SAN DIEGO
Regional Task Force
on the Homeless

Addressing Homelessness Among Black San Diegans
Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Minutes - Nov. 18, 2011

Meeting Information		
Date: 11/18/2020	**Time:** 12:30 PM – 2:00 PM	**Location:** Zoom
Members Present: Rev. Rolland Slade, Sean Elo, James Carter, Christina Griffin, Dexter Egleston, Hanan Scrapper, Omar Passons, Veronica Loving, Curtis Howard, David Baker		
Members Absent: Adrian Scott, Bobby Brown, Celese Turner, Tracey Wilson		
Staff Present: Kris Kuntz, Tamera Kohler, Carrie Stemrich (notes)		

Agenda Items		Presenter
1.	**Welcome and Introductions**	**Rolland Slade** **Sean Elo-Rivera**
2.	**Finish Initial Review of Homeless System Data**	**Kris Kuntz**

Last meeting, looked at initial results from Community Survey to familiarize the group with the data.
- Black people represent greatest racial disparity when comparing the general population to those experiencing homelessness.
    - 2020 PIT count: Black/African Americans make up 5.5% of the general population, though they make up 21% of the unsheltered population and 30% of the sheltered population.
    - If all things were equal in our community, we would expect demographic variables (like race) to be equal as well.
    - Other racial groups do not vary as much as the Black/African American population.
- Also see similar disparities (20-30%) across the HMIS sub-populations: youth, veterans, age 55+, and single adult women with familial disparities a bit higher at 32%.
- Served 4,000+ black individuals during 2019 (most are single adults).
- People engaging in different types of homeless intervention – percentage of black individuals served remains at the 20-30% range for all types (Homeless prevention, Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Rapid re-housing, and Permanent Supportive Housing.
- Successful exits comparing Black and White people – across most of these, there are some differences but remains close.
- Returns to homelessness – Black people represent 30% of all people who fall back into homelessness at 6 months and 35% of all persons who fall back into homelessness after 2 years.
- These trends are similar to Los Angeles' figures for Black individuals (33% returned 6-12 months, 35% returned 13-24 months).
    - Question: Definition of a "successful exit."
        - HUD-defined positive exits - permanent "exit destinations" that are not considered temporary situations (Kris to provide to the group)
- Need to implement improved systems in place to prevent these rates of returns.
- Key takeaways:
    - Black persons are significantly overrepresented in San Diego's homeless population.

- The Black population is the most overrepresented racial group among homeless population.
- Disparities exist in sub-populations among Black people experiencing homelessness.
- Although disparities exist within the homeless population, from initial analysis there appears to be little disparities within the system of homeless services.
  - This will need further/deeper analysis by the committee both in data and listening to people who experience the system.
  - Comments in community survey will need to be reviewed, as this does not align with what the data shows.

Discussion
- James: looking at disparities in terms of general population, but this should be indexed, black folks compared to other populations - the system's ability to address homelessness irrespective of (equity vs. disparity).
  - Create equity index, since presumable over time, race should not be a factor – analysis should not take that much time (speaking for himself).
- Dexter: can be slippery slope – racial equity work that they are doing across the nation – they are trying to decouple the notion that they should be comparing Black Americans to White Americans as default.
  - Do not want to center "Whiteness" when talking about racial equity.
- Kris: this PowerPoint is intended to provide one view of the data to learn more about what this committee wants to focus on.
  - Kris to send HUD definitions to the group.
- Omar: distinction around child welfare services – impacts the nature of potential interventions, going from system-level data to Black level data – where Black people are coming from and if we have the ability to get more granular with the data.
  - Kris: we can get as granular as the data that is prescribed by HUD.
- Tamera in response to posted chat questions:
  - We do collect some data on the Black & Trans TAY population, Mental health or dependency issues before placed into permanent housing (self-identified) - we could sperate both of these pieces of information out.
  - Family interaction with Child Protective services uses a different data system, but starting in 2020 we have been collecting a yes or no question on people's interaction or experience with the foster care system to help us better understand and get to leading questions about leaving one system and falling into this system.
    - This committee may want to consider questions to be asked for review of the data in 2021.

3.	**Needs of committee members on understanding homeless system**	**Rolland Slade**

- Curtis: focus on areas of intervention and emergency shelter as these impacted him more directly during his struggles.
  - Being impacted does not provide you with the entire system, but at the same time, how he got there and the factors is the reason he is focusing on formerly incarcerated individuals coming from jails and prisons who are also homeless upon their release.
- Omar: as RTFH continues to cull data, perhaps there could be work around Veteran homelessness – flagging crossover where there is Black veteran homelessness.
- Tamera: our work around the TAY population and Built for Zero to end sub-population homelessness.

