Ron Reed borrowed \$800,000 to create a 19-anartment nermanent housing development in Oroville for mentally ill homeless folks. He hopes to recoup costs through a state grant. PHOTO BY ASHIAH SCHARAGA

approved in the state last year, and the funding streams already available—to best use HEAP funds and avoid duplication of services.

The only organization that received final approval was Youth for Change. It received \$369,600 to purchase and remodel apartments for six homeless people ages 16 to 24 (the state requires at least 5 percent of HEAP funds go to homeless youth).

Reed is hoping the review won't change the recommendation to fund Base Camp Village because of the dire need for permanently housing homeless individuals in Butte County. He borrowed \$800,000 to get the first project off the ground and intends to see it through regardless, though not receiving HEAP funding could put a stop to the second location.

"We can have emergency shelters and we can feed people and we can give them free clothing," he said, "but we have to find a place where they fit in and where they can live [and] achieve their highest level of humanity."

Marie Demers, a CoC council member and the city of Chico's housing manager, cast the only dissenting vote for reconsidering the HEAP recommendations. She later told the CN&R that the reviewing committee was formed with a clear understanding of how to weigh criteria, and the formation of the new group would be unfair to the process and cause delays.

Other concerns were voiced at Monday's meeting, as well. Homeless advocate Bill Mash submitted a letter of resignation to the CoC council, with a caveat that he would consider staying on if the group formed a subcommittee to develop a communication plan, in order to increase the council's transparency, within 60 days. Some at Monday's meeting questioned whether it should be a priority, while others debated removing the deadline. Mash's request ultimately was approved.

Lisa Currier, a CoC council member and service provider, responded bluntly: "If we cannot be transparent to our community members, then we don't deserve to sit on this damn council."

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