

MINUTES  
COMMISSION ON HEALING SOLUTIONS FOR HOMELESSNESS  
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND HUMAN CONCERNS  
COUNTY OF MAUI  
ON-LINE VIA BLUEJEANS  
THURSDAY, JULY 15, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hudson at 1:35 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

*Present:*

Wendy Hudson, Chair  
George Kaimiola, Vice-Chair  
Faith Chase  
Lisa Darcy  
John Decker  
John Tomoso  
Mary Trotto

*Excused:*

Henry Costales  
Joyce Kawakami  
Zhantell Lindo

*Present Staff:*

Lori Tsuhako, Director  
Mimi Desjardins, Deputy Corporation Counsel  
Pili Nahooikaika, Secretary

III. PUBLIC TESTIMONY

***Keisa Liu provided testimony to agenda item 4b.***

Now is the time for change in Maui county now remember this commission was formed on the basis that not enough was being done for our houseless our unhoused in our homeless community it was created because there was a concern that the methods currently being used was not enough and were not healing more importantly we have been fed a narrative that demonize the people we are supposed to be helping by blaming them for not taking the solutions we have put out for them ignoring the fact that the path to our solutions is often worse than homelessness itself we are in a crisis and patting ourselves on the back because seven people got housed last month is not the right response in a crisis we still have people dying on the streets so now is not the time to celebrate now if you all want to have a pity party about how hard this

work is and celebrate every drop in the bucket you all can go straight over to the Maui homeless alliance, pay your dues and do that over there because that is what I have seen over there and I'm not about it and I don't want to see it here now I understand I'm coming on strong and some of you all are squirming in your seats because you're not used to it and its making you uncomfortable my response is oh well now is not the time to tip toe around the delicate feelings of those who are housed I'm here to remind you this is the space where you critically look at the issues we have what we aren't doing right and find solutions with compassion, human dignity, cultural confidency and emotional intelligence is at the forefront I'd like to leave you with a quote from that article I am talking about, "whatever the solutions are they have to start with the recognition of our collective obligation to respect the dignity of every human being no matter what their condition in life" Mahalo for your time and consideration today.

Commissioner Darcy asked Ms. Liu - What you would see as a direct action that this commission could take in order to change or improve some of the things that you're saying that you believe are not working.

Ms. Liu responded - I think a direct action we can do is first look at the system that we're using and decide whether or not it's actually working by getting the data I know they talk about a lot of data over at Maui Homeless Alliance but the actual data of not just the people that they house right away but who consistently stay housed I do think there is a problem right there where they might get housing then something happens and they're back on the streets again and they have to go through the process again so that would be one thing I would look at another thing I would look at is what are we doing to allow them to be a part of the process of them getting housed so we talk about the VI-SPDAT and how important that is for them to be qualified for certain places how can they be a part of that how do they know what their score is where they are how can they participate are we doing more especially when it comes to can we do more when it comes to technology and having them be able to access something like this like how are they going to be able to access this commission itself that's supposed to be helping them so those are a couple of things that I would look at real quick and say, hey, can we do more

***Katherine Smith provided testimony to agenda item 4b.***

I would like to testify about the homeless. I'm a retired teacher on the island and I just feel such compassion for the homeless and I think it's a scandal and an outrage that our community is literally doing nothing except for individuals like Homeless Heroes and Lisa Darcy and thank God for those folks I think one issue is that many people who are in position to help the homeless feel like they say that these people want to be homeless and I've heard people tell me that too people that I know personally and it usually I think the underlying meaning there is they don't care and I think that's super

important and these people are human beings and no matter what their issue is and if they don't want to live in the shelter they don't have to but for those who would rather do that than have a grocery cart with a blue tarp, stuffed with goods and hanging the tarp from the cart so that they get some shade I think most of them want to be sheltered this is what Lisa Darcy reports and she is in the trenches all the time and I'm sure there's not one person sitting there unless Lisa is there or one person in the county administration that has the contact with homeless people like Lisa does it's her life's work and she reports that most people, homeless people do want shelter and I feel like if we really decided that this was a problem that we really want to correct we would do it and I call on Mayor Victorino with the question what are the homeless to do are they to hang from balloons in the air and I've contacted the Mayor's Office a number of times to ask him about what's happening how are the homeless being treated I see carts left with all the goods on it no one is there and I do not receive a response. These people are American citizens who are refugees and they receive virtually no care from the Government and it's about time that our community steps up. Thank you very much for listening.

Commissioner Darcy asked Ms. Smith - I would like to ask you what change of attitude can you leave this commission with today in order to be a part of any of these healing solutions, can you in part some of your experience to us we can take with you in terms of changing attitude.

Ms. Smith responded - I can think of a couple things you know just to get ready for this meeting I thought that we were going to be on camera and I'm kupuna and frankly I have some self-care issues and I took care of those before this meeting I was so thankful that I have a bathroom and a shower to take care of those things and I think about refugees often in that regard what do they do when they have a problem I think people need to recognize the humanity of the homeless and of homeless people and reach out for them I hope this committee really gets powered very quickly and comes up with a solution, there are solutions

Commissioner Hudson closed public testimony.

#### IV. OLD BUSINESS

- Proposed Rules of Practice and Procedure for the Commission

Commissioner Chase moved and Commissioner Tomoso seconded the motion to approve the Proposed Rules of Practice and Procedure for the Commission. The motion carried unanimously.

- "Solving Homelessness Begins With A Change Of Attitude & Perspective" article received from Commissioner Tomoso

Commissioner Tomoso expressed that he brought the article forward as a way of how the commission can look at helping the homeless in a healing manner and to serve as a reminder that everyone is in this together, that everyone has a voice.

Commissioner Darcy expressed that she will use the article as a fundamental piece of information to help instill healing and solutions in the homeless community.

Vice-Chair Kaimiola expressed that the Commission needs to figure out how to end homelessness and not perpetuate it, need to find solutions to give people back their dignity and safe places to live including individuals who have been incarcerated.

Commissioner Chase referred to a testifier's comment on refugees clarifying for the record that the correct term is an Ahupua`a resident and that the Commission will work on redefining the term of homelessness and will look into its rich cultural overlays moving forward.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Formation of subcommittees and temporary investigative groups (TIG)

The Commission discussed forming subcommittees relating to the following issues:

- Compassionate response
- Redefining terms
- Cultural recognition
- Safe parking, safe sleeping, storage
- Impact of mental illness and substance abuse
- Government policies
- Felonies
- Resource mapping
- Networking with non-profit agencies

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Hudson adjourned the meeting at 2:54 p.m.