

**HEALTH, EDUCATION, HUMAN SERVICES AND HOUSING
OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE
February 5, 2008**

Councilwoman Robinson, Chairman, called the meeting of the Health, Education, Human Services and Housing Opportunities to order with Councilmen Benson, Pierce, Page, and Feely present. Councilwoman Bennett and Councilman Rico joined the meeting later. City Attorney Nelson and Shirley Crownover, Assistant Clerk to the Council, were also present.

Others present included Richard Beeland, Daisy Madison, and Dan Johnson

HOMELESSNESS BLUEPRINT

Chairman Robinson stated that the purpose of this meeting today was to get us focused—that we had the Plan and knew the players, and the playing field was ready, and the question was “When will we start playing ball?” She called on John Hayes

Before he began, Councilman Benson wanted to know how this will be headed up or in other words “Who will be in charge?”

Mr. Hayes began by thanking the Council for their input; that they were not asking for the Council’s approval but wanted to get their input and feedback; that because of Council’s input, they had gone back and clarified issues of the Blueprint Committee; that there were modifications they had made as a result, one being added membership on the Homeless Board; that people from surrounding counties will be involved because this does impact a large area, and they needed representation from a broader spectrum. He stated that they would need to hire an Executive Director for HBOC. He stated that one critical step was putting together the committee, and they would be working with the Mayor and Southeast District on this to appoint a core group who will be charged with implementing the Blueprint; that the creation of HBOC (Homeless Blueprint Oversight Committee) was critical in the implementation of the program; that they would meet with the Mayor and get people appointed and these people will be responsible for the implementation. He reiterated that the input the Council had given was critical; that they set forth the structure and got input from the Council, and now they were ready for the Oversight Committee to get in place and begin implementation as soon as possible. He stated they hoped to accomplish this in the next week or so—getting the major players together—and a group of four would serve as the basis; that there would also be representatives of various agencies.

Mr. Dorris added that the structure in the Blueprint provides more detail.

Chairman Robinson stated that Councilwoman Bennett had a question.

Councilwoman Bennett wanted to know what the process was as far as we were concerned in instituting change; that we needed to move forward and partner together and questioned if we did not need to establish performance measures.

Mr. Hayes responded that some of this is already in the Blueprint—that it would be up to the committee who gets appointed to be held accountable and make sure this works. He stated that the committee in place worked diligently in saying what is needed—that we need to get HBOC in place; that they need to stop working on the Blueprint and get the people in place; that we need to get official appointments made, and it will be their job to take the recommendations, and all of this needs to be done. He reiterated that our next step is getting HBOC appointed as soon as possible. He noted that Phyllis Cassavant and Richard Beeland of the Mayor’s Office were present.

Councilman Page stated that he really appreciated the work that Mr. Hayes and the committee had done and thanked them for their dedication in helping the homeless. He went on to say that he thought getting the Blueprint Committee formed and operating was critical; that he didn’t know how it would be set up, questioning if it would be quasi-governmental or totally independent with bylaws; that if it is to be successful, it has to be truly representative of our community, and he said thank you to those who had been working on this.

Mr. Hayes stated that their role did not end until the structure is in place and functioning.

Councilman Pierce noted that Mr. Hayes had said “not concluded until the structure is in place”. He asked if everything was geared to the Farmers’ Market?

Mr. Hayes responded that the administrative structure would make sure the Plan is implemented.

Councilman Pierce expressed that he appreciated what had been done but implementing the Plan was a problem; that it had to be worked out if the Council was to approve or accept implementation.

Mr. Hayes reiterated that this would be HBOC’s responsibility.

Chairman Robinson also expressed her appreciation for the work that had been done, stating that this was very complicated; that we needed to figure out the kind of structure in terms of organization, and she thought we were close to it. She questioned when problems were encountered, where would be the place to get information and guidance; that we needed to establish how we can best serve our homeless.

Councilman Pierce stated that we had this land that the Mayor wanted to develop and was still looking at vendors. He questioned if there was any control on this—that this is piece-meal. He questioned how we could get a group to the point to make this effective when we have so many splinter groups.

Councilman Benson pointed out that we leased the land for \$1.00 a year for this mission, and it reverts back to us if not used for this, and we are held harmless. He stated that the Council has no legal authority on this—that legally we have no control.

Councilman Pierce questioned if the land was not dedicated for this purpose?

Dan Johnson responded that the whole block was not dedicated; that there is a Master Plan that the architect has developed.

Mr. Hayes stated that we were talking about SETHRA; that the whole property is not going to be used for the homeless; that the back part will be used for commercial purposes and will not serve the homeless; that SETHRA fits what came out of the charettes. He added that this was just his opinion and not part of the committee's position; that we have to decide if this is the best fit for the homeless.

Councilman Page stated that in his mind this piece of property had not been voted on to be used as a Homeless Complex; that the Oversight Committee will determine what is to be done; that rather than the Council making uneducated decisions, the Committee will make recommendations to the Council.

Mr. Hayes explained that the committee that he had been on was not charged with this mission; that HBOC would be.

Councilwoman Bennett stated that one missing part that was important was to have someone from the community on the Board.

Richard Beeland pointed out that the Blueprint and Farmers Market are completely separate; that some of the things could be outside of Hamilton County.

Chairman Robinson stated to correct her if she was wrong but she did not think the Farmers' Market was leased for \$1.00—that only a small area was leased and not the complete complex, prompting Councilman Pierce to say that maybe it could be divided into ten small areas and we would get \$10.00!

Chairman Robinson asked if there was any further need for another update; that she thought dialog was important.

Mr. Beeland suggested that after HBOC is formed, that they can come back in about six months and give an update.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 P.M.