



TOWN COUNCIL  
**Committee to Address Homelessness  
in the Town of Barnstable**  
367 Main Street, Hyannis, MA  
Selectmen's Conference Room  
2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Selectmen's Conference Room

January 21, 2020

6:00pm

MEETING MINUTES

**I. BUSINESS**

**A. Roll Call:**

**Members present:** Chair of Committee Councilor Jennifer Cullum; Member at Large, Deb Krau; Deb Dagwan; Tracy Shaughnessy Councilor Britt Beedenbender; Lt. Jean Challies, Officer Eric Drifmeyer, Barnstable Police, Chief Sonnabend, Barnstable Police; Chief Burke, Hyannis Fire Department **Absent:** Councilor Debra Dagwan

Current Chair of the Committee opened the meeting up at 6:05pm, asking if there was anyone that wanted to speak at Public Comment, seeing none, the Chair moved to the approval of the November 15, 2019 motion from Britt Beedenbender / second Tracy Shaughnessy all members present voted in favor of approving the meeting minutes of November 15, 2019

- Public comment
- Committee response to Public comment
- Approve meeting minutes of Close current Homeless Committee and give final report.
- Open new Committee "Committee to Address Homelessness in Barnstable" and introduce new Charge:

Chair of the Committee Councilor Jennifer Cullum thanked everyone who has been involved in tis from the start, it has been yeoman works and we have accomplished a lot in those years, and would like to thank everyone who had their hands in the change the Committee made. Councilor Cullum truly appreciated the hard work and dedication to the previous Charge that this Committee was under, moving forward we have changed the name and the Charge. We are now part of the discussion rather than being in the wings, so that is huge, we never had a voice; with that being said I relinquish my position as Chair, and moving forward we now will hold elections for a new Chair.

Vote for Chair/ Councilor Debra Dagwan nominated Councilor Britt Beedenbender, Councilor Jennifer Cullum seconded that motion, there were no other nominations for Chair, Committee members held the election, all unanimous in favor of Councilor Beedenbender as the new Chair of the **Committee to Address Homelessness in Barnstable.**

Chair of Committee Councilor Beedenbender read the following new Charge of the Committee:

### **Committee to Address Homelessness in Barnstable**

“The charge of the Committee to address homelessness in Barnstable is to determine a path to Functional Zero which recognizes there will always be people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless but as long as these people can be identified and re-housed quickly and effectively, the homeless rate will be effectively or functionally zero. The Committee will evaluate, identify gaps and limiting factors, in the current system and processes and develop the framework that closes the gap”.

Chair of the Committee wanted to thank the previous Chair and the members and all the hard work and effort and passion and the need to do right by the Town, which was driven by the residents and business owners and the impact it had, the camps that people were living in; and the impact of group homes, and are they serving the public, and are they really serving those in need the correct way, that portion of it will have to be addressed with the Town and its services designed to help those I need, but my hope is that we shift away from a reactive approach and a managing approach to an approach that is really focused on ending this, we can't speak for the County but we can address the issues in this Town, we have the political way to do it, so we are ready to move forward and are in a transition spot, so I need to get a handle on where we are, I have met with the Regional Network individuals in the County as well as, Beth Albert. The agencies that participate on the RNH provide 47 programs. In 2019 there was \$1.8 million given to the RNH to support nine projects providing permanent supportive housing to 145 individuals and families. In 2019 the County conducted an assessment of homelessness amongst Youth and Young Adults (YYA) and found that as many as 2,400 YYA may experience some form of homelessness over the course of a year. The results of the 2019 Annual Point in Time Count indicate that the number of homeless families and individuals on the night of the count was 371, an increase in 13 persons from the 2018 count. The 2019 count documented that the number of families in shelter (76) is at the high end of the seven-year range. During this period the number of children in sheltered families has increased steadily from 77 in 2012 to 104 in 2019.

