

## **MINUTES**

### **Columbus and Franklin County, Ohio**

#### **Continuum of Care Meeting**

Friday, September 15, 2023

1:00pm – 3:00pm

**Virtual Meeting**

Continuum of Care (CoC) members (in attendance): Adam Troy, Beth Fetzer-Rice, Carl Landry, Scott Scharlach, Sue Villilo, Jeff Pattison, Malcolm Turner, Jim Rose, Alison Marker, Jonathan Welty, Kelsey Strausbaugh, Kier Scott, Emerald Hernandez-Parra, Lark Mallory, Michael Wilkos, Dr. Desiree Polk-Bland, Vivian Turner, Shannon Isom, Roxann Payne, Christopher Maitland, Sheila Prillerman, Sue Darby, Rei Scott, Tiara Ross, Marcus Johnson, Vunessa Allen-Martin (representing Felisha Lyons)

Community Shelter Board (CSB) staff: Lianna Barbu, Steve Skovensky, Kirstin Jones, Gillian Gunawan

Continuum of Care (CoC) members (not in attendance): Sonya Higginbotham (Worthington Industries), Buck Bramlish (Veterans Service Commission), Tina Rutherford (Franklin County Children Services), Le-Ann Harris (OhioHealth), Lt. Kyle Kincade (Columbus Police Department), Donna Mayer (Legal Aid Society of Columbus), Dr. Maria Houston (LSS CHOICES), Emily Savors (The Columbus Foundation), Frank Beel (Twin Valley Behavioral Healthcare), Hannah Estabrook (Sanctuary Night), Genee Cosby (Franklin County), Chanda I. Wingo (Franklin County Office on Aging), Nathan P Wymer (CSB Board), Terri Power (Corporation for Supportive Housing)

#### **Administrative Issues**

##### Approve minutes from June 7, 2023 meeting

Michael Wilkos asked for additions to and approval of the minutes from the June 7, 2023 CoC meeting. Sheila Prillerman motioned, Kelsey Strausbaugh seconded, and the CoC approved. Tiara Ross and Desiree Polk-Bland abstained from the vote.

##### Recommend shifting meetings to hybrid/in person

Michael asked if CoC members agree to shifting meetings to hybrid, with the option to meet either virtually or in-person. The meetings would be hosted either at United Way or CSB. Carl Landry appreciates the virtual option in terms of flexibility. The CoC members agreed to the recommendation.

##### Workgroup updates: DEI strategy subgroup

- < Shannon asked CoC members to seriously consider joining a DEI strategy subgroup. She explained that, in the CoC Application, we are ranked and scored against other

CoCs and DEI is an important component to be scored well. She suggested that CoC Board members and/or designee involvement in a subgroup instead of delegating the DEI project strictly to CSB.

- < The subgroup would be comprised of 8-10 diverse voices and perspectives. The subgroup would meet periodically throughout the year, in order to ensure we can confidently answer DEI-related questions on next year's CoC Application.
- < Michael will email a formal ask to the CoC. Otherwise, members can reach out to CSB.

## **FY23 CoC Application and Project Priority Listing**

### Review and approve new and renewal Project Prioritization, Scoring and Ranking Policy and Procedure

- < HUD released the FY 2023 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) on 7/5, but the application was not made available to us for another 3 weeks, shortening our time to work on the application.
- < Lianna explained the different funding levels: Tier 1 projects are guaranteed to renew and Tier 2 projects are at risk of losing funding if our CoC is not competitive enough. HUD raised the Tier 2 percentage from 5 to 7% this year meaning that more funding is at risk if our CoC does not score well.
- < Lianna highlighted the proposed major change in how we rate new projects competing for bonus funding; points have been added to the scoring matrix to account for feedback from the Citizens Advisory Council, the maximum points available are 7.

