

**THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CIVIL CITY OF NEW ALBANY, INDIANA,  
HELD A COUNCIL WORK SESSION IN THE THIRD FLOOR ASSEMBLY  
ROOM OF THE CITY/COUNTY BUILDING ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2015  
AT 6:00 P.M.**

The meeting of the **New Albany City Council** was called to order by Mr. McLaughlin at 6:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Council Members, Mr. Coffey, Mr. Caesar, Mr. Phipps, Mrs. Benedetti, Mr. Blair, Mrs. Baird, Mr. Gonder, Mr. Zurschmiede and President McLaughlin.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mr. Lorch and Mrs. Glotzbach

**Mr. Blair** introduced Dr. Melissa Fry.

**Dr. Melissa Fry** stated that they very intentionally did not dictate in the report who should fund what and she wanted to point that out up front, but they do recognize that they need support from local government. She explained that she worked as a researcher and facilitator on the study and she speaks as the voice of those who drafted the plan. She gave a brief history about how they have involved the community in the research of the project and across those conversations they found a really strong commitment to doing more to respond to the communities housing needs. She explained that each section of the report provides the context for understanding the pieces of the strategic plan. Said report is on file with the City Clerk's Office. She stated that their hope is that these pieces can inform decision making and allow everyone to come together to implement the plan and explained that their plan took the same form as the national Open Doors Program and it is consistent with efforts all across the country. She stated that if they look at the problem in this community there are about 200-300 individuals that are homeless and they know those numbers underestimate the problem. She explained that the current situation is that the shelters are overcrowded and are often forced to turn people away. She stated that they lack a day shelter, coordination of services, and we don't have a shared intake and assessment system as well as a report that there is insufficient substance abuse and mental health treatment facilities. She explained that they focus on a logic model that focuses on preventing people from becoming homeless and then more quickly moving people out of homelessness and back into housing. She went over the plan that is outlined in the packet handed out to the board.

**Mrs. Benedetti** stated that she thinks the right idea is to move these people from shelters and would like to see it like San Francisco where they move them out in 10 days if possible.

**Dr. Fry** warned that they shouldn't expect that kind of turn around anywhere in the immediate future but it is a good goal to have.

**Mrs. Baird** asked if there are any possibilities yet as far as housing.

**Dr. Fry** stated that NAHA is currently participating in the process through the state to have units dedicated permanently to supportive housing and if they were to get that designation and funding it would make a huge difference and would be dedicated to the hardest to house in the community.

**Mrs. Benedetti** asked how they make sure that they are taking care of their own.

**Dr. Fry** explained that federally funded housing can't have that limitation on it so as much as city governments want to think that way it isn't legal for federally funded

housing. She stated that private shelters that aren't federally funded is different but most shelters in this area are in some way federally funded.

**Mr. McLaughlin** asked if she thinks the breakdown of communication is the biggest problem.

**Dr. Fry** stated absolutely and explained that their goal is to get a case manager in as soon as possible to manage the transitions.

**Mr. Gonder** asked what the percentage is of people that do time that end up homeless.

**Dr. Fry** stated that she doesn't know that statistic off the top of head but she suspects that it is relatively high. She stated that one of the issues they have in this community is that they are lumped in the balance from the state where money is split up between communities and they can't afford to have anyone up in Indianapolis all the time fighting for this but part of the plan is to have an advocate for this type of funding.

**Mrs. Benedetti** asked about inmates being enrolled in Medicaid and if that would help them out once they leave because they would already be in the system.

**Dr. Fry** stated that if they are already enrolled in Medicaid it would certainly help because then they are eligible for some local services and those services can sometimes take a long time to get so this expedites their process.

**Mrs. Benedetti** asked about their budget.

**Dr. Fry** explained that the Salvation Army, NAHA, JHA, Lifesprings, St. Elizabeth's, and Center for Women and families are responsible for establishing this new coalition and were asked to put forward one board member to found the organization and the board will take over the process next week. She introduced Leslie Townsend and Mark Casper from St. Elizabeth's, and Steve Kiger from Salvation Army.

**Leslie Townsend** gave a brief background of the Southern Indiana Homeless Initiative and stated that it's compiled of all the homeless providers and they try to find out what the community needs.

**Mark Casper** explained that they have six organizations and tens of others that interact with homelessness and were involved in the plan but the six that signed the memorandum of understanding agreed to stay with the process as the task force that was originally hired and to work on where to start. He explained that board will address all the immediate issues to set up this coalition and assess what will have the biggest impact first. He stated that they have worked on a business plan, funding, job descriptions and he will be releasing all of that to the board next week but they will definitely need funding first and foremost with the business plan calling for about \$300,000.00 a year.

**Ms. Townsend** stated SIHI has agreed to do the funding and application for grants so they are looking to get half the funding from local governments that would include Clark and Floyd County and explained that they are here today to find out how Floyd County would want them to proceed with requesting the money and how Floyd County sees themselves helping with this funding.

**Mr. Coffey** stated that he doesn't think that there will be money from the county because they just don't have it. He explained that he doesn't have a problem putting in their share but before he would want to see a three year project to see how it is working so they can decide if they want to continue to do it.

**Ms. Townsend** stated that the first goal is to get someone on staff to get out there and do the case management but the other half will be to make sure it is sustainable.

**Mr. Coffey** asked if they are looking for \$150,000.00 from Clark and Floyd combined.

**Ms. Townsend** replied yes and stated that the other half would come from private funding and grants.

**Mr. Blair** stated that they have a lot of people in public housing and they question how they get them out of that situation and if that is something that will be addressed.

**Mr. Coffey** stated that sometimes we trap people; they have to give them what they need and the pride to get out of this system.

**Ms. Townsend** stated that the key piece to all of this would be case management.

**Mr. Blair** stated that what would be important to him would be a measuring system to see how successful this program is.

**Steve Kiger** stated that this is intended to address generational issues pointedly and resolve this in the future.

**Mrs. Benedetti** asked when the rough business plan would be finalized.

**Mr. Casper** stated that the board takes over next week and he thinks that they have enough data to give them so they can quickly be able to finalize it. He explained that they are speaking to Jeffersonville later this month as well as three other foundations so they will have more details as they move forward.

**Mrs. Benedetti** stated that New Albany and Jeffersonville are in budget season so it would be nice to be able to look at the business plan to be able to budget it in.

**Mr. Blair** stated that he thinks they would be very interested in a collaborative effort.

**Ms. Townsend** stated that they do think they have a plan in place to track their success.

**Mr. Zurschmiede** stated that all other surrounding counties need this plan as well and asked at what point they reach out to those surrounding counties for financial support.

**Ms. Townsend** stated that in the 5 or 6 year plan they will be able to reach out to other areas because they will have the staff and experience to do so.

**Mr. Zurschmiede** stated that he can see this moving forward and if it is successful, people in surrounding counties will come here to seek services and he just wants to make sure that including them in the future is part of the plan to share the financial responsibilities.

**Dr. Fry** stated that they could fight to include cost-sharing agreements to address this concern.

**Mr. Coffey** stated that he thinks that human investment is the best money spent and this in an investment in their community. He explained that they are going through budget process now so he would encourage them to get a reading from Jeffersonville on this as soon as they can and then they can come back to New Albany.

**ADJOURN:**

There being no further business before the board, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

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Pat McLaughlin, President

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Vicki Glotzbach, City Clerk