**Governor’s Council on Homelessness**

**Louisiana Housing Corporation Building**

**Committee Room #2**

**April 19, 2018**

The Governor’s Council on Homelessness met on Thursday, April 19, 2018, 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 10:38 a.m. Introductions were made and the roll was recorded by Ms. Gay Owens, the recording secretary.

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**Members Present:** Ms. Nicole Sweazy, Ms. Angela Patterson (representing Ms. Martha Kegel), Ms. Kia Sims, Ms. Alex Juan, Ms. Amanda Larkins, Ms. Antiqua Hunter, and Mr. Brett Waits (representing Mr. Chip Coulter)

**Members Absent:** Ms. Michell Brown, Ms. Leslie Grover, Mr. Joshua Hollins, Mr. Dylan Waguespack

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

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A quorum was established and the meeting opened for business.

The council reviewed the minutes from the last meeting of February 15, 2018. Ms. Alex Juan offered a motion to accept the minutes, as written; seconded by Ms. Kia Sims. Without discussion or objection, the minutes were approved.

Ms. Sweazy introduced the *SPARC: Supporting Partnerships for Anti-Racist Communities* Phase One Study Findings March 2018. SPARC was launched in September 2016, to understand and respond to racial inequities of homelessness in six communities: Atlanta, Georgia; Columbus, Ohio; Dallas, Texas; San Francisco, California; Syracuse, New York and Pierce County, Washington. She asked the group for specifics on how to recognize the cause of racial inequities and ways to assist the homelessness who are experiencing it within our state. The group addressed contributing factors such as domestic violence, unemployment and chronic homelessness; and found they are common threads in the lives of many homeless people. Ms. Sweazy reported that Louisiana citizens must produce an income of at least $16.16 per hour to qualify for a two-bedroom rental home.

Ms. Hunter stated that in Louisiana, 19,000 students are homeless. This could produce a key factor in holding schools accountable for the education of their students and the quality grading of the schools.

Ms. Sweazy announced the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has awarded Louisiana Housing Authority (LHA) ten Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers to house homeless veterans. The HUD-VASH vouchers will be a new addition to the LHA with the expected date of service on September 1, 2018.

Ms. Sweazy updated the group on the status of the Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) program request.

The Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program is currently working with the Louisiana Department of Corrections (DOC) to provide housing for new re-entry population. Upon exiting the DOC system, non-violent offenders will need rental assistance and deposits provided to secure affordable housing.

Ms. Patterson announced UNITY’S Spring Into Housing 2018, whose mission is to house 2,000 chronically homeless, in New Orleans, by June 15, 2018.

Ms. Juan introduced Ode to Our Warriors, which provides housing for the homeless veterans in the Capitol area. Their next fund-raising event is Saturday, May 12th.

Ms. Sweazy will update the council on the on-going work with the Ma Maison project. The project is Louisiana’s ten-year plan to end homelessness, which started in December 2014.

Ms. Sweazy announced the status of Louisiana House Bill 1, listing the proposed cuts that will have an impact on 40,000-50,000 Louisianans. She encouraged all councilmembers to contact their state legislators about the severity of this bill. Following the 2018 Regular Session, the governor will call another 2018 special session for the state legislators to present options to correct the 2018 “fiscal cliff.”

With no further business to discuss, Ms. Sweazy declared the meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.