



**DOUGLAS COUNTY HOMELESS INITIATIVE**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2024**

**MINUTES**

---

**Thursday, April 11, 2024**

**9:00 AM**

**BOCC Hearing Room,  
Conference Rooms A & B**

---

**In-Person Attendees: Commissioner Laydon, Commissioner Thomas, Allison Cutting, Andrea Barnum, Aurora Ogg, Chris Delawatts, Corrie Caler, Cody Anderson, Dan Makelky, Dan Marlow, Elise Cordle, Erin White, Garrik Storgaard, Jamie Fisher, Jason Gray, Jeff Garcia, Jennifer Eby, Karen Tarbox, Liz Medina, Marcia McCown, Megan Tran, Melody D'Haillecourt, Mike Hill, Mike Polhemus, Mike Waid, Nick Adamson, Paul Egan, Phil Domenico, Rand Clark, Ryan Abram, Sandy Holcomb, Sasha Easton, Scott Nelson, Shawn Sanchez, Steven Dodrill, Tiffany Marsitto, Wendy Holmes, Will Carpenter**

**Online Participants: 33 (list is available upon request)**

**1. Welcome & Introductions: Commissioner Laydon**

**2. Migrant Crisis:**

- **Jeff Garcia, County Attorney:** The County has been proactive in their response to the Migrant Crisis and in their desire to comply with the laws of the Federal government. In October 2023, a resolution was passed to declare that Douglas County is a non-sanctuary County. The County supported The Metro Area County Commissioners (MACC) and their efforts, along with the federal government, for expedited employment opportunities for legally present migrants. Executive Order 142 and Resolution 2017, passed by Denver, instructed Denver city agencies to not cooperate with federal immigration enforcement programs, provided immigrants with unlimited access to city of Denver services, threatened discipline/termination to any employee that cooperated with federal immigration enforcement and prohibited the use of city resources for federal immigration enforcement. The County sent a letter to Denver Mayor requesting an appeal of Executive Order 142 and Resolution 2017. In April 2024, the County passed a bussing ordinance which prevents the unloading of passengers other than at a planned, scheduled, and documented destination and includes buses, vans, and trucks. Lastly, the Board passed a resolution to take legal action pertaining to two bills HB 19-1123 and HB 23-1100. HB 19-1124, prohibits law enforcement from arresting or retaining illegal immigrants for civil immigration enforcement. The bill also makes it illegal for probation departments to identify the location or the immigration status of those in their care. HB 23-1100 prohibits Intergovernmental Agreements with the federal government for immigration enforcement.
- **Commissioner Thomas:** In December 2023, a public health order was issued to protect the health of Douglas County residents and migrants. The order requires persons housing groups of migrants in Douglas County to notify the health department seven days in advance, it requires that the health of any migrant groups be monitored, it requires that migrant persons in such groups be identified to the health department and that any communicable disease are promptly reported to the department, and it requires that operators of any shelters have plans in place to provide information to migrants housed there on how to stay safe and how to report a problem/emergency.
- **Migrant Crisis Report Out and Discussion:**
- **Jennifer Eby, Douglas County Staff:** What has been reported to date is approximately 10-20 migrants served by the County non-profits.
- **Sasha Easton, A/DWorks!:** Arapahoe/Douglas Works can only serve lawfully present clients or individuals with work authorizations. Through collaboration with Employers Office of New Americans and a regional partner for workforce development, Arapahoe/Douglas Works! is organizing a job fair for the work authorization population, more details to come.

**3. 18th Judicial District Attorney's Office:**

• **Corie E. Caler, Senior Deputy District Attorney:** In San Diego, CA the Homeless Court Program uses innovative ways to address and divert homelessness from the court systems. It is a voluntary program and serves a wide range of misdemeanors. They use progressive plea bargaining whereas Douglas County uses deferred plea bargaining. Douglas County's courts are reactionary and can't prevent homelessness. The County's current diversion program has additional barriers including the 6-month length of program when participants will usually serve only 10 days in jail for offenses, location, access to local services, transportation, and many who commit crime in the County but don't live in the County. Judicial processes take time and effects the ability to effectively intervene. Pre-trial services don't target interventions and can't mandate services. Current successes in the County include a defendant who had mental health issues and was experiencing homelessness and was connected to CRT. They were able to resolve the warrant and dismiss minor criminal offense and client has not reoffended. A mentally disabled adult was able to get restitution to replace his stolen I-pad. Lastly, the court passed a felony conviction for an assault on a homeless individual but were unsuccessful at engaging him or connecting him to resources.

