



CAN Board of Directors Meeting 4/12/19 Minutes

Location: Boards & Commissions room, Austin City Hall

Present: **Tamara Atkinson**, Workforce Solutions Capital Area; **Eric Bustos**, Capital Metro; **Chris Cervini**, Austin Community College; **Kelly Crook**, Superintendent, Del Valle ISD; **Hunter Ellinger**, CAN Community Council; **Nora Comstock**, CAN Community Council; **David Escamilla**, Community Justice Council; **David Evans**, Integral Care; **Jimmy Flannigan**, Austin City Council Member; **Sherri Fleming**, Travis County; **Simone Talma Flowers**, Interfaith Action of Central Texas and One Voice Central Texas; **Natasha Harper-Madison**, Austin City Council Member; **Patricia Hayes**, Greater Austin Black Chamber of Commerce; **Mark Hiemstra**, Goodwill Industries of Central Texas; **Ryan Marcum**, Manor ISD; **Jeremy Martin**, Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce; **Rudy Metayer**, Pflugerville City Council Member; **Ronda Rutledge**, One Voice Central Texas; **David Smith**, United Way for Greater Austin; **Jeffrey Travillion**, Travis County Commissioner; **Alice Yi**, Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce.

CAN staff in attendance: Raul Alvarez, Carlos A Soto

Other guests: **Ara Merjanian**, CAN Community Council, **Kelly Nichols**, Reentry Roundtable; **Helen Graebler**, Reentry Roundtable; **Ellen Richards**, Integral Care; **Kyndal Workman**.

Call to order and Introductions: Chair Patricia Hayes called the meeting to order at 1:08 pm, and members introduced themselves. David Evans announced May 9 [Community Forum on Housing as a Health Solution](#).

Approval of minutes from 2/08/19 meeting: The 2/08/19 meeting minutes and were approved as submitted, after a motion by Ronda Rutledge, seconded by Rudy Metayer.

Community Council Report: Hunter Ellinger mentioned that the Community Council has a new Vice Chair: Nora Comstock. About 30 people attended a reunion meeting held last month, bringing together people who have served on the Council since its inception. Bruce Elfant and Kathy Tovo spoke, and participants talked about the Council, its accomplishments, and what they are interested in having the Council accomplish. One thing that's a recurring issue is that the city is very big, and if the responsibility of the Community Council is to connect with the community, how do we pull that off? One way is a recruitment effort we will work on this year, another is to take a look at how to approach the whole question to make sure we're getting input from all the directions we would like input from. Another thing is talk about some remote access to meetings so folks don't have to physically drive to the meeting space. This might involve meeting in 2 or 3 different remote sites. The Council is also preparing to select the topics to work on this year. Areas of consideration include taking a closer look at emerging conditions for the elderly and questions that have come up around community self-development.

Executive Director's Report: Raúl Álvarez shared a brief overview of the Community Council reunion. Part of the challenges discussed was "what is the role of community council alumni?" This kind of group can greatly help with outreach and promotions. Alvarez called attention to the ED report, beginning with the State of the Safety Net forums scheduled to begin at the end of the month. To commemorate the 10th anniversary of the CAN Dashboard, CAN will host a series of forums to assess the "state of the safety net" organized around the four goal areas of the Dashboard. Response has been positive: the Basic Needs forum is full and there are a few slots left for the forum on the Health indicators section. By next meeting we'll have dates for the remaining two forums.

Alvarez announced that a date has been set for the Regional Summit, stay tuned next week for a save the date. A survey to get feedback on the discussion topics, panels, and types of engagement will close on Monday. At the most recent summit, participant feedback survey responses showed an interest in a little more time for small group and breakout conversations.

The Language Access Action Team has been meeting on the first Wednesday of every month to develop resources and engagement strategies to expand access to language services. Please consider designating a representative from your organization to participate. We also recently relaunched the Equity Blog, to feature a variety of topics including data, affordability, CAN resources/tools, and local efforts/resources for addressing institutional racism. Subscribe on the main page of the CAN website: www.canatx.org.

Strategic Planning Update: Patricia Hayes called attention to the handout highlighting various aspects of the 2019 Workplan, and mentioned that Ara Merjanian has agreed to help work with the strategic planning process. We want to make sure to involve folks not on Executive Committee to participate in Planning Committee. Meetings could be once per month, but could be remotely attended. With the different projects going on, it's a good time to reengage some partners for feedback on next steps. The goal is to minimize additional time commitment while ensuring other voices are included on the planning process. Raúl Álvarez added that the plan for the committee will likely be to have a couple of conference calls before July and then plan additional in-person or remote meetings to review feedback gathered from now through the Summer. He encouraged members to sign-up to serve on the strategic planning committee.