- Moving to housing: look at how people may be impacting incarceration might limit housing options or how long it takes different demographics to get housing and share that information with this committee.

- Hanan: Loss of HUD's homelessness definition is also a huge barrier – being incarcerated for 90+ days eliminates eligibility of homelessness status for these services offered.
  - Changing this definition to keep from excluding them from these services.
  - In-reach with those who are to be released to ensure they have somewhere to go and how it is tracked.
  - Critical things for this group to be looking prior to military discharge include the loss of housing, medical care, and job placement – would like to discuss ways capture the "before" information to track as well to assist.
- Dexter: presented last week on Veteran homelessness and trauma-informed care and agrees with many of the structural factors but there are also cultural factors to include.
  - Should be looking primarily at culture – how people are viewed, treated, their relationships, overall responsiveness: reaching out for help, not reporting disabilities and an understanding of getting documentation for PSH eligibility.
  - Direction and what to explore – look at systems as a bathtub – inflow (where people are coming from) and parallel systems to help facilitate the inflow, what happens while they are in the tub (what systems are they connecting with), and then the outflow (what happens when exiting the tub - PSH or other destinations) – this is how things should be structured.
- Veronica: based on personal experience, need to make sure there are wrap-around services for people, such as ensuring people are taking medications.

4.	Developing Committee Workplan	Sean Elo-Rivera

- Sean: Moving forward, we would like to tap into expertise of this group as we are trying to inform the broader community as well. Open up to the group what the purpose and goals of this committee should be for a clear shared destination.
- Christine: Would like to create a document similar to L.A.'s.
  - Appreciates recommendations for the city and county to advocate for more services. In our study, should would like to see that we add a piece for community organizations and service providers to own our power on and say repeatedly that if institutional anti-black racism is not uprooted, we are wasting our time – document like that that is collectively created through similar steps that LA used.
  - Loves the anonymity as well for those who lifted up their experiences, and the inclusion of quotes next to the findings.
  - Would like this group to create a study that informs, empowers, and affirms the work that our organizations, collectively as well as individually, is being done to get black folks housed and would like to show that everyone else is okay when Black folks are okay.
  - Opportunity to support each other in a collective action/demand for our city leadership and creating a serious report that is strong enough to inform the work to get Black people housed and safe in the County of San Diego.
- Hanan: recently looked at PATH's data on where people are placed into permanent housing - found that 90 percent of people were housed in places that are defined as declining, hazardous and impacted by red lining.
  - Also due to affordability and where Black folks can get into housing and then sustain it long-term.

- As a system, how much are we setting them up for success, such as are we able to put them in desirable neighborhoods where their kids would have a good opportunity to be educated and in safe environments.
  - Feel like we are adding red lining and the issues that we are seeing within systemic racism due to the fact that the options are very limited.
- Dexter: Need to make arguments that they should be placed in any neighborhood rather than just in certain areas, like South East - there should be affordable housing throughout San Diego once they are out of the homeless provider system.
- Hanan: also looking at RTFH's data – seeing high percentage of Black people housed through RRH, but also have high returns to homelessness.
  - Need to look at the housing placement of Black people and adequate supportive services to prevent them from cycling in and out of the system, which is known to be traumatic.
- Sean - summary thus far:
  - Create a document similar to LA where we make recommendations to community-based organizations and acknowledge the work that is being done, provide an opportunity to own the power within those organizations;
  - Acknowledgement of and call to action to uproot anti-blackness and systemic racism, envisions the work product of this committee being bold and pushes everyone to do much better more quickly;
  - Hoping to produce an analysis of where people are being placed and recommendations about where placement can lead to an increased likelihood of staying housed and avoiding replicating the cycle of homelessness that we see so often.
- Omar – 2 concrete things that struck him:
  - Getting to where Black people are becoming homeless in SD County and having conversations with those people in those communities to find out their representative experience – would like there to be a recommendation to explore.
  - Recommendations to the CoC Board and the potential of how funding is awarded – there are a couple of other CoC's looking at changing CES prioritization to help close the disparity – the gap will never otherwise close.
    - There may be HUD or other barriers, but would like to explore recommendations, and evaluating the CES prioritization may be of value to decreasing Black homelessness.
- Dexter: One thing that CSH has done to become an anti-racist organization is put into place a racial impact assessment and when writing grants, need to explicitly answer questions regarding how they are going to serve to impact the most vulnerable people. RTFH can include something similar.
  - Having organizations to think explicitly about how they are going to serve those who are over represented in this system.
  - Would like this group to take the lead and look at how we are serving those most in need.
  - Highlight parallel systems that our clients touch while they are experiencing homelessness – will let Outreach personnel know they need to build relationships with community corrections, etc. (He is leading work funded through Wells Fargo on this as a resource that can be used).
  - Opportunity to subgrant dollars to those with lived expertise be involved in every aspect of analyzing data.
- David: we have leaned on our community partners to create the kind of reports that are being discussed in order to inform the proposals and program designs that are coming out.
  - Example – SD Workforce Partnership released a report: Race, Place, and Opportunity – work on San Diego's youth disconnection, in that report went into areas where youth are experiencing higher disconnection from community services.