### Review and approve the 2023 CoC Project Priority Listing, review renewal project ranking, review new project ranking

- < Projects in the Priority Listing document highlighted in blue are the new, competitive projects in ranked order.
  - o YMCA/CMHA McKinley applied for Supportive Services funding. The CoC Board ranked the YMCA/Beacon Communities 80 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St project in the May meeting. Beacon Communities was not ready for the CoC Competition and withdrew. McKinley Manor is replacing the Beacon project. The project applied for but did not receive State ODOD funding, so is seeking CoC funding to fill a funding gap for front desk staff. This is a replacement project for the now-closed YMCA 40 West Long St; the project is set to open in the fall or winter of this year. YMCA is requesting \$262,000 in CoC funding. The project application lost 1 point due to not providing a healthcare match.
  - o Homefull Leasing Expansion applied for Supportive Services and Operating funding. The application lost points due to not having a healthcare match. Additionally, because the project is an Expansion of the existing Homefull

Leasing program, the application lost points due to issues with maintaining occupancy in the Leasing program.

- Community Housing Network (CHN) submitted two applications for new single-site PSH developments which are predicted to open in Fall 2026: (3) Deer Hill Place and (4) Knoll View Place. The applications lost points for not having identified all sources of capital and for not having a 25% healthcare match. Deer Hill Place was prioritized by CHN first because CHN has site control. CHN does not yet have site control for Knoll View Place.
- ⟨ The project in the Priority Listing document highlighted in purple is the non-competitive DV Bonus project.
  - LSS CHOICES applied for a Joint TH-RRH project. The application lost points because the project will not leverage non-HUD housing resources or a health care resource; the project will refer clients to LSS Faith Mission Health Center but no funds are associated with this relationship.
- ⟨ Projects in the Priority Listing document highlighted in pink, CoC Planning and CoC UFA, are not scored or ranked.
- ⟨ Projects in the Priority Listing document highlighted in orange were not ranked competitively.
  - YHDP projects are noncompetitive this year, but we predict they will become competitive in 2024. Because of that, the spreadsheet shows the number of points the YHDP projects could receive.
  - The two newly awarded projects, N^^ Berwyn East and CFSH DV SSO-CE, were not ranked because the projects have not yet begun and do not have performance experience.
  - Homefull TRA Mainstream/EHV is not brand new, but is still in the process of leasing up. It was not ranked to guarantee continued funding and because the project is not yet fully operational.
  - CSB HMIS cannot be scored like other projects, so is always ranked last in Tier 1.
- ⟨ Lianna highlighted the overall balance left on the most recently closed HUD grant. This past grant year, CoC projects did not spend \$769,000, over \$500,000 of which is from YHDP. The lack of YHDP spenddown is due to the same reasons as last year, such as youth programs not having enough staff or youth to use all funding. But, overall, there was a significantly lower amount of funds not used in regular renewal projects this year compared to last.

#### Review and approve the 2023 CoC Application

- ⟨ Lianna explained that CSB completed the CoC Application narrative and attachments and managed 42 partner agency project applications this year. She reviewed the CoC narrative.

- We do not currently have a local jail connection, but a meeting is set for October.
  - The Strategic Plan to End Homelessness was updated in 2022.
  - One of the CoC's big goals is to involve organizations that previously have not received HUD funding; in the application, we describe efforts to bring in new partners. The Center for Family Safety and Healing is a new partner, and, through this year's application, LSS CHOICES is a potential new partner.
  - CSB is on the Emergency Solutions Grant state advisory council.
  - Questions about addressing the needs of DV survivors were significantly expanded this year. CFSH was able to step in to answer some questions, however, we do not have complete responses to this section. We will work closer with CFSH and CHOICES going forward to get the DV system working better together; this is a clear gap in our system.
  - We work closely with the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority for a variety of vouchers. New projects can receive points for bringing more vouchers to the system.
  - We will gain points for the increased number of RRH beds reported on the Housing Inventory Chart.
  - This year, we increased capacity for non-congregate sheltering; in our CoC, we use hotels for Overflow shelter.
  - Questions addressing DEI work showed that our CoC's current work is insufficient.
  - HUD wants to see more advocacy from CoCs to increase affordable housing supply.
  - Reducing length of time homeless is a key goal, which can be achieved through increased access to permanent housing.
- ⟨ Overall, our CoC is requesting \$22 million in new and renewal Continuum of Care funding.

