

COMMISSION ON HEALING SOLUTIONS FOR HOMELESSNESS (CHSH)
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND HUMAN CONCERNS
COUNTY OF MAUI
ON-LINE VIA BLUEJEANS
THURSDAY, JULY 27, 2023

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lindo at 1:41 p.m. A quorum was present as noted below:

Present Commissioners

In-person Attendees:

Zhantell Lindo, Chair
Rochelle Kim Tempo, Vice Chair
Lisa Darcy
Jewelyn Kahele
Leonani Pahukoa Meyer

Video Conference Attendees:

Lisa Ann Kahaleauki
Charleen Naomi Crozier
John Tomoso

Excused Commissioners

Eyke Brath Hurdman
Nena Hart

Absent (Un-excused) Commissioners

Vince Razo

Present Staff

In-person Attendees:

Lori Tshako, Director of Housing & Human Concerns
Rae-Ann Pagatpatan, Staff Secretary

Video Conference Attendees:

Saumalu Mata'afa, Deputy Director of Housing & Human Concerns
Christopher Kish, Homeless Program Coordinator
Tasha Ham-Deponte, Homeless Program Specialist
Mariana Lowy-Gerstmar, Deputy Corporation Counsel (DCC)
Selina Pannell, Deputy Corporation Counsel (DCC)

Guest Presenters

EcoNorthwest (Video Conference)

Madeline Baron
Mackenzie Visser
Hoku Krueger
Karlynn Fukuda
Alicia Kone
Cadence Petros

Maui Police Department (In-Person)

Sgt. Jan Pontanilla
Chrissy Kahuhu

1. PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON ALL ITEMS

In-person Testimony

Testifier Puamaeole (aka Faith Chase) on item #2B and #3 DHHC updates: Testifier did a brief testimony regarding the C.O.R.E. program. She expressed the importance of having shelter for the houseless, such as herself. Being houseless caused her to have medical problems since she's allergic to the sun. Her need to go to the doctor translates to additional medical bills. Ms. Chase

also testified on the DHHC update. A recent call to Christopher Kish, Homeless Division Coordinator, prompted her to do a testimony today voicing her opinion on the need to have inter-departmental/inter-governmental agencies come together and discuss homeless concerns and the need for “rebuilding families”. She feels as though each agency, whether it’s State of Hawaii, County of Maui, Harbor Police, etc., are passing the buck on whose jurisdiction the matter falls under.

Chair Lindo: wanted to better understand why Mr. Kish suggested that Ms. Chase provide a testimony.

Ms. Chase: reiterated that she spoke to multiple governmental departments such as State of Hawaii’s Governor’s office, the harbor police, DLNR, MPD, the Mayor’s office, etc. but each office suggested that she contact the DHHC Homeless Division, which is why she called Mr. Kish. She strongly urged that the various offices, get together to do a round-table discussion. She continued to provide examples of how various unsheltered families are struggling to find safe places to reside.

Commissioner Darcy: asked Ms. Chase who needs to be in the room to make the decision.

Ms. Chase: mentioned that most importantly, the Mayor’s office, especially Mayor Bissen. She stated that “he is member of the Royal Family of Kamehameha so he would be able to make key decisions.” She also listed representatives from the following offices: police department, fire department, governor’s office, harbor police, DLNR, parks & recreation, and any other members of the public who may have an interest or lived experience.

Testifier Jason Schwartz on item #4 Community Concerns: The testifier had a few things to mention for the record:

- He applied multiple times to be a member of the boards and commission for the County of Maui, particularly this Commission.
- He gave a brief update on his ex-wife whose belongings got stolen a while ago, she’s still without a phone and is residing in the Kihei area.
- He reminded the audience that he has a talk show on radio via AKAKU, which runs every Monday at 11:00 am.
- He is here to be a part of the solution.

Testifier Anonymous (AKA Jaycee Law) on item #4 Community Concerns: The testifier thanked the department for the veracity of the meeting minutes. The testifier also wanted to suggest a new name for CHSH to Homeless Anonymous. Lastly, he wanted to mention that St. John Church in Kula holds a community dinner on the last Friday of each month.

