

Meeting Minutes

Rebuilding Lives Funder Collaborative

Wednesday, June 1, 2016

11:30am – 1:30pm

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

Attendees

Rebuilding Lives Funder Collaborative (RLFC) Members: Tiffany Blaskis, Buck Bramlish, Michael Brooks, Antonia Carroll, Nancy Case, Jeff Cutlip, Amanda Frankl (*for Sue Darby*), Callie Query and Molly Robbins (*for Karen Days*), Lisa Defendiefer, Rhonda Grizzell, Robin Harris, Christy Hendricks, Michelle Heritage, Emerald Hernandez, Matt Kosanovich (*for Janet Jackson*), Patrick Jarvis, Carl Landry, Veronica Lofton, Donna Mayer, Jeff Pattison, Terri Power, Kim Stands, Geoff Stobart, Don Strasser, Foster Ugbana, Val Harmon, Mary Vail, Becky Westerfelt

Community Shelter Board (CSB) staff: Lianna Barbu, Amy Price, Heather Notter

Guests: Noel Welsh and Ryan Cassell (*Community Housing Network*); Kim Eberst (*Volunteers of America Greater Ohio*); Stewart Smith and Dedra Smith (*YWCA*); Colleen Bain (*National Church Residences Permanent Supportive Housing*), Sue Villilo (*Lutheran Social Services*)

Welcome and Agenda Review

Michelle welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda.

Administrative Issues

Michelle provided system updates.

- < YMCA, PrimaryOne Health, and CSB have begun a pilot project that provides six medical respite beds at the Van Buren Center. People experiencing homelessness who have a serious physical illness and an impatient hospitalization can receive medical care while in shelter.
- < Michelle highlighted a May 31, 2016 New York Times article on the aging homeless population (http://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/31/us/americas-aging-homeless-old-and-on-the-street.html?_r=0).
- < HandsOn Central Ohio (HOCO) will begin additional diversion efforts July 1. HOCO will work with families to identify diversion opportunities, while shelters will simultaneously work with families to identify housing opportunities. Families admitted to shelter will meet with HOCO every seven days to discuss diversion possibilities. If they cannot be diverted, families will receive a voucher for up to seven days in shelter at each meeting with HOCO. If the shelters are able to house a family, diversion efforts will stop. HOCO will use a strengths-based/resiliency model learned from the Cleveland Mediation Center. The new effort is funded through the HUD CoC funding approved by the RLFC last year. If we can divert more

families, we can use the money saved in the family system to help people experiencing homelessness in the single adult system, which has a waitlist.

- ⟨ CSB is working to implement a request from the Mayor's office to prioritize pregnant women for shelter, as part of the City's efforts to reduce infant mortality. Emerald added that reducing infant mortality is a priority for the entire administration, emphasizing that there are areas of the City where infant mortality rates are unacceptable.

Michelle asked if there were any corrections to or comments on the minutes from the January 1, 2016 RLFC meeting. Patrick moved to approve the minutes, Mary seconded, and the RLFC agreed.

Lianna reviewed the updated Governance and Policy Statements and Annual Plan. The only changes were the adjustments to membership categories decided at the last RLFC meeting.

- ⟨ Three new seats were added at the January RLFC meeting: youth homeless organizations (Huckleberry House), local jail (Franklin County Jail), and agencies that serve survivors of human trafficking (Freedom a la Cart). The total RLFC membership is now 38.
- ⟨ Lisa raised the question of whether the Street Outreach position should be rotating. Emerald voiced her support and the RLFC agreed. The change was made in the Governance and Policy Statements.
- ⟨ The RLFC considered a resolution recommend by the RLFC Board to accept the updated Governance and Policy Statements; approve the Annual Plan; reauthorize the RLFC Board to act on its behalf according to the responsibilities outlined in the Governance and Policy Statements and Annual Plan; and reauthorize CSB to be the Collaborative Applicant and Unified Funding Agency for the community. Mary moved to approve the resolution, Veronica seconded, and the RLFC agreed.

Lianna reviewed the current RLFC membership and nominations for new members. The RLFC Board recommended that the RLFC maintain the current membership. Since the RLFC only meets a few times each year, the RLFC Board recommended not replacing members. The community benefits from consistent RLFC membership. Nancy moved to approve the resolution, JC seconded, and the RLFC agreed.

Heather reminded the RLFC of HUD's requirement for each member of the CoC governing body to complete a Conflict of Interest disclosure form every year. Forms are due to Heather no later than the beginning of the fiscal year, July 1, 2016.

Lianna provided an overview of the in-depth March 2016 monitoring visit from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD visited CSB, Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA), and YMCA. HUD expects to conduct a monitoring visit every year.

- ⟨ HUD did not have any findings for CSB.
- ⟨ HUD had one finding for CMHA and YMCA regarding the transfer of clients from an existing program to a HUD-funded expansion project. CMHA will submit a letter to HUD to address the finding.

Strategic Issues

Michelle reported that the RLFC Board has begun thinking about whether and how to update the 10-year Rebuilding Lives Plan, which expires in 2018.

- < The last plan cost \$250,000 to produce, so the RLFC Board is considering how to do a less expensive update and will make a recommendation to the RLFC. HUD encourages, but does not require, communities to have 10-year plans.
- < Terri asked what the benefits have been of having a 10-year plan. Michelle responded that having goals to structure efforts and report on progress has been helpful. On the other hand, the current plan was released just before the financial crisis, which changed the resource picture dramatically. It's difficult to predict what the funding environment will be 10 years in the future. A smaller time frame may be more realistic and useful.