Michael Wilkos asked for a motion to approve the resolution to approve the 2023 Continuum of Care Application and Project Ranking. Carl Landry moved, Roxann Payne seconded, and the CoC approved. Kelsey Strausbaugh, Sue Darby, and Beth Fetzer-Rice abstained from the vote.

## **Strategic Issues**

### DEI Strategy progress

- ⟨ Shannon stated that the main action item is ensuring we have a strong subcommittee. She emphasized that the strategy is not necessarily about diversity, it is more about equity. The subcommittee will consistently look at representation on the CoC.

- < She highlighted the biggest gap: our CoC is flat-footed with our response to DV. She emphasized that we do not have any representation from the State Coalition on Domestic Violence or the State Coalition on Sexual Violence. She stated that both class and equity show up in gender-based violence. Although we have partners within the space, the concern is that that information is not getting to the CoC to review best practice strategies and increase comprehension as part of an overall system of care.

## **System & Community Framework Updates**

### Programming Updates

Steve provided updates on the Homelessness Prevention Network (HPN), Winter Warming Centers, and Non-Congregate Hotel Stays/Direct Cash Transfer pilot.

- < Scaling up the Homelessness Prevention Network
  - HPN was a 3-year pilot demonstration funded by Nationwide Foundation with support from Cardinal Health and Battelle.
    - The goal was to expand in the community beyond the current targeted homelessness prevention programs through Gladden (families) and HFF (pregnant women).
    - The demonstration began in October 2020 and expanded prevention's scope with increasing the number of Access Points, as opposed to just the Homeless Hotline. The demonstration ended June 2023, with the network having expanded from 8 to 11 partners.
    - Now, HPN is planning for year 4. The plan is to tie in with larger efforts around stable housing; CSB partnered with the City, County, Affordable Housing Alliance, IMPACT, and others to form the Central Ohio Stable Housing Network.
    - HPN has been scaled up to include more efforts around prevention/housing stability as the main aspects to preventing homelessness; the City of Columbus is funding 28 housing resource specialist positions using ERA funding, increasing the Network's partners from 11 to 28, and using a 3-tier model piloted during HPN with the idea of access points being service providers and engaging families and expanding resources for singles.
      - Some new partners are Somali Link, Star House, Make-a-Day Foundation, and Jewish Family Services.
    - HPN is still in the formation phase and has not yet officially begun, with a goal of soft launching in early October.
- < Warming Center Planning
  - Steve spoke on the Winter Warming Center initiative. The City would like to establish 4 new warming centers this winter, one for each area across

Columbus. CSB is leading the effort, and sees this as an opportunity to engage with people who do not otherwise typically access shelter, such as youth, couples, people with pets, and so on.