- When SD Workforce Partnership created their request for proposals, they were able to identify specific areas and subpopulations for providers to operate in, so that is something that can transform the way the work is done, and identify where people are coming from and where are they trying to go – need to inform those outcomes with data.
- Inviting evaluators with lived experience – key recommendation when it comes to this group elevating these voices of who is being served to ensure that people who are putting out these proposals make up the front-end (reports) and back-end representation (evaluators).
  - Would like to scale up this work to the larger system outside of the youth system.
- Tamera: Regarding Coordinated Entry – the right people need to be at the front lines engaging with the population to be able to have those trusted conversations, and so many of the characteristics used to house individuals (disabling conditions, substance abuse) – there needs to be established trust in the person you are having the conversations with to be able to self-identify some of those in the way that data is collected.
  - Important as we fund programs that we also look at their staffing to ensure the right representation in populations being served, because if we can get a better understanding about those who are engaging with our homeless population (especially first time homeless), we can look at that on grants for performance as well. We are not a healthcare system, so a lot of our data prioritization is based on self-report.
- Curtis: not allow other people to make decisions based their own analysis without lived experience themselves - important to have as part of decisions and their input, because we can collect data and statistics, but it has to be the right information being presented that carries the most impact.
  - Does not want to be overshadowed by someone with a degree making decisions when they do not share the lens of the person getting out of these kinds of situations.
- Hanan – PATH has been hiring more Peer Support Specialists with lived experience and leaning on their expertise to help people move through the system. This has been successful, so as they are expanding programs they are continuing to add that into their staffing structure.
  - Training is also needed – staff not knowing how to address racism in the moment when clients have been discriminated against (not only for housing, but medical care, etc.) - how we can equip folks with the knowledge base to be able to properly advocate.
- Omar: Would like to see if this group is able to make recommendations to the RTFH to revisit with public entities how their contract dollars enable hiring people with lived experience. It would be of value if this group explored barriers before receiving funding.
- Sean: some of the goals we should be aiming for sound like they overlap with activities. Today may not be the best time to set numerical goals but it sounds like some of the work product they want this committee to produce in addition to an important document are:
  - Listening Sessions, Focus Groups
  - Trainings for Service Providers and those who are less aware of the ways that racism permeates all aspects of life, and how it particularly impacts those who are seeking to find housing and to ensure service providers are more adept at recognizing it when it is happening and understanding how to navigate it when they do.
  - Have not talked about including and prioritizing those with lived experience or the smaller workgroups.
  - Need to finish work plan between now and the next meeting.
- Dexter: one last comment - all of our work should be grounded in lived expertise starting with community forums and conversations is the most important to guide the work.

5.	Closing a. **Setting Regular Committee Meeting**	**Rolland Slade** **Sean Elo-Rivera**

- Pastor Slade: Would like to set a preference for the next meeting
  - Asked if this committee will have a space in the CoC Meeting to report their activities to make sure that what they are doing stays at the front.
  - Would like there to be a regular scheduled check-in meeting.
- Tamera: RTFH Board Meetings are the 3rd Thursday, and RTFH is committed to having a standing committee report out at all Board Meetings unless you don't want to be on the agenda. Need to allow time to get things in the Board packet if needed beforehand, and we will provide you the time that you need.
- Pastor Slade: Would like people on this committee to work on the work plan and circulate it with comments and edits as needed.

Next Meeting: **Date:** Dec. 09, 2020   **Time:** 12:30-2:00 p.m.   **Location:** Zoom Meeting