

Meeting Minutes

Continuum of Care Meeting

Wednesday, January 26, 2022

12:00pm – 1:30pm

Virtual Meeting

Continuum of Care (CoC) Members in attendance: Andy Keller, Ben Sears, Beth Fetzer-Rice, Carl Landry, Christopher Maitland, Donna Mayer, Emerald Hernandez-Parra, Felisha Lyons, Frank Beel, Jeff Pattison, Keith McCormish, Kelsey Strausbaugh, Kim Stands, Sue Villilo, Lisa Patt-McDaniel, Jim Schimmer, Mason Laurie, Michael Wilkos, Lisa Phillips, Michelle Heritage, Orvell Johns, Scott Scharlach, Sheila Prillerman, Lark Mallory, Sue Darby, Kenya Taylor, Terri Power, Tiara Ross, Tina Rutherford

CoC Members not in attendance: Buck Bramlish (Veterans Service Commission), Debbie Donahey (OhioHealth), Dennis Jeffrey (Columbus Police Department), Dion Robinson (Citizens Advisory Council), Emily Savors (The Columbus Foundation), Hannah Estabrook (Sanctuary Night), Jerome Johnson (Citizens Advisory Council), John Edgar (Church and Community Development for All People), Jon Cardi (CSB Board), Jonathan Welty (Ohio capital Corporation for Housing), Tatyanna Lucas (Youth Action Board)

Community Shelter Board (CSB) staff: Lianna Barbu, Steve Skovensky, Heather Notter, Gillian Gunawan

Guests: Sierra Faris (Franklin County)

Administrative Issues

Minutes

Keith McCormish asked for any corrections to or comments on the minutes from the November 4, 2021 CoC meeting. Michelle Heritage moved to approve the minutes, Lisa Patt-McDaniel seconded, and the CoC agreed.

Annual Financial Report

Lianna Barbu presented the annual financial report for FY21 which summarizes system-wide sources and uses of funds and analyzes costs per households served and costs per successful outcomes for all program types.

- < Some of the City, County, and State revenues show variances between budgeted and actual amounts because these grants' contract periods do not align with CSB's fiscal year. The variances do not indicate changes in funding amounts. There are no concerns about actual grants.
- < Jim Schimmer asked why County ERA funds do not have a value in the budgeted section. Lianna explained that these are COVID-19 funds CSB received from the County *during* FY21, after budgets were approved.
- < On the use of funds, it's been an unusual year because of the pandemic. Some programs underutilized available funding and some programs used more than originally allocated. Rapid Re-housing (RRH) programs in particular underutilized

available funds because of the affordable housing crisis and because they are struggling with hiring and maintaining sufficient staffing.

- ⟨ Keith asked if COVID-19 funders have been lenient about timely utilization of funds. Lianna explained that the City, County, and private funders are understanding and flexible. Federal funding sources are less flexible due to grant term restrictions.
- ⟨ Overall, there are no serious concerns. Programs continue to try to keep people safe and use as much of the available funding as possible.

Strategic Issues

CMHA Concept Paper – McKinley Manor

Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) submitted a Concept Paper for McKinley Manor, a new permanent supportive housing (PSH) project with 44 units. Lianna summarized the Concept Paper with input from Scott Scharlach.

- ⟨ McKinley Manor will be located in Franklinton. The project will focus on individuals aged 55 and older. CMHA will cover operating costs and has a plan for raising the development costs. CMHA is requesting prioritization from the CoC for supportive services funding. CMHA would contract with a service provider for services. McKinley Manor is slated for completion in July 2023.
- ⟨ Lianna reported that YMCA and CMHA agreed on changes to the Concept Paper CMHA originally submitted. YMCA 40 West Long Street PSH is closing and will be replaced by CHN Touchstone Field Place I and II. These projects won't replace all the units currently at 40 West Long Street.
- ⟨ CMHA agreed to set aside all units for clients aged 55 and older transitioning from YMCA 40 West Long St. All 44 units in the project will be designated for people experiencing homelessness.
- ⟨ Christopher Maitland asked what community engagement is taking place with the project and if the project will require City Council to pass an ordinance. Scott explained that McKinley Manor is still in its early stages of design and these details have not been finalized. Scott will follow-up with Christopher with additional information.
- ⟨ Terri Powers asked if individuals aged 55 and over are still the client base. Lianna said yes and clarified that McKinley Manor will absorb clients over 55 from 40 West Long St. and clients under 55 will go to CHN Touchstone Field Place I and II.

Keith requested a motion on the resolution to approve the Concept Paper. Sheila Prillerman motioned for approval, Lisa seconded, and the CoC agreed. Scott, Sue Darby, and Lark Mallory abstained from the vote.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Strategy

At the November 4, 2021 meeting, the CoC decided to survey CoC members to inform next steps to help the CoC better reflect the people served. Keith presented the results of the survey and facilitated the discussion.

- ⟨ Keith highlighted that white people are overrepresented on the CoC, as compared to the population served in the homelessness system. He noted that Black people are underrepresented, and that the CoC is majority Non-Hispanic.

- ⟨ He emphasized that while the survey captured some points, it did not consider other DEI criteria the CoC wanted to consider.

At the January 5, 2022 CoC Board meeting, the Board discussed the survey results and discussed a draft aspirational goal and initial strategy. Keith presented the Proposed DEI Approach to the CoC for discussion and approval.

