

Meeting Minutes

Rebuilding Lives Funder Collaborative Meeting

Tuesday, December 9, 2014

11:30 am – 2:00 pm

MORPC Offices, 111 Liberty Street, Columbus, OH 43215

Attendees:

Rebuilding Lives Funder Collaborative Members: Michelle Heritage, Rollin Seward, Kim Stands, Susan Lewis Kaylor, Ron Lebsock, Veronica Lofton, Chip Spinning, Amy Bradley, Jonathan Welty, Michael Brooks, Jeff Cutlip, Kathy Werkmeister, Don Strasser, Terri Power, Patrick Jarvis, Jennifer Voit, Karen Stowe (for Marissa Michaels), Nancy Case, Jeff Pattinson, Mary Vail, Teresa McWain, Matt Kosanovich, Carla Williams-Scott

Community Shelter Board Staff: Lianna Barbu, Amy Price, Noel Welsh

Guests: Dave Kayuha, Tiffany Nobles, Ryan Cassell, Julie Wagar, Susan Reamsnyder

Welcome & Agenda Review

Michelle Heritage welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda.

Administrative Issues

Approve Minutes from 10/21/2014 RLFC Meeting

The minutes from the October 21, 2014 RLFC meeting were distributed to the group. One minor revision was noted. Terri Power made a motion to approve the minutes with the revision. Jeff Pattinson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved without any abstentions.

Community and Public Policy Updates

Michelle gave an update on daily operations at the Van Buren Center. Since CSB opened the doors to the new women's shelter programs, there has been a significant, unexpected increase in the number of women seeking shelter from the previous year. As a testament to the need for additional shelter capacity, in November 2014, the women's shelters served 110% more women than in November 2013. Currently, the Van Buren building is sheltering over 200 women a night. Some of these women report that they were staying in unsafe situations prior to the additional capacity being made available, and approximately forty women staying at the shelter report that they are pregnant.

Michelle reminded the group that the Van Buren Center is also sheltering overflow families. The YWCA is still seeing a high number of families seeking shelter. Michelle explained that the family census is fluctuating quite a bit at this time.

Faith Mission is operating 46 overflow beds for men. If the overflow census exceeds the number of Faith Mission beds and all additional beds added at Volunteers of America and Friends of the

Homeless, men will be sheltered in motels once the temperature dips below 25 degrees (and sometimes 30 degrees, depending on inclement weather conditions).

Strategic Issues

Review October 2014 Program Occupancy Report

Lianna reviewed the October 2014 Program Occupancy Report with the group. The report looks at all occupancy rates for permanent supportive housing programs. Four CSB-funded programs showed an occupancy rate below 95% in October – Community Housing Network projects Parsons Avenue and Rebuilding Lives PACT Team Initiative (RLPTI), Maryhaven Commons at Chantry, and the YMCA 40 West Long Street expansion.

Lianna noted continued concern about the RLPTI program, which was showing low occupancy for six straight months. She reviewed Community Housing Network's response to occupancy concerns. Lianna explained that the RLPTI program should be able to get occupancy up above 95% very shortly. She reminded the group that clients from the older Long Street program were being moved into the Long Street expansion program to ensure timely spend-down of federal funding, adding that the Long Street expansion program would eventually be brought up to over 95% occupancy.

Four HUD Continuum of Care-funded programs showed an occupancy rate below 95% in October – the Rental Assistance programs and the Family Homes program operated by Community Housing Network and the Shelter Plus Care program operated by Lutheran Social Services/Faith Mission.

Lianna noted that the Community Housing Network Rental Assistance programs' decreased occupancy was still a cause for concern, and Community Housing Network and Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority were working to fill available units. Lianna reminded the group that the Faith Mission Shelter Plus Care program would close by the end of the year.

