

Meeting Minutes

Continuum of Care Meeting

Monday, September 23, 2019

11:00am – 1:00pm

Community Shelter Board

Attendees

Continuum of Care (CoC) Members: Tatyanna “Kale” Lucas, Becky Westerfelt, Buck Bramlish, Carl Landry, Chad Meek, Tina Rutherford, Debbie Donahey, Donna Mayer, Emily Savors, Felisha Lyons, Jeff Pattison, John Edgar, Michelle Missler, Kim Stands, Michael Wilkos, Lisa Defendiefer, Michelle Heritage, Nancy Case, Robin Harris, Sam Shuler, Sheila Prillerman (by phone), Steve Gladman, Sue Villilo, Terri Power, Veronica Lofton

Community Shelter Board (CSB) staff: Tom Albanese, Lianna Barbu, Hannah King

Continuum of Care (CoC) Members (not in attendance): Andy Keller (CSB Board), Kythryn Carr Harris (ADAMH Board), Dennis Jeffrey (Columbus Police Department), Dion Robinson (Citizens Advisory Council), Emerald Hernandez (Columbus Mayor’s Office), Geoff Stobart (Franklin County Jail), Jerome Johnson (Citizens Advisory Council), Mark Paxson (Franklin County), Jon Cardi (CSB Board), Jon Welty (Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing), Keith McCormish (Columbus Coalition for the Homeless), Lisa Patt-McDaniel (Workforce Development Board of Central Ohio), Paula Haines (Freedom a la Cart), Priscilla Tyson (City Council)

Welcome and Agenda Review/Approval

Kim welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda. Attendees introduced themselves.

Administrative Issues

Minutes

Kim asked for any corrections to or comments on minutes from the May 29, 2019 CoC meeting. Michelle H. moved to approve the minutes, Chad seconded, and the CoC agreed.

Recommendations to the CoC on FY19 CoC Application and CoC Project Ranking

Lianna presented a graphic that summarizes the HUD Continuum of Care Program Competition process. Partner agencies’ project applications were due to CSB by August 27, 2019. On average, each project application went through three cycles of review and revision with the partner agencies. CSB has prepared the system application and priority listing, which are being recommended for CoC approval by the CoC Board. The full application must be submitted to HUD by September 30, 2019 and CSB will submit prior to deadline.

Lianna presented the 2019 CoC Review, Scoring and Ranking document.

- < Our CoC has \$12,444,838 in guaranteed Tier 1 funding and \$1,393,619 available in competitive Tier 2 funding. Any projects ranked in Tier 2 are at risk of losing funding. Partner agencies submitted 31 renewal project applications, including CSB’s HMIS/CSP project.
- < \$658,974 in bonus funds is available, which is less than in prior years. Per the May 29, 2019 CoC resolution on new permanent housing, the CoC prioritized Homefull Pivot PSH and Homefull Focus RRH for new (bonus) CoC funding. There are changes to the project budgets based on availability of bonus funds and assessed need.

- < A separate pool of bonus funding (\$659,772) for projects serving survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking (DV) is available. YMCA submitted an expansion project application for their existing DV rapid re-housing project.
- < CoC planning and UFA funding are non-competitive projects and total \$790,968. CSB prepared these applications.
- < Lianna explained that project ranking options are developed according to the CoC's 2019 Review, Score, and Ranking Procedures. Ranking options weigh performance measures and usage of grant funds. Per HUD rules, funds cannot be reallocated from new projects, which take time to lease up and fully operate. Across all of the CoC grants, a total of \$567,402 was unspent. \$221,558 of this amount could not be reallocated to other projects per HUD rules, and \$221,496 are Isaiah Project unspent funds. The remaining \$124,348 is the CoC's lowest unspent amount to date. The CoC Board reallocates funds throughout the year to maximize spend-down.
- < The CoC Board is recommending project ranking Option 1, which lists renewal projects in the order of their combined program evaluation and usage points. CHN SRA straddles Tier 1 and Tier 2. The two new Homefull projects are in Tier 2. CHN SRA's current annual renewal amount (ARA) exceeds the amount of funding available for Tier 1 projects by approximately \$700,000. If we do not receive Tier 2 funding, CHN SRA will be fully cut or reduced to the level available in Tier 1 (approximately \$1,000,000). This option maximizes our Tier 1 funding. CSB estimates that CHN SRA will score well and is at low risk of being cut; the Homefull projects are estimated to receive relatively low scores.
- < Veronica asked why CHN SRA is a low-performing project. Lianna explained that occupancy is low, which negatively affects many other performance metrics. Sam explained that CHN is having difficulty finding landlords who are willing to participate in the SRA program. Other CHN programs have low occupancy but have compensated for this metric by exceeding other performance metrics. CHN is working with CSB and other CoC partners on continued landlord engagement. Michelle H. noted that unit availability is an issue for shelters and rapid re-housing (RRH) programs as well. Kim clarified that CHN SRA is not currently leasing units that are vacant; rather, it has not secured the number of units that the project is funded to lease. Tatyanna asked how CHN seeks out landlords, noting that she may know of some willing partners. Sam answered that similar to CSB and other agencies, CHN has added a landlord liaison position that is dedicated to outreach and engagement. She welcomed additional leads. Michelle H. added that CSB also does landlord outreach through social media and networking with other partners in the community.
- < Michelle H. reminded the group that the scoring and ranking process is mandated by HUD. The CoC Board attempts to maximize units given the available funding and competition environment, balancing risk with potential gains. Lianna added that we always hope to receive competitive Tier 2 funding, as well as bonus funding for new projects.
- < Becky asked for additional detail regarding how the CoC Board decided on a scoring and ranking option. Michelle answered that per the Review, Score, and Ranking Procedures, the options rank projects according to either usage of funds, performance, or a combination of those measures. The CoC Board determined that Option 1, which ranks projects according to both performance and usage of funds, presented the least amount of risk to the CoC's projects and the people they serve.