CAN Partner Spotlight: Integral Care: Ellen Richards thanked CAN for having her today and introduced herself. After a brief overview of the populations and region served, Richards discussed the mission of Integral Care. Services provided go from crisis response, housing, residential services, and substance use treatment to jail diversion, prevention, and wellness. Integral Care will be opening the Oak Spring complex with 50 units of housing this summer. Another one of Integral Care's roles in the community is as an authority for the County in the areas of mental health and intellectual/developmental disability. Part of authority role is to work across the community in a planning function, which includes a recent focus on children's crisis services. The Children's Mental Health Crisis Task Force met from 2017 to 2018, analyzed and mapped the local crisis system, identified gaps, and [developed recommendations](#). Recommendations from the report include: improve communication and coordination across systems; single point of entry when child is in crisis; expanding crisis response, community-based crisis intervention, wraparound intensive case management; and developing short term crisis stabilization.

Discussion: Members called attention to a new children's hospital that opened in the area and Justice of the Peace Yvonne Williams' holistic approach to addressing truancy. Members also harped on the need to avoid poor coordination and the duplication of effort. Members also articulated the importance and value of partnering with legal organizations. Opportunities include the Health Law and Family Law sections of Austin Bar. Faith-based groups are also valuable partners. Members mentioned how outside of Travis County primarily faith-based organizations do this kind of work. The idea of developing an asset map showing resources and highlighting gaps could be very useful in this regard.

CAN Priority Presentation on Addressing Institutional Racism: Austin Reentry Roundtable. Helen Gaebler thanked everyone for the opportunity to be here, and introduced herself and Kelly Nichols of Wollard, Nichols, and Associates who provides consulting backbone support to the Roundtable. Gaebler briefly introduced the Roundtable, a coalition launched in 2004 modeled after the Urban Institute Reentry Roundtable Initiative. The roundtable does not provide direct services, instead focusing efforts to engage, convene, advocate, and partner to improve reentry ecosystem. The intent of the group is to: improve outcomes, shift public perception, and promote policy and practice changes. Two highlighted programs that have seen great success were the Advocacy Project and the Advocacy Fellowship Program.

Since President Obama established the Federal Interagency Reentry Council in 2010, there have been a number of developments regarding HUD Fair Housing guidance. A local in depth study resulted in the [Locked Out: Criminal History Barriers to Affordable Rental Housing in Austin & Travis County, Texas](#) report, which aims to inform improved policies, strategies and resources to reduce criminal history barriers to housing. Findings matched almost identically with what others have found, in terms of failure to comply with best practices and Fair Housing requirements under HUD guidance. Key findings include: lack of transparency & compliance with the Texas Property Code, unreasonable lookback periods for considering criminal backgrounds, Failure to consider mitigating circumstances, equating arrests with convictions, and overbroad categories of criminal activity. From that, created task force and housing workgroup to create guide. In 2018, after 2 years of work in a partnership that included a broad set of stakeholders, the result was the [Criminal Background Screening Guide](#) and [Background Screening Template](#). The screening guide provides guidance on: compliance with HUD guidance, legal terminology, deferred adjudication, calculating look back periods, and individualized review processes. Implementation support from the Reentry Roundtable includes: utilization of housing guide standards in funding criteria, training for private sector landlords and property managers, and supporting tenant education efforts.

Presenters asked that CAN partners consider using the standards in the guide to the greatest extent possible in any housing decisions. They also asked that CAN partners look into how their own organizations are considering criminal records in employment and other kinds of access to services. The challenge is not specific to housing. It is a problem that comes up over and over again. Finally, Gaebler invited all to engage with roundtable, whether it's through regular monthly Planning Council meetings, RAP meetings open to public on first wed of every month and yearly events such as RAP Speaks.

Discussion: Members described this challenge as the ultimate NIMBY issue. Members noted the importance of having a full discussion about the continuum. The redevelopment of the jail site should be seen as an opportunity to look at a variety of options for transitioning out of jail. ACC plays a vital part in the continuum on the employment and training side where they look at how workforce development can be done pre-release and then continued post-release. Another positive development is the hiring of a new Fair Hiring Champion, Hank Perret. The continuum is critical and there is room for local conversation about effective development on the inside and outside. Presenters noted that they are working on collecting information about these and other resources and hopefully make the Roundtable the “go to” place to access services that are available.

Adjournment: Patricia Hayes adjourned the meeting at 3:10 pm.