



**Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness  
 Legislative Action Committee  
 Annual In-Person Meeting**

Wednesday, November 29 2017  
 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

**Meeting Attendance:**

Kate White	Michigan Community Action	In person
Husain Carter	My Brothers Keeper	In person
Debra Hayes	My Brothers Keeper	In person
Terri Ariss	Livingston County CoC	In person
Peter Ruark	Michigan League for Public Policy	In person
John A. Taylor	Community enCompass	In person
Jessica Garrison	Housing Resources Inc	In person
Ryan Hannon	Goodwill Street Outreach	In person
Eric Hufnagel	Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness	In person
Laurel Burchfield	Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness	In person
Jason Weller	Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness	In person
Elizabeth Kelly	HOPE	Phone
Nicole DuPont	Summit Pointe	Phone
Natalie Rindlisbacher	Offender Success	Phone

1. Welcome and Introductions

a. Origins and Purpose of LAC (Erich Hufnagel, MCAH)

- I. Brought together a year ago to do advocacy work on homelessness/housing. Roll up your sleeves group – idea is that we want to move forward on issues.
- II. Identified policy priorities last year with input from the group and the field.
- III. Monthly meetings have taken form of report out on what's happening with MCAH and at state and federal level. Also check in with communities so that we are being informed by what's happening at local level. Meetings are open to new members.

2. Policy Priorities 2017-2018: Review and Update

a. State ID (Jason Weller, MCAH)

- I. Origin - State ID taskforce that MCAH joined and helped coordinate at state level
- II. Update on work
  - I. Local
    - a. ID: So far this year 3 communities have passed local ordinances that allow for fee waiver or reduction, such as Genesee, Calhoun, and Kalamazoo.

II. State

- a. National: Vital Documents: Elizabeth Kelly (HOPE). Social Security Administration is allowing use of HMIS Service Point ID card as a photo ID as acceptable.
- b. Open letter for SoS requesting a meeting. Focused on fee waiver. From ICH so agency to agency. Open for about 7 weeks and will be closing next week. Purpose is to show that there is support from communities around the state. Also collected contact information so we can call on them for action if necessary for next steps.
- c. Expansion of 4-year Pilot Program: Elizabeth Kelly (HOPE) – pilot program limited to 5 counties (Macomb, Wayne, Oakland, Calhoun, Genesee) allowed for alternate documents that are more accessible for homeless. Allows for faxing all documentation to exceptions unit to pre-approve that everything is correct to save time for the client. SoS doesn't plan to expand at this time and reports the barrier to expansion is the need to train all branch offices on how to process. Kalamazoo is on 'waiting list' for expansion.
- d. SB 404: Senators Knezek and O'Brien introduced legislation for Veterans to access free IDs. One of their target audiences was homeless veterans. Passed in Senate, but stalled in committee in the House, no movement since September. This bill was seen as 'pilot' with a smaller population to see how many took advantage of fee waiver and what the cost is. But since now stalled, do we want to try and expand or introduce something new? Need to make sure not to alienate relationships in Senate.

III. Priorities for 2018:

I. Engaging with SoS

- a. Kate White (MCAA) and Eric Hufnagel (MCAH) - How can we get all agencies within ICH to help us communicate the cost benefit of fee waivers? Is there the political will for departments to conduct their own cost analysis of what costs they accrue through services for those who don't have an ID?

II. SB 404 or other legislation providing fee waiver for State ID

- a. Need to determine next steps with House.

III. Vital Documents:

- a. Elizabeth Kelly (HOPE) – birth certificates for those pre-1978 for adopted or unwed mother are held with MDHHS. Trying to get some appropriations to provide those for free for those who are homeless. Can we get something passed for 2018 appropriations process?
- b. Jessica Garrison (Housing Resources Inc) – Focus on community level. Could we visit CoCs and give presentations about what's happening successfully in other communities? Elizabeth Kelly (HOPE) has records and documents to illustrate their process and success that they can share. Debra Hayes (My Brothers Keeper) had Elizabeth and Jason present to County Commissioners which led to their fee waiver program. MCAH can coordinate this effort

IV. Information Sharing: Jason Weller (MCAH) – how do we transmit information about access to existing services/programs and best practices for organization working on ID/vital documents issues around

the state? There's a lot of missing info at community level currently.  
Example: MDHHS has done a memo for their caseworkers on the Real ID For Me, but limited reach. How do we communicate and to what audience?

b. *Decriminalization (Laurel Burchfield, MCAH)*

- I. Origin – came from member survey on priorities with expectation that Michigan needs would line up with national trends on local ordinances banning panhandling, sleeping in public, and camps. Subcommittee formed and created an agency survey that pointed us towards different priorities, including access to housing for returning citizens and engagement with police and courts. Still coordinating with national Housing Not Handcuffs campaign
- II. Update on Work
  - I. Local
    - a. Agency survey conducted and report will be made public in 2018.
    - b. Client Questionnaire, based on national campaign questionnaire, will capture from clients' perspective their experience with access to housing with a criminal record, relationships with police and courts. 3 community pilots wrapping up with goal of going statewide in early 2018.
  - II. State
    - a. SB 84 Homeless Bill of Rights – Senator Johnson introduced (2<sup>nd</sup> attempt) earlier this year but hasn't made any progress. Convened community partners – primarily Detroit – for feedback but MCAH has some concerns with costs and enforcement as the bill is worded. There aren't any co-sponsors to the bill and the Senate Local Government Committee doesn't have it on the schedule currently.
      - I. Terri Ariss (Livingston County CoC) – This may work better as a Detroit/urban homeless Bill of Rights. May make more sense to approach Bill of Rights efforts at local level instead of state. Ryan Hannon (Goodwill) – Traverse City has a Bill of Rights, but doesn't have any enforcement
    - b. Police engagement – Committee is interested in understanding police engagement more and may look into a statewide research project on different police tactics/training/processes with regards to homelessness and mental health crises. Ryan Hannon (Goodwill) – Group in Traverse City/Northern MI started an advocates and leaders for building community and police trust.
    - c. Access to Housing for returning citizens – working with Citizens Alliance on Prisons and Public Spending (CAPPS). They did a survey in several East Michigan communities and have policy recommendations that they will be sharing with MCAH. Opportunity for alignment and collaboration?
- III. Priorities for 2018
  1. Communications
    - a. Build awareness through a communications strategy that includes personal testimonials and report from client questionnaire
  2. Police engagement

