The Council meeting was called to order at 1:06pm by Co-chairperson J.J. Tomash at the Denver Human Services (DHS) Castro location, 1200 Federal Blvd. Denver, Colorado, on behalf of the Council.

**Introductions**

The meeting opened with a brief welcome, followed by introductions from the Council members, Denver Human Services (DHS) staff, and guests in attendance. The Council revisited their core values identified at the previous meeting, reviewed Robert’s Rules and a proposed co-chairperson protocol which outlined practices and duties of the co-chairpersons moving forward. J.J. Tomash motioned to approve the co-chairperson protocol, and Tim Lomas seconded- the motion passed with majority vote.

**Housekeeping – Minutes & Bylaws**

The Council reviewed minutes from the previous meeting held on 02-22-2019, and no changes or additions were requested. J.J. Tomash motioned to approve the minutes, and Tim Lomas seconded- the motion passed with majority vote.
DHS presented two additional changes to the proposed bylaws for the Council to review: a language change and an addition to the Council duties. Joe Homlar with DHS requested the Council consider updating any mention of “Denver Department of Human Services” and “DDHS” to “Denver Human Services” and “DHS” to be consistent with other mentions of the department. After discussion, J.J. Tomash motioned to adopt the bylaws with discussed changes, and Tim Lomas seconded- the motion passed with majority vote.

Timelines for recommendations

The Council reviewed proposed timelines from DHS introduced at the 02-22-19 meeting. Several members shared their experience at the RMHS Community Forum on April 1, including community feedback. Tim Lomas provided additional background from the RMHS Community Advisory Council (CAC) meeting held in March. Common themes included: urgency, needs in the community, lack of understanding of DHS mill levy program goals, and potential individual impacts of the funding recommendations to be made. Council members Lauren Weinstock and Kate Williams joined the meeting early on in this discussion.

Council members considered questions related to next steps, such as what overlap might occur with current mill levy programs, the logistics behind a recommendation, and what happens once a statement of recommendation is made. J.J. Tomash motioned that the Council produce at least one recommendation for DHS by the next meeting of the Council, and Tim Lomas seconded- the motion passed with majority vote.

Council members discussed long term goals and related timelines. DHS staff provided background on the additional steps and timing that might follow a statement of recommendation from the Council, which could take up to 5 months or longer depending on the contract. The Council agreed to table additional timeline discussions and focus on movement with the current recommendation timeline.

Discussion – Big Problems to learn more about for Fall 2019 recommendation goals

Council members submitted individual rankings for priorities related to spending recommendations identified in the 2018 needs assessment. Crystal Porter reported out the topics most highly ranked: Affordable housing, waitlist, case management, transition services, employment, and mental health. These topics were tabled, to be revisited in future meetings.

Discussion – Areas of focus for an immediate impact, Spring 2019 recommendations

DHS reviewed Council member submissions related to 3 potential areas for immediate impact:

- Resources for transitions: website directory of services, comprehensive resource guide, map and/or infographics that facilitate system navigation, benefits counseling or resources
Cultural competence and sensitivity: outreach projects, city-wide campaign to drive understanding and inclusion

Understanding the mill levy: outreach and materials, DHS mill levy information or resources, potential to escalate into a full campaign down the road

Co-chair J.J. Tomash led discussion into these topics, including:

- The vast wealth of materials out there without facilitating access to the resource or service.
- Cultural competence and sensitivity as a significant need.
- Whether there was room for discussion of other opportunities for immediate impact, including revisiting unmet individual needs in existing mill levy programs with RMHS. Concerns were raised about duplication and potential for partnership.
- The Advisory Council’s role in helping DHS expand beyond services already available.
- An affordable housing subcommittee with a potential public summit, with awareness of the rules and regulations related to waiver requirements that impact housing opportunities.

Council members formed subcommittees for each of these topics, including a 4th to review other opportunities. The affordable housing subcommittee was put on a temporary hold. Each subcommittee will meet before the next council meeting, to report out on April 19.

- Transitions subcommittee: Tim, Betty, and J.J.
- Understanding the Mill Levy: Ann and Kate
- Cultural competence and sensitivity: Betty and Lauren
- Other opportunities: Kendall, Lauren, and Tim

Jennifer Beck offered herself as a resource for subcommittees, upon request.

Public comment (2 minutes per speaker, up to 20 minutes)

Co-chair J.J. Tomash recognized members of the public for comment and called on each person who signed up, before opening it up to anyone else in the remaining minutes. Two public comments were made- the first commenter shared the services their organization currently provided, funded by mill levy dollars through RMHS. The second commenter shared personal experiences on how isolation and exclusion impacted the health and wellbeing of her family member with intellectual and developmental disabilities, leading to an organization she started that targets inclusion.

After the public comment period, J.J. Tomash motioned to end the meeting and Kate Williams seconded. The Council meeting adjourned at approximately 2:50pm.

The next Council meeting is Friday, April 19. Details for this meeting are on the website.

Mill Levy Advisory Council Sessions are recorded; recordings are available upon request.