**4. HEART:**

• **Tiffany Marsitto, HEART Supervisor:** HEART received a total of 170 referrals for the month of March. Of those 170 referrals, 56% were proactive street outreach by HEART, 17% were dispatched by law enforcement, 14% were citizen calls, 8% were public referral forms, and 5% were community partner calls. The call outcomes included 55 individuals contacted by HEART, no camps were found this month, and no law enforcement action was taken. The four highest categories of HEART program enrollments included: three shelter referrals, 15 transports, 20 hotel vouchers, and three referrals to housing support. During the month of March services provided by location include: Highlands Ranch 32%, Castle Rock 21%, Parker 24%, Lone Tree 8%, Englewood 8%, and remaining areas 7%. HEART is now providing extended coverage from Monday-Thursday 10a.m. - 8pm and Sunday 8:00a.m. - 6:00p.m.

• **Success Story:** The HEART received a referral from the Parker Police Department of a woman living out of her vehicle. Tiffany Marsitto, HEART Supervisor, met with the woman to assess her needs and barriers. The woman was newly evicted from her apartment, working two jobs, and struggling to find enough funds to repair the vehicle that she was residing in. A local non-profit paid to have her vehicle repaired, and the HEART was able to refer her to organizations to help with a motel voucher while her car was in the auto shop. The woman was able to gather enough funds to register her vehicle and she currently has an apartment application pending. Tiffany is working with the woman to ensure she is connected to an agency that can provide her with long-term case management and budgeting assistance so that when she does get into a place of her own, she can regain self-sufficiency.

5. **Bridge House Ready to Work:**
  - **Paul Egan, Ready to Work Program Director:** The Ready to Work program provides adults experiencing homelessness a unique opportunity to rebuild their lives through work. Applying a holistic approach which combines three elements: paid work in a Ready to Work social enterprise, dormitory housing at a Ready to Work drug and alcohol-free living environment, and case management support. The program takes nine to twelve months to complete. The Ready to Work enterprises include landscaping and supplemental sanitation to municipal and commercial customers and catering. Their current locations are in Aurora and Boulder with a third location opening soon in Englewood.
  - **Success Story: HEART Navigator, Will Carpenter,** received a referral in June of 2023 for Ryan, who needed help finding employment and housing. Will referred Ryan to the Ready to Work Program in Aurora. The HEART received notice in February 2024, that Ryan was about to graduate from their program. Ryan expressed his gratitude for the HEART helping him connect with a program that broke his cycle of homelessness.
6. **Executive Committee Member Updates:**
  - **Chief Kevin Duffy:** The Douglas County Jail filled the reintegration position vacated by Nicole Beckett and is hoping to introduce them in a future meeting. The reintegration program begins working as soon as people enter the jail. The reintegration and Jail Based Behavioral Health Service (JBBS) programs are some of the most innovative and productive programs at the jail. Reintegration is connected to JBBS and is designed to serve those with a dual diagnosis. Before the reintegration program, recidivism would occur around 15 days after release from jail. This was found to be approximately the same time that people would have been off their meds after release from the jail and this derails people. The jail has experienced a dramatic reduction in recidivism in direct correlation between the reintegration and JBBS programs being established.
  - **Deputy Shawn Sanchez:** The reintegration program offers sobriety support for up to one year after release from the County jail. The reintegration program coordinates with problem solving courts in Arapahoe County and as the County transitions over into the 23rd court district, the reintegration program will continue to help people connect to resources and programs that will stabilize their basic needs and ensure a sober and safe environment. The Bridge House, Ready to Work program is one of those community partners that the reintegration program engages with.
  - **Bob LeGare, Previous Mayor of Aurora,** asked DCHI to provide information on the Aurora Regional Navigation Campus: Commissioner Laydon responded that Douglas County has agreed to invest 1.125 million dollars as a partner in that program. There will be more information about the Aurora campus at the May Douglas County Homeless Initiative meeting.
  - **Mike Waid:** The Douglas County Community Foundation Fund, Douglas Has Heart, is only \$750 away from the next contribution at the end of the second quarter. The next recipient will be Parker Task Force.
7. **Public Comment:** None
8. **Closing Comments:** Commissioner Laydon

The Douglas County Homeless Initiative provides a collaborative meeting space for a diverse group of community partners to discuss issues related to homelessness. These meetings are not a forum for discussion of specific land use applications or development projects in individual jurisdictions. Please contact the relevant jurisdiction to inquire about how to participate in the public input process for specific projects.

*\*\*The Next Regular Meeting Will be Held on Thursday, May 9, 2024 @ 9:00 a.m.\*\**