and Housing Frist clients who are not yet housed. What we have not captured accurately is the number of showers provided.

82 people have been provided Outreach Services

9 of the 82 have been seen by more than one case manager

115 documented encounters

30 people seen at the Coffee House

11 people seen at the Village Green

2 people seen in the camps

Many also seen at Noah and Duffy

27 people were offered housing assistance/referrals

21 accepted

9 people were housed this month, (5 Duffy, 4 NOAH)

9 people were offered assistance with Detox

1 accepted and went to Detox

Other services offered and accepted include transportation, showers and referrals to Social Security, DTA, etc.

Ms. Nelson stated that each statistic it includes NOAH, Duffy Center Case managers, Rick, and Eileen Crosby reach out to the homeless twice a week to meet with people at the shelter. Ms. Nelson also wanted to mention that the Duffy Center has introduced a shower program, and what this is if someone wants to come to our facility and just wants to get a clean shower, it gets these individuals through the door and possibly on some sort of a treatment program or wellness check and then we can begin the process with these people.

Councilor Cullum asked Heidi what her perspective is on the issues regarding the homeless and if she sees a difference in her day to day encounters. Councilor Cullum mentioned that the Duffy Center has really stepped up in this area and hired their own outreach workers and case managers to handle the situation, and Councilor Cullum wanted to make mention of that and also to thank Heidi and her staff in their efforts in combating and helping with this. Councilor Cullum also asked if there is anything this

Committee can do to assist or help in this process that may make things easier for you. Ms. Nelson said she feels it would be a good idea if we got everyone together and collect the data or to see where everyone is regarding this, and also to see if the position of outreach coordinator really needs to be filled or do we need just an organizer to organize what everyone is already doing because this summer we have made incredible progress in this area.

Councilor Cullum mentioned that when Rose Evans came last time to this committee meeting and spoke to us regarding the States position and where we may be overlapping in services and to coordinate that effort.

Deb Krau asked about the “Boots on the ground” staff were going to pick two individuals that are a chronic homeless people and the focus was to be on them and to get them services or at least some sort of help, Ms. Krau wanted to know if there was success in this idea or if it happened at all. Ms. Nelson answered that she did not specifically ask that question or ask if that actually happened, but can find out information if need be. Ms. Krau said it would be helpful and maybe report in October. The other question from Ms. Krau was she wanted to know if the State gave Housing Assistance Corp any money for an outreach worker or case manager to fill in the time gaps that were identified with respect to the schedule this committee had set in the early onset. Ms. Nelson did not have that information either, but will reach out to Mr. Presbrey to find out if any additional funding was provided. The last question Ms. Krau asked was if the Coordinated Entry Process was getting along. Ms. Nelson stated that the outreach coordinator and HUD the Continuum of Care did put in an application to Housing and Urban Development and the Duffy Center was able to ask for funding to fund this. The Duffy Center has applied to be the coordinator of the entry system since they do this anyway already.

Councilor Cullum asked Chief MacDonald about the Community Service officers and the fact that they go away at the end of the season, so do you see a problem occurring when this happens, Chief MacDonald said that those positions are a seasonal position, however the Town Manager has asked me through grants to keep the position at the very least until the end of October, so he is going to do that, so that the ground we have already gained is not lost. Councilor Cullum and the committee members agreed. Councilor James Crocker Jr. asked Ms. Nelson about the reporting numbers and how they compare to previous years, are there more services being offered, or are we reaching more individuals, what do you see in these numbers being reported. Ms. Nelson stated that the reporting is being gathered in a different way, it was important for us to gather information from all the reporting agencies and put the information in perspective, but it was the effort of Deb Krau and myself to coordinate this information in one location and then report it out; it is hard to say from previous years because we did not have the data in previous years because it was not coordinated. Deb Krau said that in years past the agencies were all over the place, and kept the data to themselves and did not share it, but we have opened that up and have more outreach workers on the streets reporting back to us.

Councilor Cullum said we could probably compare this data to the Main Street Initiative data that was reported, it was based on the same reporting information. Councilor Crocker Jr. asked about the 1 in 9 individuals and only 1 received help, Ms. Nelson said unfortunately we have to keep going back to these individuals because they have to want the help and if they don't we can't force them, they have to commit on their own to their own recovery if that is what they want, but we will keep asking until we are successful Ms. Nelson said. The more people we have out there connecting with these individuals will eventually make a difference.

Deb Krau asked about the statistic of the housing placement and wanted to know if we are still running into issues with housing stock. Ms. Nelson said she had just spoken to Pat, who is the case manager at Duffy, and they are still housing people but it is very slow, it can be a 30 to 90 day process in order to get housing. This is just the application process which is a difficult process in itself; however it does happen it just takes a lot more time.

Councilor Dagwan asked if the funding is the problem in why it is forever process, Ms. Nelson said it not a resource problem, the problem is the voucher coming in are not enough to accommodate the

rent amounts. Individual's income and the cost of a home and the voucher, there is still a gap, housing is very expensive here on the Cape and the wages are reportedly lower so the gap exists.

Councilor Dagwan asked if there are enough houses on the Cape. Ms. Nelson said that is still an issue, but we are working with landlords' or property owners and trying to get them over the fear of renting to Section 8 individuals, and that is a slow process because if they have had a bad experience in the past, they are reluctant to do it again. Councilor Cullum asked about the amount of money the vouchers were in the past, why are they not adequate now if they have remained the same. Ms. Nelson said the rents have gone up and the vouchers have not, back in the 90's and the year 2000 the rents were much lower so the vouchers were adequate. Rents back then were \$900 and now rents are \$1200 and above. Councilor Cullum asked who sets the amounts on the vouchers. Ms. Nelson stated the amounts are based on fair market rents in the area, then they issue based on that; it's the Federal Government that releases the monies for these vouchers. Councilor Dagwan asked how the rents are paid, is there a contract or something. Ms. Nelson said that the landlord has a lease that is signed by the client and the lease stays with the client if they decide to move, the voucher follows the client not the landlord.

Councilor Jennifer Cullum thanked Ms. Nelson for coming in.

Councilor Cullum asked for a motion to accept the meeting minutes of August 4, 2016. Councilor Frederick Chirigotis made the motion to accept the meeting minutes of August 4, 2016, this was seconded by Councilor Dagwan, all members present voted in favor except Deb Krau abstained as she was not in attendance. Councilor Jennifer Cullum asked for a motion to adjourn; Councilor Debra Dagwan made the motion to adjourn at 6:05pm. Deb Krau seconded the motion.

ADJOURN: 6:05pm

NEXT MEETING: September 12, 2016 at 6pm Barnstable Senior Center