2. NEW BUSINESS

A. Presentation – ECONorthwest: Maui County Strategic Plan for Homelessness

ECONorthwest, the consulting firm contracted by DHHC, following procurement, to address Maui County Strategic Plan for Homelessness provided an overview of the scope of their work and the timeline to carry out their project. The key players from ECONorthwest, Kone Consulting, and Munekiyo/Hiraga, introduced themselves and gave a brief background and the role that they will play. The project is broken down into seven

different tasks. Task 1: Kickoff & Project Management was completed in July. Task 2 involves Community Engagement. ECONorthwest will be on Maui at the beginning of the month and will conduct several focus groups. They plan to have “listening sessions” with a variety of service providers, those who involved with affordable housing, homeless shelters, and those providing services to the unsheltered. They are hoping to gather recommendations from the community in order for the firm to develop the most effective plan. Throughout the project’s timeline, ECONorthwest plans to provide updates and get more feedback. Tasks 3, 4 and 5, which are Literature Review, Program Assessment and Funding Analysis, will take place approximately from September through January. During these steps, the firm will look at data and trends currently taking place in the County. They will look at the various funding provided to Maui County agencies and how it’s being spent in regard to homelessness. With the data, suggestions, and recommendations that they collect, the firm will then work on Task 6: Strategies & Actions. These actions will solve the entire system including preventions, services, outreach, and housing placement. ECONorthwest plans to present Task 7: Strategic Plan around Spring of 2024.

The Anticipated Schedule can be found on the PowerPoint presentation that is attached to the minutes.

Discussion on item 2A:

Commissioner Tomoso: asked ECONorthwest to clarify which dates they are planning to revisit with CHSH and to also clarify the type of participation that they hope to expect from the Commissioners.

Madeline Baron: responded that ECONorthwest is looking to visit and give updated presentations sometime in December and possibly around February/March but no specific dates have been set yet.

Cadence Petros: then responded that ECONorthwest is hoping that the Commissioners can give feedback on the various types of problems the community is faced with. They also hope to get more in-depth conversations with some of the individuals involved in the Homeless Alliance. Once information is gathered, the group will then share their draft strategies and again ask the commissioners and/or other individuals for their feedback.

Commissioner Kahaleauki: asked the consultant group if they have data on strategies done on the West coast and how successful were they.

Madeline Baron: responded that yes ECONorthwest presented a strategy to Pierce County in the Tacoma, Washington area. Their situation was quite similar to the one presented for Maui. She’s happy to send a link with data and results.

Commissioner Darcy: pointed out that Maui’s characteristics is unique, describing Maui as rural, tourist-based economy, and has a very strong cultural under met need. She asked what ECONorthwest’s experience is with these dynamics.

Cadence Petros: responded that yes, most if not almost all communities that they work with have under-represented populations like Native Hawaiians. Although the group has experience dealing

with diverse populations, they will still be sure to involve local providers to assist in formulating strategies for Maui County.

Commissioner Darcy: followed up with a second question, asking ECONorthwest “Why did they apply for this project?”.

Cadence Petros: responded that their team loves challenges. She also mentioned that homelessness is one of the most pressing things in each community so they want to be able to help the community find strategies to end homelessness. She personally holds the topic close to her heart.

Madeline Baron: added that ECONorthwest definitely works with rural communities such as Pierce County, Washington. Although Tacoma is a larger city, the county is home to many other small and remote towns.

Alicia Kone: also added that the County of San Diego was another project that included rural areas. What’s important in developing these strategies is to use data and determine the sub-populations so that they can be addressed.

Chair Lindo: asked a few things of ECONorthwest as they begin their project. First, she asked that the team do meetings on all three islands: Maui, Lanai and Molokai. She also suggested that ECONorthwest ask the commissioners to host them in their designated districts so that they can address each town according to each town’s needs. Lastly, she asked that a Native Hawaiian practitioner be made a part of their team so that formulated strategies can prioritize the Native Hawaiian population.

Commissioner Tomoso: praised ECONorthwest for partnering with Munekiyo/Hiraga on this project as they are a local agency that will be able to provide cultural influence throughout the process.

Commissioner Darcy: asked how ECONorthwest plans on working with the host culture.

Alicia Kone: explained that the group plans to utilize the Technology of Participation Facilitation method.

Commissioner Darcy: then asked how the group plans to navigate politics.

Alicia Kone: mentioned that politics was an issue 25 years ago when she started dealing with Homelessness and it’s still an issue now. Therefore, she’s very attracted to the community engagement role of this project. She looks forward to working with those with lived experiences in hopes of finding a solution.

Cadence Petros: responded that she welcomes the opportunity to discuss tough issues. She respects other’s opinions and it just means working through the disputes.

