**Governor’s Council on Homelessness**

**October 19, 2017**

The Governor’s Council on Homelessness met on Thursday, October 19, 2017, in Committee Room #2 of the Louisiana Housing Corporation Building located at 2415 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Ms. Nicole Sweazy, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Introductions were made and the roll was recorded by Ms. Gay Owens, recording secretary.

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**Members Present:** Ms. Nicole Sweazy, Ms. Tasha Anthony, Mr. Chip Coulter, Ms. Alex Juan (designee of Department of Veteran Affairs), Ms. Martha Kegel, Ms. Kia Sims (designee of the Governor’s Office)

**Members Absent:** Mr. Jacquez Ambers, Ms. Michell Brown, Ms. Leslie Grover, Mr. Joshua Hollins and Mr. Bruce Parker

**Staff Present:** Gay Owens, recording secretary

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A quorum was announced present and the meeting opened for business.

Ms. Sweazy presented an update on the FY 2017 Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and informed the council of the three-day early submittal, prior to the September 28th deadline. She thanked the Council for their dedication in overseeing the rating and ranking of the projects the State submitted to the competition. The Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding announcement will be forthcoming.

Ms. Sweazy introduced the Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) and SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) then discussion ensued. Ms. Sweazy stated that a presentation has been scheduled, for both programs, within the upcoming January 2018 council meeting.

The council addressed the need for a uniform CoC Disaster Plan for all regions of the state. This plan will detail the steps that should be taken to accommodate the needs of homeless persons during a disaster such as shelter, food and services. An organized entry process will be necessary to coordinate all regions to prioritize assistance based on vulnerability and severity of service.

The National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week (HHAW) is scheduled for November 11-19, 2017. The purpose of the event is to shed light on the issues of hunger and homelessness. The council discussed plans for the 2018 HHAW that included working with community organizations and religious groups as partners.

Ms. Sweazy introduced the Point in Time (PIT) Count event as a HUD required reporting event performed by every CoC in the State and across the country one night during the last 10 days in January. It is a count of all unsheltered and sheltered homeless individuals and families. The PIT for 2018 has been scheduled for January 22, 2108, due to an early Mardi Gras. Ms. Sweazy encouraged the council members to become involved in the 2018 count within the state and to focus on the housing needs while fulfilling the HUD mandate.

Ms. Sweazy announced Governor John Bel Edwards’ criminal justice reform package to reduce Louisiana’s prison population by 10 percent and scale down the parole/probation population by 12 percent over the next decade. After discussion, the council recommended to have the Emergency Solutions Grant Homeless Prevention funds made available to assist the Louisiana Prisoner Reentry Initiative. Ms. Kegel moved, seconded by Ms. Anthony, without objection or discussion, the motion carried.

Ms. Sweazy thanked the council for their attendance and scheduled the next council meeting for Thursday, January 18, 2018 at 10:30 a.m. at the Louisiana Housing Corporation Building, Committee Room #2 in Baton Rouge.

With no other business to discuss, the chair declared the meeting adjourned at 11:28 a.m.