January 22, 2018

Naomi Byrne, Chair, Continuum of Care Board

Dear Naomi and Members of the CoC Board:

As chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Governance, I am pleased to present to you the attached revised Continuum of Care Board Charter. We have worked for a year to create a method to consolidate all essential parties and interests to pursue a cooperative, coordinated, community-wide, and effective strategic plan to address the challenges of homelessness in the cities of Arlington and Fort Worth and in Tarrant and Parker Counties. Representatives of all governments, service providers and interested parties are part of this committee and have approved this document. In a moment, I will go into detail about who was involved and what our process was. But first, the Ad Hoc Committee respectfully suggests the following:

1. We strongly encourage the Continuum of Care board to approve and adopt this new charter either at the January meeting or as soon as is reasonably possible.

2. We recommend that the CoC implement a 90-day transition period.

3. We recommend that for the purposes of the transition, in order to seat the new CoC board by the end of the 90-day transition, the Leadership Council meet to make its board appointments; and that the CoC Board take the role assigned to the Membership Council in the revised charter in order to make its board appointments.

4. We recommend that the following sentence be added, in the appropriate place: “The business of the CoC Board shall be conducted in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order.”

The Ad Hoc Committee on Governance was convened in Spring of 2017 at the request of the Tarrant County Homeless Coalition for the purpose of determining whether or not to merge the TCHC and Continuum of Care boards so as to facilitate the development and implementation of a strategic plan to address homelessness. At this time, this is not the Ad Hoc Committee’s recommendation.

However, a couple of months into our process, the Office of the Mayor of Fort Worth expressed the city's interest in developing a plan that would allow the local governments to play a more active role in strategic planning. Since our larger charter was to facilitate a structure to pursue a larger, long-range strategic plan, we were tasked to find a way more fully to integrate the mayors of Arlington and Fort Worth and the Tarrant and Parker County judges into the Continuum of Care in an active leadership role.

This past summer the Ad Hoc Committee met with Mayor Price, Mayor Williams, and Judge Whitley to discuss the shape of the new board. The Ad Hoc Committee considered many proposed structures, including structures submitted by the city and various committee members. The city facilitated a meeting with Mandy Chapman Semple who gave us an overview of the Houston model. We were also familiarized with the structures of other localities.

The revised charter attached defines the Continuum of Care as the Leadership Council and the Membership Council. The Leadership Council comprises the county judges of the two counties, the mayors of the two cities, and the chair of the Mayors Council. It will “advise on, review, and approve the long range plan to end homelessness” and annuals updates thereof. The Leadership Council is responsible for appointing five (5) members of the Membership Council. The Membership Council shall appoint seven (7) members. The total number of places on the Membership Council is 26. The Ad Hoc committee put a great deal of thought into each place on the board.

The Ad Hoc committee is excited to present this proposed new charter. We truly believe we are at the dawn of new day. We are encouraged by the good will and genuine commitment exhibited by everyone involved. We believe that with the adoption of the revised charter, the Continuum of Care is poised to develop an effective, coordinated long-range strategy to end homelessness in our community.

The members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Governance are:

Rev. Fritz Ritsch, chair

Elizabeth Becker

Naomi Byrne

Judge Brent Carr

Randy Clinton

Fernando Costa

Jason Hall

Debbie Kratky

Victoria Farrar-Myers

Paul Harral

Tammy McGhee

Tim McKinney

Toby Owen

Mattie Parker

Tara Perez

Patricia Ward

Dawn Zeiger

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Fritz Ritsch

Chair, Ad Hoc Committee on Governance