

Homelessness, Housing, Mental Health Task Force

January 30, 2023



Presentation:

Supportive Services – Group 1

Restore Hope Ministries
Domestic Violence Intervention Services
YWCA Tulsa





Jeff Jaynes, Executive Director
Amanda Faith, Director of Homeless Prevention



Restore Hope Ministries – About Us

- Mission: restoring families in financial crisis to economic and spiritual vitality.
- Programs: Hunger Reduction (grocery, Thanksgiving), Homeless Prevention (ERAP, rent payment) and Hope Promotion (school supplies, optional chapel).
- Our homeless prevention work includes casework and direct financial support to prevent eviction as well as advocacy and partnerships across the continuum of care (*A Way Home 4 Tulsa*) to provide a holistic response to eviction.



Restore Hope Ministries – Service Needs

- What are the main barriers preventing your organization from better serving people experiencing homelessness?
 - Regulatory Interpretation Challenges
- Alternative Question: what barriers are increasing ***the need*** for Restore Hope's services? (Upstream Solutions)
 - Lack of affordable housing
 - Unequal eviction landscape for landlords and tenants
 - Lower wages, lower access to health care, access to better public transportation, need for greater financial empowerment.

Restore Hope Ministries – Recommendations

- What specific actions can the City consider to help?
 - Policy: Incentivizing affordable housing developments, policy changes to update OK Residential Landlord Tenant Act, access to counsel for fairness in eviction court.
 - Convening: Creative affordable housing development strategy with Partner Tulsa, developers, and community organizations, continued active participation in A Way Home For Tulsa to reinforce best practices in homeless response.
 - Financial Resources: regulatory interpretation alignment
- Do you have examples of what has been successful in other cities?
 - Dallas Eviction Action Center (Dallas EAC); recruited pro-bono attorneys to represent every single eviction client in Dallas County. Legal Aid can't represent everyone, but pro-bono attorneys can. Would raise the bar for evictions overall.
 - Increased filing fees, longer process times, balanced court requirements for landlords and tenants (See “Jane the Renter”)

TOO QUICK TO EVICT

Tenants are evicted almost twice as fast in Tulsa than in Nashville, a community that's similar in size, income and housing market. Why?

Meet Jane the Renter and learn about how the two unique eviction systems can impact individuals and landlords in similar situations.

Jane in Tulsa

Rents a home

Jane saves up enough money to pay the first and last month's rent and rents a home.



Day 1

A few months later she has car trouble that costs hundreds of dollars and she's unable to pay rent.



Day 5 & 10

On the 5th of the month Jane gets a late notice, then **on the 10th of the month the landlord pays \$58 in filing fees and Jane gets an eviction notice with a minimum of 3 days' notice.**



Day 15

Eviction Court is scheduled for the 15th. The landlord doesn't have to be present for the case, however if Jane isn't present the Judge can file a default judgment (automatic eviction).

Very little opportunity for resident to regain footing.



Tulsa has the 11th highest eviction rate in the country, but are our renters worse than most major cities?

Data shows slight policy adjustments like filing times, filing fees and landlord representation can have a positive impact.



Jane in Nashville

Rents a home

Jane saves up enough money to pay the first and last month's rent and rents a home.



Day 1

A few months later Jane gets sick and misses multiple days at work and she is unable to pay rent.



Day 5

On the 5th of the month Jane gets a 14-day notice to pay or quit, which gives her a chance to work more hours and catch up on rent.



Day 19

If Jane stays in the home, the landlord can proceed with eviction. **On the 19th of the month the landlord pays \$191.50 in filing fees and the eviction notice is served by the Sheriff with a minimum of 6 days' notice.**



Day 26

Within the six-day notice time, both Jane and the landlord can request a 15-day postponement of the Eviction Court Date.



Day 31

Ultimately, **court is scheduled around 4-to-8 weeks after a late payment and the landlord has to provide a strong case with evidence against Jane.** If Jane isn't present the Judge can file a default judgment (automatic eviction).



Although Nashville has a similar population and median household income as Tulsa, it's eviction rate is approximately half that of Tulsa: 3.42% compared with 6.95% (source: evictionlab.org).

Both cities' eviction rates are above the national average, but Nashville policies keep eviction rates lower than Tulsa even though they have a slightly higher poverty rate, percentage of renter homes, median gross rent and rent burden than Tulsa.

Data show slight policy changes can help reduce eviction and homelessness, while strengthening the rental market in Tulsa for landlords and residents.

Data collected and analyzed by Tulsa's Eviction Data working group. Learn more at housingolutiontulsa.org.



