Local News 5:59 PM MON OCTOBER 5, 2015

Gov. Baker Takes Solving Homelessness To Task

By CRAIG LEMOULT (/PEOPLE/CRAIG-LEMOULT)

Credit Gretchen Ertl/AP Images for Massachusetts School of Professional Psychology.

Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker announced Monday that he's reconstituting a council of agencies from across state government in an effort to address homelessness. The council will be led by a veteran policy consultant who has served under four prior administrations.

Homeless advocates say if the state's going to solve its homelessness problem, it's going to take a broad approach focusing on housing, jobs, mental health, child care and other areas. Robyn Frost of the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless says the newly reconstituted Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness will coordinate the different agencies that focus on those issues.

"If the administration is, as they have said, and I believe they are, serious in finding concrete ways to end the issue around homelessness in our state, this particular council is going to be the one that gives them the road map into doing that."

The council technically never went away, but went dormant during the Patrick administration. It will be headed by Linn Torto, who has worked on range of issues under Governors Weld, Swift, Romney, and Patrick. Baker's office says the Council will create a strategic plan to end homelessness and increase access to affordable housing.

Council members will include:

Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED)

Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS)

Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD)

Department of Education (DOE)

Administration and Finance

Department of Veterans Services (DVS)

Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA)

MassHealth

Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA)

Department of Public Health (DPH)

Department of Children and Families (DCF)

Department of Mental Health (DMH)

Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

Department of Youth Services (DYS)

Department of Correction (DOC)

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