Chair Lindo: asked if ECONorthwest plans to provide periodic publication during the development of the plan.

Madeline Baron: explained that at this time there aren't any plans for a publicly facing website but the group is more than happy to provide updates at their future meetings. They plan to provide transparency throughout this development.

On-Line Testimony

Michael Williams on #2A: mentioned that he was the Chair of Cost of Government Commission. He would like to urge ECONorthwest to conclude their plan by the middle of April so that it can conform to the May 2024 Budget process. He also suggested that the County needs a house for all unhoused individuals. He referred to the Hawaiian Kauhale tradition which is being modeled on Oahu and suggested that these "villages" be placed on county-owned land. He listed lands adjacent to Kihei Police Department, Wailea Fire Department, Waiale/Waikapu, and Honokawai areas. The testifier reiterated that if ECONorthwest's plan is done sooner, it could be included in next year's budget and construction would hopefully take place within the next two years. Lastly, he suggested that unhoused individuals need safe parking areas with restrooms, water, and laundry services, as far as a short-term solution.

In-Person Testimony

Dennis Kaaihue on #2A: suggested that they need to engage with community feedback. In the past, he proposed a diagram of how to solve homelessness to the various boards and council meetings, but he has yet to receive any response. The diagram was provided to ECONorthwest for them to review as well.

Commissioner Darcy: praised Mr. Kaaihue for the time he put into his proposal. She asked what the best part of him was that was included into the plan.

Mr. Kaiahue: responded "My love". He's very passionate about his proposal and hopes that he can get more feedback.

Jessica Lau on #2A: wanted to express to ECONorthwest that yes, they can get comments from commissioners and professional agencies but most accurate information will come from homeless individuals themselves. She urges the consultants to definitely engage and interact with those with lived experiences while they are here.

Commissioner Darcy: asked Ms. Lau if given the opportunity, would she be willing to assist with connecting ECONorthwest to unsheltered individuals for their stories and feedback?

Ms. Lau: responded "Yes".

B. Presentation – Maui County Police Department (MPD) C.O.R.E. – Overview of MPD's programs and resources that provide networking/support assistance for the unsheltered.

Sgt. Jan Pontanilla and MPD Counselor Kristine Kahuhu, presented an overview of the various services that C.O.R.E. provides. They oversee the following programs:

- MMEU – **Mobile Medical Educational Unit**
 - C.O.R.E. Bus distributes food, drinks, and other services to various parts of the island throughout the week. Other agencies collaborate with MPD and also provide services such as non-critical wound care, health check-ups,

mental health counseling, financial services, vaccination, and Covid-19 testing.

- CIT – Crisis Intervention Team
 - Training is provided to those wanting to learn how to interact with individuals potentially suffering from a mental illness or an emotional crisis. They focus on how to de-escalate situations before they reach a point of violence or self-harm.
- EPIC – Emergency Preparedness Increasing our Community Awareness (AKA Active Attacker)
 - Offers demonstration on active attacker situations and reality-based scenarios.
 - Assist organizations with creating policies and procedures in an event of a live situation.
 - The main steps are Run, Hide & Fight.
- CPTED – Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
 - Conduct assessments of particular locations in order to deter criminal behavior.
 - Strategies include utilizing Natural Surveillance, Territorial Reinforcement, Natural Access Control, and Target Hardening.
- Citizens Police Academy “INSPIRE”
 - INSPIRE stands for Imagine the Possibilities, Nurture Growth, Success in Collaboration, Perpetuate the Culture, Invest in our Future, Recognize Knowledge is Power, Engagement is Key.
 - 10-week interactive program for individuals to learn more about job opportunities at MPD and the criminal justice system.
- LIYT – Live In Your Truth
 - Interactive group activities geared for teens and young adults between 12 and 24-year-old, with the objective to eliminate personal challenges and allow them to discover who they can be.
 - Fun social gatherings with various community partners that focus on participants’ physical, emotional, spiritual, mental, social, and environmental health.
- For more details, call MPD dispatch at 808-244-6400 or email C.O.R.E.@mpd.net

Discussion on item 2B:

Commissioner Tomoso: asked the presenters if he was to contact them while on the field assisting the homeless and needed MPD’s assistance in any applicable situation, would the C.O.R.E. unit be able to assist?

Sgt. Pontanilla: responded that with a brief heads up or advance notice, her team would see how they could be of assistance.