- a. Data collection before seeing if there is any state or local policy work to be done
  - 3. Access to housing with criminal records
    - a. Incentivization – Interest in seeing state legislation that provides incentives for landlords who rent to returning citizens
    - b. Expungement
      - I. Examples of states that have passed state legislation on expunging criminal records. Is this something we can do?
      - II. Expungement of eviction history: Terri Ariss (Livingston County CoC) – removal of evictions for renting history after a certain period of time?
    - c. Ban the Box on Housing applications
      - I. Would this actually help with either raising awareness or helping returning citizens get farther along in rental process? Would the final outcome of being denied housing be the same even with ban the box?
- c. *Affordable Housing (Eric Hufnagel, MCAH)*
  - I. Origin - committee met early on and discussed some of the big picture issues. Has not met regularly.
  - II. Update on Work
    - 1. Nothing to report.
  - III. 2018 Priorities
    - 1. Identify Co-Chairs to coordinate and facilitate committee work.
    - 2. Capturing local success and best practices
      - a. Communities have taken up different ways to address affordable housing solutions. These are done at community level and are creating silos of success/best practices. How do we pull in communities that are being successful to create a larger, state wide initiative? Can a tool kit of best practices be helpful at the community level?
  - 3. State level – no silver bullet that will fix everything but there are some things that can be done.
    - a. Eviction Diversion: Terri Ariss (Livingston County CoC) – Livingston is implementing eviction diversion that has reduced annual eviction down 75% in one year.
    - b. Senior housing: Rent Caps: Laurel Burchfield (MCAH) – Rep Chang is convening Reps interested in senior affordable housing and have introduced leg on rent caps. Leg is stalled, but group meeting to look at senior housing more broadly and may introduce legislation later.
    - c. Rental income discrimination: Elizabeth Kelly (HOPE) – landlords are allowed to not rent to those with subsidies. Landlords can require a certain amount of income to rent and that doesn't include subsidies.
    - d. Housing and health care – Ryan Hannon (Goodwill) – Community Health Innovation Region – looking at how to improve health/reduce obesity. Affordable Housing came up a lot, so brought in Goodwill and they now have a group that looks at affordable housing and health care.

#### 4. Research

- a. Community surveys taking inventory of affordable unit availability
- b. Defining Affordable Housing and Causes: Eric Hufnagel (MCAH) - Bigger issues – define what affordable housing and what is causing the problem? Is aging population the cause? Unintended consequences of development in GR and TC that pushes low income out to contiguous counties and putting stress on their affordable housing stock. Wage vs rent and housing stock.

#### d. Healthcare & Funding

- I. Origin – two priorities identified but determined that LAC focus should be on the federal level and should partner with other organization leading work on federal funding and ACA/Medicaid issues.
  1. Question to the group – should this continue to be focus and scope of groups, or do we need to form committees or change tactics?
    - a. Peter Ruark (MLPP) – should continue to establish more connections on these two issues but continue to share info/action alerts/communication on these issues from other organizations.
- II. 2018 Priorities:
  - a. Hospital discharge planning: Terri Ariss (Livingston CoC) – hospitals connect DV victims with services rather than just release. Why can't this happen with homeless? Eric Hufnagel (MCAH) – legislation mandates for DV and there have been conversations with hospital association committee focused on discharge planning.
  - b. State funding: Are there opportunities to be more involved in appropriations process, specific to MDHHS? Examples: ESP second round of funding increase possibility and funding to increase staffing within agencies – specifically DHHS.

#### 3. Advocacy Day (Laurel Burchfield, MCAH)

- a. Review of 2017 and plans for 2018
  - I. MCAH hosted first advocacy day in March of 2017 with 70+ registrations and 70+ visits with state legislative offices.
  - II. Plan is to host another event in March of 2018 using policy priorities for talking points
- b. Goals:
  - I. Increased participation
  - II. Improved materials
- c. Planning Committee Volunteers and Responsibilities
  - I. Responsibilities include meeting 2-3 times beginning early January (Laurel will schedule), helping create/update materials, doing outreach, potentially setting up legislative meetings
  - II. Volunteers: Ryan, John, Terri, Jessica, Debra, Husain
- d. Additional thoughts
  - I. Peter Ruark (MLPP) – organize materials so that there's a one-pager with clearly defined asks. Make locals come up with follow-up strategy
  - II. John Taylor (Community enCompass) – make sure legislative asks required a response in the moment so we can capture their reactions.

#### 4. Next meeting: January 22 at 12:00 pm