Review System & Program Indicator Report for FY2015 1st Quarter

Lianna reviewed the FY15 1st Quarter (7/1/14 – 9/30/14) System and Program Indicator Report with the group. The following highlights were noted:

- Family Emergency Shelter System
 - Overall households served (total 600) have increased by 13% over the previous year's numbers (FY14 1Q total 530). This total represents the largest number of families served in one quarter since CSB began tracking data.
 - The percentage of successful housing outcomes achieved (50%) decreased by 13 percentage points from the previous year (FY14 1Q total 63%). Successful housing outcomes continue to be historically low due to the unprecedented demand.
 - Average nightly occupancy numbers jumped to 115 households, up from 93 in FY13. This number is well over double the fixed capacity of the family shelter system.
 - Average length of stay in the family shelter was 20 days, which meets the system goal.
- Men's Emergency Shelter System
 - A decrease in the number of households served (1,364 total, down from 1,714 in FY14 1Q) was noted, but there was still a waitlist throughout the reporting period. The decrease noted directly correlates with an increased average length of stay, meaning that the longer clients stayed in shelter, the fewer beds turned over, resulting in a smaller number of clients being served.
 - Successful housing outcomes were average at 28%.

- Women's Emergency Shelter System
 - Overall individuals served (total 595) showed a large 18% increase over the previous year's numbers (FY14 1Q total 504). These numbers factor in the recent influx caused by the Van Buren shelter opening during the reporting period. The census continues to rise.
 - Successful housing outcomes were average at 25%.
- Permanent Supportive Housing System – Rebuilding Lives units only
 - The system is performing well, with good occupancy rates and a 97% successful housing outcome rate. Currently, there are 1,172 Rebuilding Lives units in the system with the expansion of rental assistance units at the YMCA 40 West Long Street location.
- Total Permanent Supportive Housing System – Rebuilding Lives and non-Rebuilding Lives units
 - With the inclusion of non-Rebuilding Lives units, there are 1,716 Permanent Supportive Housing units in the system.
 - The system will add 18 more Veterans Administration Supportive Housing vouchers in the coming months.
 - Occupancy rates need to improve, as reflected in the October 2014 Occupancy Report.

Review 2013 Continuum of Care Debriefing Summary

Noel reviewed the 2013 Continuum of Care Debriefing Summary with the group. He explained that the document provided the final score for the Continuum of Care's 2013/2014 application, as well as some general information related to scoring.

Noel noted that the Columbus/Franklin County Continuum of Care received 127 out of a possible 156 points on its 2013 application. Out of 412 Continuum of Care nationwide, the average score granted was 113.5 and the median score was 116.5. 102 Continuum of Care scored between 120 – 130 points, with 58 Continuum of Care scoring above 130. Noel noted that the Columbus/Franklin County application showed room for improvement in the following scoring categories: Continuum of Care Strategic Planning and Performance, Continuum of Care Coordination of Housing and Services, and Recipient Performance.

Noel noted that while the Debriefing Summary contained a summary of results for each scoring category and overall notable areas of deficiency, specific suggestions for improvement for individual applications was not included.

Lianna noted that 15 Collaborative Applicants applied for Unified Funding Agency designation in FY2013, and two were awarded designation, our Continuum of Care (OH-503) and CA-606. Michelle noted that CSB would continue to work with providers to improve the community's application and increase the score.

Review Semi-Annual Financial Reports

Lianna introduced the semi-annual financial reports to the group. She reviewed CSB revenues and expenses for the 7/1/13 – 6/30/14 time period. Lianna noted that revenues were accrued as expected, with a 96% variance between budgeted and actual revenues.

On the expenses side, Lianna noted that expenses were also accrued as expected, with a 96% variance between budgeted and actual expenses. She acknowledged some minor discrepancies. No concerns were noted.

FY2015/FY2016 Budgets

Michelle gave an overview of the state of the homeless system. Over the last three years, CSB's shelters have served 79% more families and 16% more single men and women. Columbus and Franklin County is experiencing a sustained, enduring increase in its homeless population, and this ongoing trend is depleting resources at rates much quicker than anticipated.

Michelle noted the community's continued commitment to ensure that every family seeking shelter is served. She noted that this commitment to families was using resources at an unprecedented rate, draining CSB's reserve funding and forcing CSB to implement changes as soon as possible. CSB's Board of Trustees met to discuss the current state of CSB and the extremely high demand for services. The CSB Board decided on the following order of prioritization:

1. CSB would continue to fund services to homeless families according to the community's commitment, meaning that every family seeking shelter and services would receive it.
2. CSB would preserve funding to emergency shelter and housing programs to the fullest extent possible.
3. CSB would distribute any budget cuts across the system in accordance with the first two priorities. Programs not included in items 1 & 2 above would be slated for closure.