Rose Turner, Chief Administrative Officer





OUR MISSION: to advance physical and emotional safety by reducing the impact and occurrence of sexual and domestic violence, human trafficking, and stalking through inclusive intervention and prevention services for children, youth and adults.

50% of clients in the 2022 Point-in-Time count mentioned a personal history of **domestic violence**.

Causes of Homelessness

These are the top reasons respondents said contributed to their homelessness.
Multiple choice question, results may not add up to 100%



38%

Relationship
Breakdown



31%

Loss of
Income



30%

Job Loss,
Mental Health



21%

Eviction,
COVID-19,
Substance Use



20%

Domestic
Violence



16%

Criminal
Justice
Involvement



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION SERVICES

OUR SERVICES include

- safe housing
- counseling for children, youth, and adults
- legal advocacy and representation
- court advocacy
- law enforcement advocacy
- education and outreach
- hospital advocacy
- childcare
- batterers intervention



Domestic violence survivors often present with multifaceted issues:

- Mental health
- Substance use/abuse
- Lack of education, income, resources

PRIMARY BARRIERS to DVIS serving people experiencing homelessness

inadequate:



funding



space



capacity



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION SERVICES

ACCOUNTABILITY

It is important to us that the support we receive is used efficiently and effectively. DVIS has many protections in place to ensure adherence to grant guidelines and responsible stewardship of funding, including adherence to GAAP, multiple annual audits, and Board and Committee oversight.

RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY

- Continued involvement with policy development and planning
- Active and continued involvement in *A Way Home For Tulsa*
- Organized trainings for landlords regarding domestic violence situations

\$

- Additional grants for Transitional and Permanent Housing

📍

- Cities with a robust Rapid Rehousing (RRH) program, such as Houston and Austin, have seen success in both development and sustainability





Julie Davis, Chief Executive Officer



YWCA Tulsa – About Us

- YWCA Tulsa is on a mission to eliminate racism, empower women, and promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all.
- Which causes of homelessness identified in the Point-in-Time count does your organization work to address?
 - Loss of income
 - Eviction



YWCA – Service Needs

- What are the main barriers preventing your organization from better serving people experiencing homelessness?
 - Available affordable housing (particularly for larger families)
 - Housing conditions of affordable housing
 - Landlords who take advantage of individuals who do not speak English or know their rights
 - Cost of Living – many clients are under-employed or un-employed and so find it difficult to afford affordable housing
 - Limited housing options for larger families

YWCA – Recommendations

- What specific actions can the City consider to help?
 - Policy?
 - Protections for Tenants Rights
 - Convening?
 - The City of Tulsa has been supporting convening partners and experts in this area
 - Financial Resources?
 - Invest in affordable housing/subsidized housing within the City
 - Public Transportation
- Do you have examples of what has been successful in other cities?

Presentation:

Supportive Services – Group 2

Tulsa CARES
Oklahomans for Equality
The Merchant



Tulsa CARES

Kate Neary, MPH, Chief Executive Officer
Casey Bakhsh, MSW, LCSW, Chief Programs Officer



- Founded in 1991
- Serve 23 counties of NE OK
- National best practice for HIV/HCV care
- Serve approximately 800 HIV / 125 HCV
- Core programs:
 - Prevention
 - Care Coordination
 - Medical
 - Housing
 - Mental Health
 - Nutrition



Tulsa CARES – About Us

- Mission: We improve the quality of life for people affected by HIV and Hepatitis C through tailored care and comprehensive support that promotes dignity, equity and optimal health
- Which causes of homelessness identified in the Point-in-Time count does your organization work to address?
 - Relationship breakdown, loss of income, mental health, substance use, eviction, domestic violence and criminal justice involvement.



Tulsa CARES – Service Needs

- What are the main barriers preventing your organization from better serving people experiencing homelessness?
 - Lack of affordable housing
 - HUD limits of fair market value
 - Cannot overlap HOPWA with Section 8
 - Lack of inpatient mental health facilities
 - Barriers to house those who are justice involved, zero/fixed income, and/or have evictions on record
 - Costs of home comforts (furniture, household goods, pet-friendly)

Tulsa CARES – Recommendations

- Increase stock of permanently affordable housing
- Funding for aftercare case mgmt. services for people going from unsheltered to housed
- Retaliation protections for tenants
- More awareness and education around eviction process and the access to legal counsel (mobile library centers help support, bus advertising)
- Late fee controls on landlords
- Rent stabilization policy
- Better protections for domestic violence survivors (prevent evictions on their records, etc.)
- Educating citizens on how to file a housing complaint (fair housing issues); city's water bill has a pamphlet that could be utilized
- Unit acquisition strategies (Jacksonville, FL; Greensboro, NC)
- Addressing encampments (cross-agency, multi-sector response) Boston, MA



Oklahomans for Equality

Dorothy Ballard, Interim Executive Director



CITY OF
Tulsa
A New Kind of Energy.