Commissioner Darcy: mentioned that she attended the Paia Town Hall meeting the night before and found it disturbing to have MPD’s presence there. She does not feel that the police department should be intertwined with health care and social service activities. She believes having police in such meetings makes others nervous. They may feel the possibility of being harassed, being served a warrant, etc. She always wanted to point out that in regard to the CPTED slide, she received the message “You’re safer when it’s brighter”. She asked MPD if that’s the

case, how would the community be able to provide a safe place for those who need the dark to sleep.

Sgt. Pontanilla: responded to Commissioner Darcy's that the example about the lighting refers to an example of how private companies reach out to MPD for consultation and advice on how to make their properties safer.

Commissioner Darcy: then stated that having a police presence at social events may cause attendees to feel like the participating vendors are now unsafe (that they need the police department there). She's asking what the justification is for intertwining police presence with health care and social services activities.

Sgt. Pontanilla: asked Commissioner Darcy if she was still referring to the CPTED program.

Commissioner Darcy: clarified that now she's referring to the MMEU bus.

Sgt Pontanilla: explained how the MMEU bus came to be. As the pandemic prompted a lockdown, Sgt Pontanilla and (at that time) Lt. Medeiros wanted to help individuals especially those unsheltered. During the lockdown, most agencies weren't providing face-to-face appointments. Thus, she and Lt. Medeiros decided to propose the concept of the MMEU bus, which was eventually granted. While various medical and mental health agencies attend to provide their services, the police department is there to solely facilitate the event funded through MPD. She emphasized that MPD is not there to make any arrests or pass out any warrants.

Chair Lindo: thanked Ms. Kahuhu and Sgt. Pontanilla for their presentation. She hopes that the presentation helps "set the record straight" of the misconception others may portray the C.O.R.E. unit to be involved with. She heard the concern of Commissioner Darcy but wanted to clarify that other agencies also provide medical outreach to the unsheltered, such as churches, the County of Maui, and even the police department. Therefore, she feels that if an individual is not comfortable with having the police present, he/she can seek services elsewhere. She also then asked if any of the C.O.R.E. programs are available on Lanai and Molokai, as she feels it is necessary. Another question that she asked was if MPD has statistics on the successes of its various programs, especially those relating to the unsheltered.

Sgt. Pontanilla: responded that at this time, funding does not extend to Lanai or Molokai. However, yes, each program has data that they can share with the Commissioners if they need it to make recommendations.

Chair Lindo: asked Sgt. Pontanilla if MPD needs CHSH to make any recommendations to County Officials on any policies that may help MPD become more of a partner with the unsheltered community. She feels that MPD could possibly engage more with the unsheltered community as a partnership instead of creating a sense of fear around police presence.

Sgt. Pontanilla: stated that the stigma toward police is not just with the unsheltered, but for everyone. Therefore, the C.O.R.E. unit is trying to eliminate the typical stigma, create a more positive relationship with the community, and show that they want to be a part of the solution. She believes that this will take time, commitment, and consistency, so she asked the Commissions to support any of MPD's efforts.

Lastly, Chair Lindo: asked if police officers are required to take any Native Hawaiian law training in order to understand how to “bridge the gap” with the unsheltered community, and if not, does Sgt. Pontanilla think this would be beneficial.

Sgt. Pontanilla: responded that C.O.R.E. does not have such a requirement. However, the ethnic background of the various C.O.R.E. staff is quite diverse and many of them are of Hawaiian ancestry, so she feels that without formal training, the staff is culturally competent. In addition, Chair Lindo’s suggestion may also be a great idea.

Commissioner Darcy: asked two questions. 1) What type of inter-departmental and -governmental coordination does C.O.R.E. work with, in reference to “sweeps”. 2) Despite the negative stigma that MPD may portray, especially after the recent sweeps, how would she share MPD’s positive efforts with the community?

Sgt. Pontanilla: clarified that C.O.R.E. has never done a sweep nor has it been a part of a sweep. As far as Commissioner Darcy’s second concern, Sgt. Pontanilla referred her to Mayor Bissen’s recent policy on addressing unsheltered residents in Maui County. She pointed out that Homelessness is not a crime. However, if an individual is breaking any type of law, they can be cited for that unlawful act.

Commissioner Darcy: continued to ask Sgt. Pontanilla on her views of the ACLU’s recent filings to sue City of Honolulu due to the city’s recent sweeps being unconstitutional.

Chair Lindo: interjected that the conversation was going off topic.