FY15 contracts with provider agencies will be reopened in order to introduce budget cuts and accompanying conditions. Provider agencies were notified of the changes and budget cuts would be implemented beginning 2/1/2015. Budget cuts would carry over into FY16 contracts and CSB's internal budget as well, with additional cuts for FY16 expected.

Michelle again acknowledged the community's commitment to people experiencing homelessness in Columbus and Franklin County. She thanked the City of Columbus, Franklin County, the United Way of Central Ohio, and several private funders for their continued support. She asked the group for feedback.

Kim Stands asked which agencies and programs had been cut. Michelle provided a partial list of programs slated to be cut. She explained that the Collaborative Outreach program operated by Maryhaven would be closed. She noted that CSB was working on fundraising strategies to keep the Outreach program open.

Jonathan Welty asked about the feedback CSB received from its partners. Michelle replied that the provider agencies have been extremely gracious and continue to talk about ways to work in partnership. She acknowledged that these funding cuts are very difficult on the providers and CSB.

Don Strasser expressed concern about increasing overflow numbers and suggested that the RLFC needed to assume responsibility for more effective solutions. He suggested the reimplementation of the Interfaith Hospitality System as one possible approach. Michelle replied that City Codes for overnight shelter were extremely stringent and effectively prohibitive regarding the old Interfaith model. CSB attempted to reactivate the Interfaith Hospitality Network, but the number of congregations needed was substantial to meet the need, since fire code generally only allows five people to sleep overnight in a building not specifically intended for the purpose. Currently, overflow beds for men are in place at Friends of the Homeless, Faith Mission, and the Volunteers of America Men's Shelter, with additional beds added at motels when temperatures dip below 30 degrees and/or inclement weather conditions prevail. This standard has been in place for over 15 years.

Terri asked if full Navigator provision and/or Medicaid expansion would produce improved outcomes for the system as a whole. Regarding Medicaid expansion, Michelle replied that ADAMH had created two new service teams for specialized populations. Susan Lewis Kaylor described the teams. The Homeless Outreach and Support Team will target homeless adults who frequent the shelter system and exhibit symptoms of mental illness and/or substance abuse and are not

engaged with community support services. The Ending Homelessness through Intensive Treatment and Support Team will target homeless adults who are identified as high utilizers of shelters hospitals, treatment centers, mental health and substance abuse programs, jail, prison, and other community services through an Assertive Community Treatment. Susan explained that both services are being ramped up and prospective clients have been identified.

Michelle noted that with the budget cuts, the final number of navigators will need to be ramped back.

Michelle informed the group that family system providers have been meeting regularly to discuss innovative ways to lower the family census and reduce recidivism. She explained that figuring out how to stabilize families was a top priority for the system. She explained that CSB approached the Columbus Foundation to research probable causes for the recent trend in high family homelessness.

Patrick Jarvis asked if projected FY2016 budget cuts were conservative. Michelle replied that budget discussions were ongoing and CSB intended to mitigate cuts for all providers as much as possible. Lianna added that CSB had a responsibility to ensure a balanced budget.

Jeff Cutlip asked if evictions were negatively impacting some households. Michelle replied that evictions were one of several likely factors impacting high family homelessness rates. She suggested that it would be beneficial to educate evictees on the eviction process. Michelle added that many families are living in doubled-up situations.

Kim asked if CSB had considered the impact of eliminating the Collaborative Outreach program. Michelle reminded the group that the Collaborative Outreach program served as a kind of umbrella program for the unsheltered population and the agencies and programs that frequently interact with that population. Kim suggested that the Collaborative Outreach program could actually use additional resources. Michelle agreed with Kim. Don added that the program is critical to link unsheltered people to services, but he noted that the program does not directly provide shelter or housing. Michelle explained that she was asking the RLFC to help find resources to maintain the program. Kim added that the City of Columbus had been having conversations about how to expand the program, given recent activity with code enforcement and the program's role in ensuring safety for persons being vacated from unsafe residences. Again, Michelle agreed that additional resources are essential.

