



DOUGLAS COUNTY HOMELESS INITIATIVE

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2024

MINUTES

Thursday, October 10, 2024

9:00 AM

BOCC Hearing Room,
Conference Rooms A & B

In - Person Attendees: Alton Reynolds, Alyssa DeJesus, Andrea Barnum, Catherine Millis, Dan Makelky, Dan Marlow, Darren Weekly, Donte Young, Greg Matthews, Jamie Fisher, Jason Gray, Jeff Garcia, Jennifer Eby, Jonathan Holloway, Kirk Wilson, Laura Hefta, Melody D'Haillecourt, Mike Hill, Paul Baca, Rand Clark, Scott Nelson, Shawn Sanchez, Steven Dodrill, Tiffany Marsitto

Online Participants: 24 (list is available upon request)

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

2. **RTD Update:**

- **Alton Reynolds, RTD Outreach Coordinator:** RTD has increased security missions along the RTD transportation service lines. Mr. Reynolds continues to collaborate with HEART to address issues within 12 -24 hours, including encampment cleanups, end of line issues, and resource navigation. RTD has supplied HEART with discounted RTD tickets for resources. The communication between HEART and RTD has increased dramatically to resolve issues faster. The referral process for RTD staff to contact HEART is in process and hoping to increase that capability for future collaborations.
- **Jonathan Holloway, RTD Commander:** RTD covers eight counties and 40 municipalities. We are seeing a large influx of societal issues that are affecting all of the municipalities. They have an on-call Navigator to help address issues in a timely fashion and working to strategically utilize their resources. In the last year, RTD went from 22 officers to 91. They are authorized to hire 54 more officers and now require infrastructure resources including vehicles. RTD is becoming a full functioning police department to ease the burden of investigation needs on other municipalities. The RTD Transit Watch app allows the ability to go online for communication to address community needs in a timely manner.

3. Ordinance Update:

Jeff Garcia, Douglas County Attorney's Office: On September 24, 2024, the Douglas County Board of County Commissioners adopted an amended ordinance limiting the use of public property or the "Camping Ban". The amended Douglas County ordinance had two changes adopted. The amendment is in alignment with the U.S. Supreme Court's decision regarding the Grant's Pass, OR case on June 28, 2024, which overturned the lower court's decision of an Eighth Amendment violation to prohibit sleeping or camping on public property. The first change was to remove the shelter requirement to enforce the ordinance. The second change was to extend the ordinance to include enforcement of Camping Ban on public property. The amended ordinance became effective as of October 25, 2024.

4. Municipalities Ordinance Updates:

- **Jason Gray, Mayor of Castle Rock:** Castle Rock has followed the County's lead to amend their ordinance to include the Grant's Pass decision changes.
- **Laura Hefta, Councilmember, Town of Parker:** Lone Tree hasn't had their ordinance discussion yet but will more than likely follow the County's lead as well.

5. Executive Committee Member Updates:

- **Laura Hefta, Councilmember, Town of Parker:** Town of Parker will be including a budget line item for a cleanup cost item to increase to \$50,000 per year and will be hiring a cleanup vendor for encampment cleanups. Councilmember Hefta requested a list of eviction prevention resources to share with community and eviction prevention attorneys.
- **Mike Polhemus, The Rock Church, Lead Pastor:** Their organization is seeing an increase of approximately 100 people a month for eviction assistance and can only help 10%. Also, seeing recurring rent assistance requests along with new requests. They are seeing an increased need for money management and budgeting education. Increased food costs are causing additional demands at their food bank.
- **Dan Marlow, Help and Hope, Executive Director:** Seeing an uptick in people who are above 80% AMI seeking assistance.
- **Jennifer Eby, Douglas County Staff:** When funding is abundant it is a natural response to allow those resources to become a part of your monthly budget. Now that funds are depleted people are experiencing a cliff effect. Recognize that the need is greater than funding and appreciate the feedback from partners in community.
- **Andrea Barnum, AD Works!, Workforce Program Manager:** AD Works! offers budgeting and financial awareness classes in person and online Money Matters workshops at <https://www.adworks.org/> AD Works! offers resources for cliff effect planning and net financial resources can assist families to understand how their job pathways effect their long-term finances. AD Works! offers a Castle Rock location at the Sturm campus and takes walk-in appointments. Their hours are 8:30a.m.-4:30p.m. for walk in assistance.
- **Dan Makelky, Human Services, Director:** The amount of people on food assistance has doubled within the County. Often, when people are at the level of eviction it is too late for assistance because the need is too large.
- **Rand Clark, Douglas County Staff:** There has been a change in the way that eviction assistance has been distributed through the State and people can only be helped once. Would like to present a broader update of the changes to the Executive Committee. Douglas County has received a grant of \$50,000, with a match of \$25,000 for a homeless prevention program. This pilot program includes 3 months of case management in collaboration with our community partners. Douglas County will continue to apply for additional funds.

6. HEART and the Municipalities:

- **Tiffany Marsitto, HEART Supervisor:** HEART completed a total of 236 calls for service for the month of September. Of those 236 calls, 55% were proactive street outreach by HEART, 25% were dispatched by law enforcement, 8% were citizen calls, 7% were public referral forms, and 5% were community partner calls. The call outcomes included 37 individuals contacted by HEART, seven were not from Douglas County, 18 were not homeless, 21 refused services, four involved law enforcement action, 135 where no unsheltered person was found, six were provided general information, and seven unoccupied encampments identified. While 47 households received one or more services for September, the highest categories of HEART program enrollments included: 14 nights of hotel vouchers, 16 transportation assistance, 20 referrals to housing support, and eight were referred to a shelter of their choosing. During the month of September services provided by location include Highlands Ranch 29%, Castle Rock 17%, Parker 23%, Lone Tree 17%, Castle Pines 8%, Englewood 3%, Larkspur 1%, Littleton 1%, and 1% from other Douglas County locations.
- **Success Story:** HEART received a call from a concerned citizen regarding a male walking alongside the highway. Once contacted, HEART learned that the male was trying to get to a regional shelter. HEART provided the man with transportation to a bus station, along with some food, and information about the Ready to Work (RTW) Program. The male eventually checked into a regional shelter, but also applied for the RTW Program and was later accepted. The client is currently doing well at RTW and is actively engaged.

7. Public Comment: None**8. Closing Comments: Commissioner Laydon**

The Next Regular Meeting Will be Held on Thursday, November 14, 2024 @ 9:00 a.m