The CoC Consolidated Application is prepared by the Collaborative Applicant (CSB) and consists of three parts: the CoC Application, the CoC Priority Listing, and all of the CoC's project applications. Lianna presented the Consolidated Application for the CoC's review. New and otherwise notable aspects of the application include:

- < Section 1B: CoC Engagement. There is a new question about community organizations' participation in the CoC's coordinated entry system. We are able to answer "yes" to most entities on HUD's list. Lianna noted that this is a potential area of improvement for the next competition.
- < Section 1C: CoC Coordination. This section includes questions about the CoC's coordination with its public housing authority, Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA). In FY18, 10% of new admissions into public housing and housing choice voucher programs were experiencing homelessness at entry. This represents a decrease from last year's reported figure of 16%. The questions about protecting against discrimination are broader this year than last year's LGBTQ-specific questions.
- < Section 2A: Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Implementation. 97.65% of the permanent supportive housing beds in the CoC are reported as covered in HMIS. CSB has worked with the VA to reach 100% coverage of their VASH beds and we will be able to report 100% coverage in next year's application. Lianna thanked Carl and his team for their efforts in this achievement.
- < Section 3A: CoC System Performance. This section contains the largest share of points available in the competition. It includes measures of first-time homelessness (decreased), length of time homeless (increased), and the percentage of people returning to homelessness (increased). Our CoC has significantly increased non-employment cash income. There is a new requirement this year for the CoC to have a written agreement with an employment organization. Our CoC now has memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with Goodwill and the Workforce Development Board of Central Ohio that outline our shared goals to embed employment services within the homeless crisis response system.
- < Section 3B: CoC Performance and Strategic Planning Objectives. There is a new suggestion that CoCs have written or formal agreements with early childhood services providers. Our CoC now has MOUs with YMCA and YWCA that indicate our shared agreement that children staying in emergency shelter must have access to public education, and early childhood-age children are referred to the Head Start programs.
- < Section 4A: CoC Accessing Mainstream Benefits and Additional Policies. The number of RRH beds available decreased since last year.

Kim and Michelle thanked the CSB staff for their work on the CoC Application. Kim requested CoC approval of the resolution to approve the Consolidated Application and project ranking option 1. Steve moved to recommend approval, Veronica seconded, and the CoC agreed. Becky and Sam abstained from the vote.

Strategic Issues

State of Homelessness Report

Michelle H. presented the state of homelessness in Columbus and Franklin County and the gaps in services and resources for our system. Franklin County is projected to grow by nearly 400,000 people by the year 2050. There is not enough housing for everyone, and families are being priced out and screened out of housing. The cost for our system to re-house homeless families has more than doubled since 2013. There is a disturbing pattern of inequity in who experiences homelessness, and there are significant service gaps for men, women, and families. The service

gaps for families are particularly severe. There is a significant opportunity to do more prevention and rapid re-housing to relieve the pressure on the homeless shelters and stay ahead of population growth. Both interventions are proven to work and are more cost effective than long stays in shelter. Both family shelters in our system are operating in a continuous overflow state. We have enough families in overflow right now to warrant building a third shelter. Unless we can prevent more families from becoming homeless and rapidly re-house homeless families faster, the number of families in shelter will continue to grow. CSB estimates that the cost to fully fund prevention services is an additional \$2.9 million per year. The cost to fully fund RRH services is estimated at an additional \$2 million per year. CSB is working on scheduling a community conversation to share this information with additional stakeholders.