Mary Vail asked how many people are served by the Collaborative Outreach program. Lianna reviewed the FY2015 1st Quarter System and Program Indicator Report. She explained that for the 7/1/14 – 9/30/14 time period, the Collaborative Outreach program served 151 clients and moved 89% of those clients into shelter or housing, representing successful outcomes. 60% of those successful outcomes have moved into stable housing, a very good success rate. Amy added that the Collaborative Outreach program submits the most applications into the Unified Supportive Housing System out of any CSB-funded program. Michelle explained that closing the program was a difficult and unwanted choice, but she noted that the program couldn't be maintained at the expense of losing more shelter and/or permanent housing beds/units.

Kim asked the amount of the FY2015 funding gap. Lianna replied that the gap represented approximately \$830,000 in unavailable funding.

Michelle asked the group for ideas to maintain the Collaborative Outreach program. She asked the group to consider possible funding sources and stressed the importance of the Collaborative Outreach program. Lianna added that it would require approximately \$95,000 to keep the Collaborative Outreach program open through 6/30/15.

Jennifer Voit asked if the community's other outreach programs would fill in the service gap if the Collaborative Outreach program closed. Michelle replied that the Collaborative Outreach program is the hub of outreach provision in the community and its loss would leave the community with several independently functioning programs.

Mary Vail asked about diversion programs and their role in the community. Michelle replied that it is CSB's goal to increase diversion efforts, particularly with families. She explained that it is often difficult to divert single adults away from shelter, because their options are usually exhausted by the time they seek shelter. Families have more opportunities for resources other than shelter, as evidenced by the current 41% diversion rate. Michelle noted that families will be screened for diversion three times before entering shelter. She explained that CSB and its partners are trying to limit service provision to people who have lived in Franklin County for 90 days and longer. This was a long time practice in the family system.

Michelle encouraged the group to brainstorm solutions. Don suggested convening a workgroup with the parties involved in a sex offender workgroup several months prior. Michelle replied that the RLFC is the important body when it comes to issues regarding homelessness in Franklin County and that the RLFC was the right workgroup for this issue. Michelle also noted that the sex offender taskforce met for several months, but did not appear to produce much in the way of tangible results. CSB ended up putting sex offenders in motels as no other solution was developed.

Patrick Jarvis noted that it would be beneficial to determine which stakeholders would feel the greatest impact if the Collaborative Outreach program was closed, and suggested opening communication with those stakeholders to leverage resources. He and Chip Spinning suggested several possible options. Michelle acknowledged that it would be good to explore entirely new funding opportunities and thanked them for the suggestions.

Michelle asked the group if it would be willing to convene within the next month to discuss funding strategies to keep the Collaborative Outreach program open. She acknowledged the benefits of today's discussion and noted the group's diverse approach when considering the issue. Kim agreed, noting that the RLFC meetings were a good forum to discuss resource development.

Amy Bradley asked if additional fundraising would produce duplicative results. Michelle encouraged the group to call CSB with any questions or concerns about fundraising. She noted that a large, public fundraising campaign led by CSB and WBNS-10TV was ongoing through February 2015.

Jonathan Welty asked which community organizations regularly call the Collaborative Outreach program for assistance. Kim replied that the Central Ohio Transit Authority, the Columbus Police, and city code enforcement all rely on the program. Michelle added that most city residents aren't fully aware of the beneficial work being done by outreach workers.

The group agreed to convene for a strategic funding discussion on January 7, 2015 at the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission offices. Michelle and Kim agreed to meet with Collaborative Outreach staff members and Lisa Drifendorfer from Discovery SID to discuss resource generation strategies. Michelle encouraged the group to call CSB with any questions, concerns, or suggestions prior to the meeting.

Michelle acknowledged that the budget cuts have been difficult for CSB and its provider agencies, and thanked the RLFC for its support and guidance during turbulent times.

New Shelter and PSH Development

Community Housing Network Presentation on Terrace Place Project Plan

Michelle welcomed Ryan Cassell and Tiffany Nobles from Community Housing Network to the meeting.