Oklahomans for Equality – About Us

- Oklahomans for Equality (OkEq) seeks equal rights for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ+) individuals and families through advocacy, education, programs, alliances, and the operation of the Dennis R. Neill Equality Center.
- Our direct work and partnerships engage all intersections of homelessness impacting the LGBTQ+ community in Tulsa and the broader Oklahoma region.



OkEq – Service Needs

As the largest LGBTQ+ focused resource and advocacy organization in the Oklahoma region, OkEq is depended upon for a broad spectrum of ever-increasing needs for services and programming. Especially among youth and young adults (ages 5 thru 24).

Our primary barriers in order of current priority are:

- Funding
- Staffing and Volunteers
- Skilled Program Leads and Caseworkers
- Hostile State Level Legislation
- Resource Awareness

OkEq – Recommendations

What specific actions can the City consider to help?

Policy: We are looking to municipal and county government bodies to balance state level legislation that negatively impacts our served communities with policies that best accommodate the civil and human rights of the LGBTQ+ community and all Tulsans under the law.

Convening: We wish to be actively engaged and more consistently invited to the “table” in initiatives for policy developments, community outreach, and data capturing. While OkEq has had an active role in the City’s Human Rights Commission for many years, often the need to include LGBTQ+ voices in broader efforts and brain trusts are overlooked.

Financial Resources: As a rapidly growing non-profit with the privilege of running a community center our perpetual ask will always be for funding and staffing supports. This would look like recurring grants that are intentional in including support of LGBTQ+ programming and resources. In staffing, a City matched employee and/or group volunteer program would be significant. This model is often used by larger corporations like Walmart, AT&T, and Phillips 66, which allow employees to either be compensated for their volunteer hours at their usual pay rate or will make a monetary match of an employee’s volunteer hours or direct donations.

The Merchant

Paul Schmidt, Executive Director
Debbie Schmidt



The Merchant – About Us

- Our Mission is to move folk's up and out of Homelessness
 - We work to get people housed and provide financial support to our friends so that they may obtain photo id's, birth certificates, and other identification documents.
- Started in February of 2017
 - Initially served 5-10 individuals per day (6 years ago)
 - Now serve 150-200 individuals per day

The Merchant – Service Needs

- What are the main barriers preventing your organization from better serving people experiencing homelessness?
 - Struggling with losing connections to specific service providers such as: Social Security Administration and the Veterans Affairs.
 - Funds



The Merchant – Recommendations

- What specific actions can the City consider to help?
 - Policy
 - Ease cleaning in the winter and other times of bad weather, more CRT folks in Tulsa.
 - Convening
 - Love to establish an ongoing dialogue with the city to regularly address issues and identify how we can work closely together.
 - Financial Resources
 - We are small with minimal funding. We spend most of our funds on documents and utilities for keeping it a warm place for folk's, would love help with funding documents.

Presentation:

Supportive Services – Group 3

Be Heard Movement
Volunteers of America Oklahoma





BEHEARD

MOVEMENT

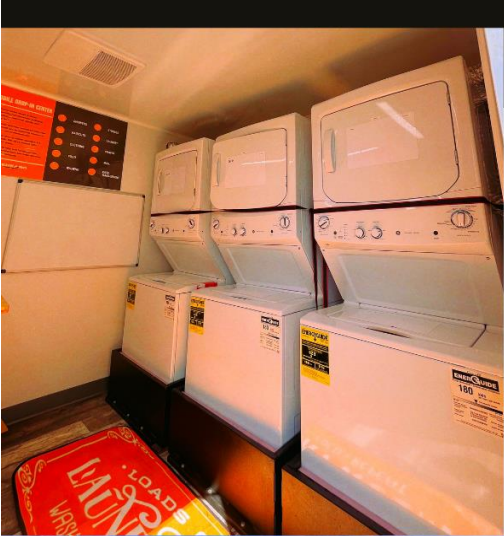
RESTORING DIGNITY ONE SHOWER AT A TIME

Evan Dougoud, President and Founder



CITY OF
Tulsa
A New Kind of Energy.