Deputy Corp Counsel: confirmed that this is not part of the agenda.

In-person Testimony

Jessica Lau on item #2B: Expressed interest in taking the Crisis Intervention Training course. She provided her contact information to the C.O.R.E. staff so that they can contact her for further details.

Dennis Kaiahue on item #2B: Questioned if MPD does sweeps on their own or do they work with the County and medical agencies before entering encampments. During testimonies, conversations are prohibited so Chair Lindo suggested that he contact MPD directly with any questions.

Commissioner Darcy: asked Mr. Kaiahue if he had experienced his possessions taken away and if so, how he felt. She then proceeded to ask if Mr. Kaiahue was comfortable with C.O.R.E. and the services they provide.

Mr. Kaiahue: stated that he was angry but that was years ago. Now, he is comfortable with C.O.R.E. and the services they offer.

Donna Revells on item #2B: commented on how beneficial the C.O.R.E. bus was when it used to go to Paia. Services such as wound care, vaccinations, and haircuts were offered to those who needed assistance. Furthermore, individuals were able to get information and register for

services such as SNAP and housing assistance. Although some individuals may have been scared to attend the food drive/C.O.R.E. event, Ms. Revells praised that MPD's presence was quite "invisible". Unfortunately, after some time, C.O.R.E. stopped attending the Paia food drives, leaving many of those wanting their assistance and services, disappointed.

Commissioner Darcy: asked Ms. Revells if she thinks that more people would come for services and assistance if the bus was not operated by MPD.

Chair Lindo: also asked Ms. Revells if she knew why the C.O.R.E. bus stopped going to Paia.

Ms. Revells: responded that having another organization put in the same efforts as the C.O.R.E. bus wouldn't really make a difference in the community's attendance. She added that the individuals are going to the Paia location, primarily for food distribution, not for the bus. She also answered Chair Lindo's question, saying that the reason why the C.O.R.E. bus was no longer attending the Paia food distributions was because the Paia Center merchants complained that the bus was a distraction. Ms. Revells disagreed, the community goes to the Paia for food regardless or not the C.O.R.E. bus is there.

3. DHHC Updates and Communication

Lori Tsuhako, Director of DHHC, presented updates to the Commission. These included:

- 1) Grants Management Division processing new grant agreements for the Fiscal Year 2024. Several new agencies are being awarded this year, including Project Vision which will receive \$188,000. This new agency will provide water to the unsheltered, as well as other services, which is yet to be determined.
- 2) HUD Division will soon be announcing about upcoming NOFO (Notice of Funding Opportunity). Any agency working with the homeless or unsheltered community, and is interested in these funds should visit the County of Maui HUD website. Details aren't posted yet but please keep checking the site for updates.
- 3) Hale Makua is an agency collaboratively working to create a medical respite program for unsheltered individuals. Once formed, they will be able to assist the unsheltered who are really sick in obtaining medical care. They also plan to follow through with appropriate hospital discharge procedures.

Chair Lindo: Asked if there is anything that the Commission can do or make any recommendations to the County in support of the medical respite program.

Director Tsuhako: Responded nothing at this time since she doesn't know the complete details. She mentioned that Hale Makua is working to pull together agencies from various sectors such as the Maui Memorial Medical Center and Aloha House.

4. Community Concerns –

Donna Revells: Mentioned that she regularly distributes food in Paia with a group from Waipuna Chapel. As she creates relationships with the participants she wants to help them get assistance but she doesn't know where to start or where to send them. She suggested a resource center that would serve as a one-stop shop. This resource could be a website or an office that the community could visit in order to get the help and/or information that they need.

Chair Lindo: Provided Ms. Revells with her business card and asked her to email her if she would like to participate in the TIG's efforts with the faith-based community.

Vice Chair Tempo: also provided Ms. Revells with her business card and invited her to join the Maui Homeless Alliance Continuum of Care. She also explained that there is a "Resource Card" that Ms. Revells may be interested in. The "Resource Card" includes contact information of various agencies.

Commissioner Crozier: also offered her contact information to Ms. Revells, stating that she is with Mental Health Kokua.

4. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 25, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.

Deputy Corp Counsel Mariana Lowy-Gerstmar: introduced her colleague Selina Pannell who was sitting in today's meeting and may possibly oversee future CHSH meetings.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Lindo adjourned the meeting at 3:48 p.m. No motions were made and no votes were taken.

Link to recording:

https://bluejeans.com/s/oPmb8tm_mAd