- < Nancy asked if this conversation will be open to the public. Michelle answered that the next conversation will be targeted to elected officials and large corporate investors.
- < Jeff expressed that he found the comparison between the cost to prevent a family from becoming homeless (\$2700) and the cost to rehouse a family (\$7200) to be an effective approach. He asked if other rapidly growing cities are also focusing on prevention and RRH. Michelle answered that CSB has adopted best practices from other cities (like Austin's landlord liaison idea), but that we are not aware of other cities who have gotten ahead of their population growth challenges like CSB is attempting to do.
- < Carl echoed that our community is experiencing a gap in the general availability of housing, and that the need is understandably more severe for people with barriers to housing. Michelle added that there is available housing stock, but the cost to secure it is increasing. CSB and partners are having to pay double or triple security deposits to secure housing for clients. Thanks in part to seed funding from CMHA, CSB is piloting a loss mitigation fund to incentivize landlords to rent to clients with barriers.
- < Tom emphasized that CSB intends to exhaust all available interventions before exploring construction of additional shelters to accommodate increased need. Michelle added that there are many households who qualify for and need rapid re-housing, but a lack of resources is preventing them from receiving these services.
- < Becky questioned whether the community's new initiatives around workforce housing will help or hinder opportunities for low-income households. Michelle stressed the need for additional low-income housing.
- < Donna reported that many of her clients in eviction court are not being supported by their subsidized housing providers. Some providers give clients one or two payment plans, but many clients need additional chances. The costs of court and attorney fees add to clients' existing barriers and contribute to their loss of housing. Providers could prevent some instances of homelessness by giving tenants additional chances.
- < Felisha asked whether gentrification is being considered as CSB strategizes around the lack of housing options for our system's clients. Michelle answered that this is a known issue, but that CSB's role as coordinator of the homeless crisis response system is adjacent, rather than central, to gentrification. CSB's work with the Center for Social Innovation ([SPARC Report](#)) included detecting bias within our system and correcting it, as well as ways we can correct disparities that our clients have experienced in other systems of care.
- < Becky expressed frustration about the number of community conversations that have already happened around housing and affordability. Sam noted that income issues are a large part of housing and affordability issues.
- < Michael reported that 4% of Columbus neighborhoods are experiencing gentrification, while 43% of Columbus neighborhoods are experiencing poverty concentration. In the latter scenario, existing low-income residents are in competition with new low-income residents, which drives housing costs up for all residents in the area.

System and Community Framework Updates

Framework progress report

Tom presented a progress update on the activities detailed in A Place to Call Home, the community strategic framework adopted by the CoC and CSB to re-affirm our guiding principles for addressing homelessness; and to articulate our vision for an aspirational, systemic response that ensures homelessness is prevented whenever possible, or if it can't be prevented, is a rare, brief, and non-recurring experience.

- < The Veterans system is fully resourced and is currently meeting federal criteria for achieving an effective end to Veteran homelessness. CSB is in the process of requesting a review by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness to certify this achievement. The success and optimization of the Veterans system demonstrates that when a system is fully resourced, it is effective.
- < We are continuing to make improvements to the family system. Landlords have been receptive to conversations about collaboration and lowering barriers to housing for formerly homeless households. CSB is working with CelebrateOne and other partners to ensure all pregnant women experiencing homeless have access to evidence-based home visitation.
- < The youth system has been focused on YHDP efforts, including the ongoing work of the Youth Action Board, a new rapid re-housing project, a Coordinated Access and Rapid Resolution (CARR) team, a joint transitional housing and rapid re-housing project, and a PSH project. New approaches to coordinated entry are also being implemented.
- < New care coordination partnerships are being developed with Molina, Mount Carmel, and Nationwide Childrens. These efforts aim to build our community-wide prevention network through consistent screening and referral processes. A request has been made by CSB to a private funder to support a prevention network demonstration project. CSB is working with ADAMH and CHN to make improvements to supportive services in PSH projects, particularly scattered-site projects.

System & Program Indicator Report

Lianna reminded the group that the full Q4 SPIR (April – June 2019) is available in the meeting packet for members to review. CSB recognized three programs of excellence: Gladden Community House Family Diversion, National Church Residences Permanent Supportive Housing, and Netcare Access Homeless Hotline for Families. YMCA and YWCA were also recognized for serving record-breaking numbers of families in emergency shelter.

Kim thanked the group for their time and attention. He reported that he is working with the City and County on addressing the increase in encampments, due to the lack of housing available to people with barriers and our system's full shelters. He asked CoC members to think about what they might be able to do individually and within their organizations to help address unsheltered homelessness.

Meeting Adjourned.