Ryan introduced the Community Housing Network Terrace Place project plan to the group. He gave an overview of the project and asked the group for questions and comments.

The Terrace Place project was conceived in response to a request from Campus Partners. Edwards Communities has plans to develop the land currently occupied by Community Housing Network's North High Permanent Supportive Housing project as part of its South Gateway II redevelopment project. Terrace Place would replace the North High project while providing a substantial facility upgrade.

Terrace Place will provide 60 units of permanent supportive housing, comprised of 47 Rebuilding Lives (RL) units and 13 ADAMH units. This unit composition adds 14 RL units and 10 ADAMH units to the system. Units will all be one-bedroom, a step up from the Single Room Occupancy units in the North High facility. Terrace Place will feature increased, updated community space for its residents.

Ryan explained that Community Housing Network is pursuing multiple funding opportunities for the Terrace Place project, including City and County HOME funding, Ohio Housing Finance Agency funding, and equity from the sale of the North High land. He explained that a meeting was being convened with Community Housing Network, Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority, CSB, and the Franklin County ADAMH Board to finalize plans for voucher assignments.

Ryan reviewed Terrace Place floor plans with the group. He noted that Community Housing Network would retain A-1 as its front desk service provider, and added that Community Housing Network was exploring a partnership with the Ohio State University Extension program.

Tiffany explained that Community Housing Network's service partnership with Concord Counseling at the North High project was expected to transition to Terrace Place. Concord is currently providing employment and life skills services at North High.

Jeff asked if current residents would stay at North High until construction was complete at Terrace Place. Ryan replied that this was the goal, although final confirmation was still unclear due to Edwards' ongoing redevelopment plans. He noted that Community Housing Network would temporarily relocate North High residents if necessary.

Jeff asked for the projected completion date of the Terrace Place project. Ryan replied that the project was slated for completion in October 2016.

Michelle thanked Community Housing Network for its presentation and introduced a resolution to approve the Terrace Place project plan to apply for Ohio Housing Finance Agency tax credits, with the condition that Community Housing Network, Community Shelter Board, the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board of Franklin County, and the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority convene a discussion to determine the proper designation of Section 8 and Rental Assistance vouchers. She asked the group if it had additional concerns or conditions.

Jonathan asked if the Ohio Housing Finance Agency would know the results of the stakeholder meeting on voucher designation. Michelle replied that results from that meeting would be shared with both the Ohio Housing Finance Agency and the RLFC.

Michael Brooks asked why there was money available for a new permanent supportive housing project, given the earlier discussion about systemic budget cuts and closing programs. Michelle replied that the capital funding used for Terrace Place is one part of a larger commitment secured in 2008 from the city and county and spent down in increments for the sole purpose of permanent supportive housing.

Michelle asked the group for a motion to approve the resolution. Mary Vail made a motion to approve the recommendation. Kathy Werkmeister seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved without any abstentions.

Updates on RL Strategy Progress to Date

Michelle noted some progress on Strategy 10; Affordable Housing Campaign. She explained that a workgroup had been convened to implement an affordable housing campaign, and recognized Amy Klaben from the Columbus Housing Partnership for her efforts.

Michelle asked the group if there were any questions about progress on the other strategies. No questions were noted.

Quarterly Project Updates

Volunteers of America of Greater Ohio Van Buren Village

Susan Reamsnyder gave an update on progress with the Van Buren Village Permanent Supportive Housing project. Construction on the facility is underway, the foundation has been poured, and the project is on track to open in October 2015. The project will contain 60 units designated for Chronically Homeless individuals and 40 units for ADAMH-eligible clients.

YWCA WINGS Renovations

Julie Wagar gave an update on progress with renovations at the Griswold Building. Some repairs have been made inside the building, including much-needed work on the building's elevators. Administrative staff is scheduled to relocate in mid-April 2015, with the residents following in June 2015. Renovations are on track to be completed in June 2016.

Michelle reminded the group that the RLFC would convene on January 7, 2015 for a strategic discussion about the Collaborative Outreach program.

Meeting adjourned.