The minutes of the meetings that Chair Beedenbender has read are reported out to how many families were housed; it does not have a coordinated plan to move forward about what to do moving forward with those families that were not housed. There was an assessment done on the youth and young adults there were 2200 youth and young adults are homeless, this could be a duplicate from them coming in and out of the system; this town can provide services from our police and fire, but we can also provide the political will to build homes for everyone in need, not just the homeless. There were some bright spots with the County on the list that they had originally created and why it was able to be dropped, it worked because the Social Service had a coordinated effort to keep track of the individuals stated Deb Krau. But it was dropped after the Social Services Agencies decided they had done a good enough job. There are going to be issues moving forward with those that do not want to be housed and there are others are going to be challenges with either a run in with the law, or they have disabilities that need to be addressed, if we look at what we did at one point that was working, and we need to get back to that process because it worked. There was a hospital Committee that was formed and was going to take over where the Main Street initiative that had this process before, it was taken over by the health care system and Officer Jennifer Ellis was part of that group. Moving forward we need to have a coordinated effort and discussions with all the Agencies at the same table to get to the issue and find out what they need to coordinate themselves and the system so it works and every agency and service person is touching these individuals with services and that they are being serviced correctly.

Councilor Jennifer Cullum asked about Community Solutions how we take this approach so that it is not the Council driving this force, but making it clear it is our mission, There is an outside group that is Called Community Solutions that help communities reach their goals, it's a coordinated data set up, they come in and guide the discussion and keep it on scope and focus with

goal setting, they have the expertise with solutions that have worked over a variety of communities, it is a \$10,000 fee to get them to come in and help coordinate, so we need to find out if we split that cost with the County or we take it on our own, those are discussions down the road. Chair of the Committee will also ask Beth Alberts if an assessment been done recently or how outdated the last assessment was when it was done. We also have to gain the trust back from these service agencies as well. Councilor Cullum said her hope is that we do not come up against the frustration the last Committee had with these individuals that you're talking to now, so she would be interested in interviewing Community Solutions to see if they are even onboard with helping with this issue, or are they going to be resilient to the idea.

Chair of Committee said we need engagement of these services to get to ground zero, and if they do not participate then we as a town can say we are committed, and why not you, and if it doesn't happen then it will be a totally different discussion at that point. Chair of the Committee said she has had discussions with Duffy and others and they seem to be on board with at least having a discussion, and that's good.

Councilor Cullum would like to formulate a list of what we want and need and then look for solutions to that list, Deb Krau would like to see how the other towns on the Cape coordinate their social services, what do they do. Lt. Jean Challies said we have a coordinated effort within the Police Department, it may not be perfect, but we do have one.

Chair of the Committee said we need data, we need all the players at the table for discussion and to get to solutions, Councilor Dagwan said we should also try and engage a homeless person to ask what their perspective on the issue is and what they need. Chair of the Committee said that yes they did have someone in the program that was either homeless or is currently homeless, but yes there was someone who had at the very least experienced homelessness. Chair of the Committee admitted that the data gathering is going to be difficult because of either no one wants to say they are homeless or the population is constantly moving and you can't get it. Lt. Challies said that you can gather the information from the agencies that feed them or service them currently, there are charts on individuals that seek medical attention that Duffy asks questions, and so there is data to gather if they are willing to give it. Ms. Krau asked if we hire Community Solutions and they come in and look at Barnstable are they coming up for the solutions and ideas for the Town or the County and going forward is it the Town that makes sure it's followed or the County. Chair of the Committee said she sees the next steps as her speaking to the following:

- Community Solutions
- Talk to Beth Albert about County funding
- Ask the Town Manager to reach out to Mr. Yunits from the County regarding this issue

Ms. Krau said the most important thing is who and how it is going to be managed, that was the problem in the past, once we had the data. No one wanted to take ownership going forward. Chair of the Committee answered that Community Solutions helps with that decision. Councilor Cullum asked that we ask the Town Manager for staff to help support this moving forward. It starts with the continuum care stated Deb Krau, so it has to start there, and right now that is Beth Albert when you click on the continuum care tab on the County website.

Chair of the Committee asked for a motion to adjourn, Councilor Cullum made the motion; it was seconded by Councilor Dagwan, all members voted in favor of adjournment at 7:00pm

## **II. ADJOURN**

**NEXT MEETING: TBD**