Be Heard Movement– About Us



OTHER OUTREACH VEHICLES:

Showers Laundry Case Management 



MOBILE BARBERSHOP BUS



MOBILE CLOTHING TRAILER



Be Heard Movement– About Us



MISSION:

OUR MISSION IS TO UTILIZE SOUL WORK AND SOCIAL WORK TO BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY, BUSINESSES AND THOSE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS.



It took 18 showers, 4 loads of laundry, 4 haircuts and 18 case management appointments to end his homelessness.

YOU DECIDE:

- relationship breakdown
- loss of income
- mental health, job loss
- eviction, Substance use
- domestic violence
- criminal justice involvement.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN BARRIERS PREVENTING BEHEARD FROM BETTER SERVING PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS?



1. East Tulsa needs a outreach center open 5-7 days a week. (admiral area, Garnett area)

- There are little to no resources in east tulsa. which causes increase in foot traffic for businesses, criminal justice involvement and impairs mental health.
- East tulsa unsheltered individuals are staying homeless longer and its a direct cause of no access to resources.
- East tulsa unsheltered population data states that individuals have not showered in 5-6 weeks.

2. Limited staffing, We are needing:

- 2 more case managers (\$72k)
- 1 Mental health counselor (50-65k)
- 3 Outreach Assistants (96k)

3. Night outreach Team

- Outreach team will serve east tulsa McClure park area after hours. The goal is to help businesses, the community, and those experiencing homelessness.
- Outreach team will serve as a rapid response for unsheltered guest.

4. 8 station Mobile Laundry trailer (79k)

- Laundry trailer will be dedicated to provide access to laundry services for low-income apartments. Will team up with the tulsa dream center and landlord tenant resource center to help prevent homelessness.



Be Heard Movement – Recommendations



**WHAT SPECIFIC
ACTIONS CAN THE CITY
CONSIDER TO HELP?**



FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- Mobile Drop-in center program expenses (68k)
- Help located city owned building that we can use to offer drop in services (east, west, north or south tulsa.)
- Mobile Laundry Trailer - 79k
- Mobile Bathroom Trailer - 58k

OTHER WAYS TO HELP

- Letter of approval for mobile outreach services from the city.
- Access water hookups and grey water disposal plan.
- Affordable housing.



Healthy Communities For All

Pam Richardson, President & Chief Executive Officer
Susan Kenny, Director of Mission Advancement



Volunteers of America Oklahoma – About Us

Volunteers of America Oklahoma's mission is to respond to Oklahomans in need and to create opportunities for people to experience the joy of serving others. Serving 14,000 individuals annually, VOAOK is dedicated to creating "Healthy Communities For All" serving veterans, the aging, the homeless and the disabled.



**Volunteers
of America®**
OKLAHOMA

Healthy Communities For All

VOAOK provides 51 units of housing in scattered site apartments for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness.

VOAOK provides money management services for 500+ Tulsans preventing eviction and homelessness.

VOAOK provides employment services for veterans at risk of homelessness. VOAOK housing services provides for veterans who are work ready and able to assume the lease in 6-12 mos.

Causes of Homelessness

These are the top reasons respondents said contributed to their homelessness.

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**Job Loss,
Mental Health**



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**Eviction,
COVID-19,
Substance Use**



20%

**Domestic
Violence**



16%

**Criminal
Justice
Involvement**

VOAOK – Service Needs

- What are the main barriers preventing your organization from better serving people experiencing homelessness?
- **LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING** – insufficient housing is available for clients living in poverty with significant behavioral health or medical challenges.
- **LANDLORD RELATIONSHIPS** – are tenuous and subject to immediate reversal upon new ownership or new management or a client experiencing a difficult mental health or substance use challenge or non-compliance with the community policies. One episode in scattered sight housing can ruin the relationship with the landlord and the other program residents in the same complex.
- **BACKGROUND CHECKS** – inhibit housing and employment. Current or active justice involvement deters housing stability from the perspective of the landlord and the employer.

VOAOK – Recommendations

- What specific actions can the City consider to help?
 - Policy – required set asides in new developments for people experiencing homelessness that result in higher points prior to financial awards. Once a set-aside exists an expectation of reporting/monitoring should occur.
 - Convening – landlords (owners & managers & providers) educational sessions about homelessness and provide incentives for participants. Training about homelessness for property managers and working with individuals with mental health challenges.
 - Financial Resources – with inflation higher costs in workforce, rent, repairs and utilities and continue to escalate. Funding to support these increases. Funding for mental health and substance use disorders.
- Do you have examples of what has been successful in other cities?
- VOA, a National non-profit, provides affordable housing across the U.S. and there are several quality models in Chicago, New Orleans and Los Angeles.