



INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

NO ACTION

November 25, 2014

TO: Mayor Teresa Jacobs
And
Board of County Commissioners

FROM: George A. Ralls, M.D., Acting Deputy County Administrator 

SUBJECT: BCC Work Session & Homelessness Update - December 16, 2014

At the direction of Mayor Teresa Jacobs, as communicated to the Board in a recent memorandum, the Board will be presented with a work session and update on homelessness on December 16, 2014. The presentation will provide an overview of the problem from a regional and local perspective. Additionally, staff will discuss the challenges of affordable housing inventory and detail a specific plan to address the problem on both an immediate and long term timeline.

The presentation is informational only. No Board action will be requested.

GR/cr

Attachment

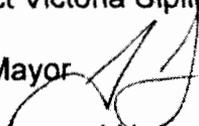


ORANGE COUNTY MAYOR
TERESA JACOBS

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November 7, 2014

To: Board of County Commissioners
Commissioner-Elect Bryan Nelson, District 2
Commission-Elect Victoria Siplin, District 6

From: Teresa Jacobs, Mayor 

Subject: Board Work Session and Homelessness Update

In reference to my attached letter to John Hillenmeyer, Volunteer Board Chairman of the Central Florida Commission on Homelessness (CFCH), I will be presenting our BCC with an in-depth update on the topic of homelessness, as part of a Work Session to be held on Tuesday, December 16, 2014.

Working with County staff and numerous community partners, the Work Session will include a comprehensive overview, including:

- I. Update on the mission and activities of the CFCH.
- II. Presentation of Orange County's Homelessness Plan, which seeks to realign our service delivery model and allocation of County funds to better address the needs of our veterans, as well as the chronically homeless and homeless/at-risk families.
- III. Funding overview and program priorities of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), how our local funding model works, including a review of the region's lead agency, the Homeless Services Network, as well as Orange County's current and proposed future funding.

Highlighted in the Work Session will be the issue of Affordable Housing considering it is a hugely important factor when discussing solutions for homelessness. In addition to obvious factors like short supply and a highly competitive marketplace, various criteria like housing occupancy standards and the availability of workforce transportation make this issue incredibly complex. To further complicate the issue of homelessness and affordable housing, there are specific barriers that families and others face in seeking a secure and safe place to live.

As you will recall, we saw this issue come to light earlier this year when a motel in Eatonville was condemned due to unlivable and dangerous conditions. Were it not for the emergency efforts of Orange County and the immediate assistance of generous community partners, more than a dozen families (many with infants, toddlers and children) would have been literally put out on the street that cold, rainy Friday night.

In this case, it was revealed that these families were paying between \$600-\$800 for a single room in a decrepit motel. Their main obstacles in acquiring a suitable apartment or home were compromised credit, past evictions, a down payment (first and last month deposit) and, in some cases, a criminal record. There are organizations across Orange County that are addressing these obstacles and are reestablishing housing for homeless individuals and families; thereby, breaking the cycle of homelessness.

Building upon the great momentum and recent, renewed awareness that has been created regarding the issue of homelessness, I believe that we can make history by transforming the lives of our homeless children, families, adults and veterans. Working together, we can help create permanent solutions for housing the chronically homeless in a compassionate, effective and cost-efficient manner, and for lifting families and children out of homelessness and onto the path of self-sufficiency and success.

Attachment

c: Ajit Lalchandani, County Administrator
 Jeffrey Newton, County Attorney
 George Ralls, M.D., Acting Deputy County Administrator/Health and Public Safety Director