- ⟨ The aspirational goal is for the CoC membership to be more consistent with the demographics of people experiencing homelessness and housing instability in our community. The first step will be to move the CoC membership composition closer to the characteristics of the Franklin County population as a whole. During the annual CoC membership nomination process, the CoC will explicitly request diverse nominations and ask that CoC members actively recruit diverse candidates.
- ⟨ Keith asked whether there are additional characteristics the CoC should consider.
- ⟨ Mason Laurie suggested considering age and generation. He noted that Franklin County Department of Jobs and Family Services staff tend to skew older. Keith agreed to adding age as a criterion to explore for diversity.
- ⟨ Beth Fetzer-Rice noted that some seats on the CoC are filled through designation. She suggested CoC members be strategic in succession planning, asking agencies to look internally for diverse candidates.
- ⟨ Felisha Lyons suggested that the CoC explicitly orient and define expectations for members. She pointed out that some people may not have experience in a public service role. The CoC will need to provide additional support to ensure all voices are heard.
- ⟨ Keith supported Felisha's ideas and suggested asking DEI professionals for further advice.
- ⟨ Michelle Heritage informed the CoC of CSB's newly hired DEI Director. The DEI Director will develop a practice community of other DEI experts who can advise the CoC. She echoed Felisha's sentiments and asked the group how the CoC should train new members. She asked the CoC to email their suggestions to Heather Notter.
- ⟨ Terri Powers suggested including an acknowledgement that the CoC is continuing to learn and will pursue its aspirational goal with cultural humility.
- ⟨ Mason will reach out to the Chief DEI Officer at the Franklin County Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for additional input.

The CoC asked CSB staff to update the strategy language based on the CoC's discussion. The CoC will consider the revised DEI strategy for approval at the next CoC meeting on June 9, 2022.

System & Community Framework Updates

FY22 Q1 System and Program Indicator Report

Lianna provided highlights from the FY22 Quarter 1 System and Program Indicator Report which includes data from 7/1/21 – 9/30/21.

- ⟨ There was a 6-percentage point increase in families needing shelter when compared to the same period in FY21. The number of families in shelter is still lower than the numbers before the pandemic. The number of men served in shelter also increased, while the number of women served in shelter decreased.

- < On the Men's System report, Mason asked if the percent working at entry (29%) was higher than usual. Lianna explained that this is 7-percentage points higher than FY21, but not significantly higher historically.
- < Overall, lengths of stay in shelter increased to an average of 52 days, the highest number of days historically. Lack of sufficient affordable housing makes it difficult for households to find stable housing and exit shelter quickly.
- < A high percentage of people in shelter have a self-reported disability. The average age for heads of household is slowly increasing.
- < Homelessness prevention programs are operating very effectively. The number of households served increased 196 percent compared to the same period last year. The number of pregnant women served increased 115 percent. Successful housing outcomes are high at 92 percent.
- < RRH programs are challenged by the affordable housing crisis and insufficient staffing. The number of households served and successful housing outcomes decreased while the average length of participation increased.
- < Michelle invited Beth to provide some perspective on Home for Families' challenges in housing and hiring. Beth stated that hiring has been incredibly challenging. Positions remain vacant for longer than usual and applicants are not as a qualified. To compete in the current job market, HFF shortened its hiring process and hired applicants with less experience who had to receive more rigorous internal training. These challenges leave gaps in staffing and services, compounded by families entering shelter with increasingly high barriers, which result in higher length of time in shelter.
- < In terms of housing, HFF is struggling to find decent, affordable housing that clients can eventually afford themselves. Because of the affordable housing crisis, HFF's homelessness prevention programs are sometimes unable to prevent clients from entering shelter, which makes it more difficult for clients to start on a path to stability.
- < PSH programs continue to operate effectively. The 88 percent occupancy rate reflects the affordable housing crisis and the challenges for people with subsidies in finding scattered sites units to rent.
- < Lianna highlighted the Special Populations dashboards. CSB added a new section with the breakdown of successful housing outcomes by race and gender.
- < Keith asked about the cost of a client entering shelter versus being prevented from becoming homeless. Lianna referred to the FY21 Annual Financial Report and highlighted the annual costs to serve households with homelessness prevention versus shelter and re-housing interventions. Homelessness prevention costs less on average than the cost of sheltering and re-housing a client.

Community Plan Update

Steve provided a community plan update as follow-up from the November 4, 2021 CoC meeting.

- < November and December consisted of robust system-to-system meetings among CMHA, Social Security Administration, Franklin County Office on Aging, and Franklin County Office of Justice Policy and Programs. CSB hopes to partner with these agencies.

- < The three most common themes in these discussions were (1) the need for additional client support after exiting shelter, (2) the need for more homelessness prevention services for single adults, and (3) on-going challenges with staffing and hiring.
- < There will be one more listening session, specifically for grassroots organizations who have not been historically involved. About 35 organizations have shown interest. After this session, Steve will finalize the Plan. He aims to have this completed by March 2022.

Point-in-Time Count Update

Steve provided an update on the Point-in-Time count.

- < The Point-in-Time count will take place tomorrow, January 27, 2022.
- < More than 13 teams will conduct the land count. Other volunteers will be at magnet sites, such as drop-in and warming centers.
- < Kroger gift cards and a roaming food truck will encourage engagement.

COVID-19 and Overflow Update

Steve provided an update on COVID-19 operations.

- < Steve acknowledged the work of shelter partners to keep clients safe during the surge in COVID-19 cases.
- < Over the past one-and-a-half months, the homelessness system reactivated its command center approach, holding daily meetings and ramping up testing at multiple locations.
- < The last big spike occurred early January. Additional isolation and quarantine space were opened to accommodate demand. Overall cases have now begun to decrease.
- < The homelessness system is working with public health, the City, the County, and Federally Qualified Health Centers on testing and vaccination. Lower Lights Christian Health Center is providing a roaming Registered Nurse who can administer vaccines and provide education in shelters.

Meeting Adjourned.