

# **RHAC Meeting August 13, 2021**

## **Notes**

- February 2016, city and county passed complementary sets of homeless strategies to address intensifying homelessness in region.
- Strategies included formation of the RHAC, co-convened by LAHSA and United Way, to provide a forum for broad-based, collaborative & strategic leadership on homelessness. Intended to serve as membership body of L.A. Continuum of Care, in compliance with HUD regulations, in order to facilitate understanding of best practices, and communicate goals/barriers/progress to community stakeholders.
- Convened for the first time in February 2017, with representatives from SPA's, cities, public & private agencies and various stakeholders.
- In 2020, several leadership entities undertook initiative to review L.A.'s homeless system of governance, including BOS, LA City Council, LAHSA Commission, and the Committee for Greater L.A. Result—4 reports with findings and recommendations on governance to define roles and responsibilities better, streamline decision-making, and increase accountability.
- Common challenges listed in the various reports included lack of role clarity for governing bodies, need to strengthen system administration, and lack of a common system-wide vision---strategies to address these challenges called for further evaluation of LA's homeless system governance.
- One report proposed disbandment of the RHAC, saying it no longer served its purpose. It was originally intended as helping with coordination and goal-setting. But there are challenges with RHAC's advisory nature within the broader governance framework, which is in desperate need of structural repair.
- L.A. City Report on Governance recommended: 1) someone in middle coordinating homeless services for both public and private entities; 2) LAHSA needs strategic plan on prevention/housing creation/re-housing/street homelessness; 3) some departments have authority but no accountability, and others have accountability but no authority; 4) work needs to be done on outreach, communication, metric data and contracting; 5) review regional system vs. local needs; 6) need for city and county officials to sit together to address governance.
- LAHSA Ad Hoc Committee on Governance: reviewed LAHSA governance in 4 broad areas: 1) Operations, and challenges related to contracts and communication; 2) Role Clarity, and overlapping or unclear lines of authority, even for members of governing/advisory bodies; 3) Support for system administration; 4) Lack of system-wide vision and goals. Recommendations to: 1) strengthen operations; 2) establish role clarity (work with LAHSA Commission, Continuum of Care Board, Coordinated Entry System Policy Council, & Lived Experience Advisory Board to establish clarity. Full analysis of existing groups for overlap, responsibilities, etc; 3) tighten up LAHSA Commission; 4) create a bridge with key elected officials (city & county) to create homelessness-specific planning group; 5) support system administration and development system-wide, and work on vision and goals.
- L.A. County Report on Governance: BOS report issued on 3/2/21, with concerns on operations as well as governance. At the end of July the County established the Blue Ribbon Commission on Homelessness to continue governance review, that will meet bi-weekly beginning in September, and report back by March 2022.
- The Committee for Greater LA: academics released report last year recommending that we should use the pandemic to not go back to the way things were, and fix existing governance organizations. Report indicated: 1) city and county collaboration is not enough---governance is

bigger than government; 2) there's a lack of community-accepted leadership. Everyone and no one is in charge; 3) there are lots of coordination workarounds, but no common mission and milestones; 4) there is plenty of data, but no commonly accepted outcome measures; 5) there is insufficient funding, and insufficient linking of existing funding to mission; 6) align work of existing organizations to a new North Star (one set of assumptions everyone uses). Says there's a hole in the center of the system---there is no center. The center should be the home base of the community-wide commitment to addressing homelessness in L.A., with an oversight board overseeing a governing board and a CEO who is responsible for strategic planning, measurable outcomes, accountability & mutual assistance, policy and intergovernmental relations, and public communications.

- For now, RHAC suspended indefinitely until completion of broader governance review.
- In the meantime, work is happening now to improve contracting and other operational issues at LAHSA