



City of Cambridge
Department of Human Service Programs
51 Inman Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139, 498-9076

TO: Robert W. Healy

FROM: Jill Herold *JH*

RE: Response to Awaiting Report #20, dated 5/14/90, Councillor Walsh, regarding plans to evaluate the MultiService Center for the Homeless

DATE: September 25, 1990

In May, 1990, I transmitted a summary of the information collected by consultant Barbara Thornton, in the course of our study of the MultiService Center and its role within the Cambridge service system for the homeless. Shortly thereafter, we convened a working group with representatives from the service provider community and from the MultiService Center staff. The group participated in a series of work sessions over the course of the summer, examining each program at the MSC. In several instances, communication channels were strengthened and formalized with partner agencies in the community, such as the family shelters and the Cambridge Housing Authority, to address any current or future concerns. Because of concerns voiced about gaps in services to homeless persons with substance abuse problems, a special meeting was held which included providers of services to this population. In response to concerns expressed at the meeting, a staff member from the MSC is now performing outreach and benefit counseling services at the CASPAR Emergency Service Center on Albany Street on a regular basis, and consultation in the substance abuse area is available each week at the MSC through a specialized staff member from the Cambridge and Somerville Councils on Aging. At the recommendation of the working group, which will continue as needed, Department of Human Service Programs staff will arrange for a broader informational and planning forum to bring together periodically Cambridge providers of services to homeless persons.

Another group was constituted to serve as a search committee for the Housing Options Planner/Manager position which was reformulated from the former Emergency Services Coordinator position by the group. The Housing Options Planner/Manager will continue to work to maintain and improve existing services to the homeless, but will also focus on the development of supportive transitional and permanent housing for the

DIVISIONS:

Childcare
498-9076

Community Learning Center
547-1589

Community & Youth
498-9037/9072

Council on Aging/Elderly Services
498-9039

Low Income Fuel Assistance
498-9038

Planning & Development
498-9076

Recreation
498-9028

MultiService Center/Homeless Services
864-6340

homeless, in connection with the Community Development Department and community agencies. The search committee will screen resumes and interview applicants for both this position and the MSC Director position, which will become vacant in October. Resume deadlines are October 5 for the MSC Director job, and October 16 for the Housing Options Planner/Manager position. This committee has representatives of community agencies which serve the homeless as well as representatives from the DHSP and the Community Development Department.

We are very pleased with the high level of participation of both community and MultiService Center staff in each phase of our study process, and feel confident that ongoing collaboration will ensure a high level of effective service to homeless Cambridge individuals and families.

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CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

ROBERT W. HEALY

City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI

Deputy City Manager

October 1, 1990

To The Honorable, The City Council:

In reference to Awaiting Report Item No. 20, regarding plans to evaluate the MultiService Center for the Homeless, attached please find a response from Jill Herold, Assistant City Manager for Human Services.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Healy", is written over a horizontal line.

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mev
enclosure

Agenda# 4

S-947

Awaiting Report Item Number 20, regarding
plans to evaluate the MultiService
Center for the Homeless.

In City Council,

Oct. 1, 1990

Placed on file

OCF:G