- CSB is currently in the process of identifying locations.
- Steve called the CoC to action, asking members to consider if they have any partners or connections that may have a location that can be used. Each location can have a capacity of 40 or less; ideally, could be non-congregate if there were individual rooms; we want the locations to be small and community-based.
- Sheila shared her understanding of warming centers as a location that is open between 7am and 5pm, which a person can go and be safe and warm, but only during those daytime hours. She asked if the new warming centers will follow this model. Steve explained that our approach this year will have some partners providing services and operations, and others will provide the location itself. We want to have safe overnight options for people, with the goal to be open 24/7. The locations can also function as daytime warming centers, as Sheila described. A flexible approach, for example, would be to have both overnight and daytime centers run as the same program, but in different locations.
- Steve provided more details: we want a strong service coordination component to tie into housing work. The biggest difference this year lies in the lower capacity; making sure there is an equitable way to enter the warming center (by not requiring a referral from the homeless hotline); from there, having conversations with each individual. He posed the question: how do we utilize a warming center for someone experiencing street homelessness?
  - Roxann Payne, representing Mt Carmel, our system's Outreach provider, added that the difference comes into play in conversations we have with community members; helping people to understand that warming centers are not shelter; it is more a matter of explaining what the warming center is able to provide, what resources are available, and trying to determine interest.
    - Sheila asked if someone who is on the waitlist to enter shelter can go to a warming center without losing their spot on the waitlist, and how many nights a client will be allowed to stay. Roxann explained that warming center teams can help people transition into shelter. Steve added that, once warming centers are open, the system will also be in winter overflow expanded bed capacity, so there won't be that same waiting list for shelter. It has not yet been established how long clients will be allowed to stay.
    - Sheila volunteered to help out at one of the centers once open.

- Alison Marker asked if CSB has leads for locations, and the goal timeline. The goal opening date will be November 15 or December 1, depending on when the weather turns cold, and the centers will stay open through February. Steve answered that we have some leads but want to examine all possible options; we want centers to be close to transportation and other resources; once we have locations we will begin community engagement to really have some positive energy in the community around the need; we need communities to be part of this effort.
    - Shannon concluded that we need capacity and resources, CSB will walk alongside other entities in partnership; we need more partners to collaborate.
  - ⟨ Non-Congregate Hotel Stays/Direct Cash Transfers pilot
    - There is a particular need for non-congregate hotel stays for families who are not working with RRH to get them.
    - Direct Cash Transfers is a pilot program for up to 30 families that YWCA engages. The idea is that direct cash assistance will better help to resolve shelter stays.
      - Jim Rose asked how much on average is disbursed. Steve explained that families can be given up to \$1,500, and can choose to receive that as a one-time payment or incrementally over a series of months. YWCA Family Center is working out participant agreements; the ethos is around trusting that clients know best what they need to resolve their crisis.
      - He added the caveat to recognize that this is a pilot, an emerging practice, and not everyone will be successful,
    - Michael commented that there is growing Trust-Based Philanthropy around the country, wherein people provide unrestricted funding to nonprofits with the trust that non-profits know what is best and will spend it appropriately; he thinks there is value in the experiment.

### The National Homeless Services Workforce Study

- ⟨ This Brief Description of Workers in the U.S. Homeless Services summarizes the results of a survey administered to 1,060 people.
- ⟨ Results include demographics of the participants, annual income from homeless services jobs, satisfaction with work-based benefits, and turnover risk indicators, where almost 40% said they are doing at least one of the three: actively looking for a new job, plans to quit in next 12 months, often considers quitting.
- ⟨ Roughly 40% of participants said these were major sources of stress:
  - Staff shortages and staff turnover
  - Fighting against the system

- Lack of resources to do their job
  - Low pay or unfair compensation
  - Feeling unable to help or do enough
  - Burnout or compassion fatigue
- ⟨ More information can be found on the website: [www.NHSWS.com](http://www.NHSWS.com)

**4<sup>th</sup> Quarter SPIR**

- ⟨ Lianna called attention to four partners for their outstanding performance: Gladden Community House, Home for Families, Huckleberry House, and Netcare.
- ⟨ She highlighted the Family Dashboard: this quarter saw a record high shelter occupancy, caused by record length of stay for families in shelter and unsuccessful exits, with only 33% successfully exiting to Permanent Housing.
- ⟨ Our shelters are dealing with a waitlist for the first time in 3 years.

**Meeting adjourned.**

**Action Items for Next Meeting**

Topic	Items	Due
DEI Strategy	CSB will put out a call for DEI Committee representation to the CoC	October 2023
DEI Strategy	CoC members will consider representation on the DEI Committee	October 2023