Michelle reviewed the 2015 Rebuilding Lives Report Card.

- < Michelle recognized United Way of Central Ohio and Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services for continuing to make progress on the "Coordinate Emergency Aid" goal.
- < Regarding the goal to "Increase Access to Benefits & Income," YWCA informed CSB that they will no longer operate the Benefits Partnership program. CSB issued a Request for Proposals for other Partner Agencies to take the program, but received no submissions. The funds will be reallocated to shelter.
- < Michelle recognized Goodwill for the Transitional Work Program, which contributes to the "Employment" goal. Michelle also recognized Amethyst, Community Housing Network (CHN), and National Church Residences Permanent Supportive Housing (N[^]), which have independently developed additional workforce programs. The progress has been good, but there's still work to be done on this goal.
- < The system continues to add to the supply of Permanent Supportive Housing units to meet the goal of 2,700 units. The system needs 430 more units to meet the goal.
- < Michelle highlighted ADAMH's work with mental health populations. ADAMH is collaborating with Partner Agencies to better serve this vulnerable population.

Lianna reviewed the System and Program Indicator Report for January 1, 2016 through March 31, 2016. Gladden Community House Stable Families Program was cited as a Program of Excellence for helping families at risk of homelessness receive assistance to retain housing. Southeast, Volunteers of America Greater Ohio (VOAGO), and YMCA were recognized for their work with the Navigator program to reduce lengths of stay in shelter and increase rates of movement to stable housing.

- < We are still seeing increased numbers of families in the Family System and are concerned about the 62% rate of successful housing outcomes. Additionally, average length of stay is higher than it has been in the past.

- < The number of men served increased because the average length of stay decreased from 46 to 38 days. We are also seeing an increased rate of successful housing outcomes. Both are encouraging developments.
- < The number of women served decreased by 13 percent because the system no longer has flexible capacity for women. The average length of stay decreased from 53 to 30 days, meeting the system goal. The rate of successful housing outcomes is good.
- < Outcomes for the Crisis Response System for single adults are improving. Successful housing outcomes are 32% and average length of stay is 41. Shelters and Navigators continue work to improve these outcomes. Lianna highlighted that the report also tracks outcomes based on Navigator pathways.
- < Terri asked where clients exit and Lianna explained that a successful exit is considered a permanent housing destination, such as a signed lease or permanently residing with family. Terri asked about the difference between the 32% successful housing outcome from shelter and 50% successful housing outcome from the Navigator program. Lianna responded that the Navigator program provides aftercare services, after a client is housed, to support housing stability and retention. The 32% shows successful exits from shelter and the 50% shows successful exits from the Navigator program. The 50% represents the entire program – it is not a subset of the 32%.
- < Carl asked if the outcomes are consistent with expectations and Lianna highlighted the 10-year goals on the bottom right of the Crisis Response System dashboard. Michelle added that they are hitting our goals, but would like to do better.
- < Tiffany asked if we track where clients go after program exit and how long we keep the data. Lianna responded that we do not track where clients go and we keep the data forever so that we can track recidivism over the long-term.
- < Emerald asked whether we track where individuals were in-between service periods if they come back to the system for assistance. Michelle explained that we ask them where they were immediately before they became homeless, but we don't have the resources to track their whereabouts for the entire time between service periods. In the family system, in general we have found that exiting to family is not as stable as exiting to independent housing with their own lease. We don't know, however, if that's because the family had higher barriers to begin with. Doubling up is difficult, but often necessary because vacancy rates in the community are so low and many families lack the income to pay market rate rent.
- < Kim asked if there are any initiatives in place to enhance collaboration with landlords. Michelle reported that Cantrell Butler from the Navigator program is working to identify and recruit new landlords, but it's been difficult. Lianna added that next week CSB will meet with HUD regarding 2013 Congressional legislation that encourages landlords who receive HUD assistance to prioritize homeless individuals as renters. CSB will try to work with HUD to advance implementation of this legislation.

- ⟨ Lianna reported that the Permanent Supportive Housing program is performing well. New units were added when VOAGO's Van Buren Village project opened earlier this year.

Lianna reviewed the Occupancy Report, explaining that it's important to keep all units as full as possible to ensure that we are fully using all resources available to the system to serve people experiencing homelessness. The occupancy goal is at least 95% and is 100% for some programs. Temporary fluctuations are acceptable – we only look for patterns and trends that may need to be addressed.

- ⟨ Columbus Area Integrated Health Services (CAIHS) Scattered Sites program is under occupancy because it's running out of funds. CAIHS and CSB are working to identify a more sustainable capacity for the program.
- ⟨ CHN's RLPTI program is under occupancy, but is starting to improve. CHN's SRA program is at 97% and we are looking for 100% in this program. YMCA's 40 West Long program is under occupancy because of a lease agreement with Alvis House.
- ⟨ We are starting to include Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) voucher units in the Occupancy Report. Sixty-eight percent of the data has been entered in Columbus ServicePoint and the VA is working to integrate the rest.

Lianna reviewed the Program Evaluation results summary, reminding the RLFC that these ratings are very important because the RLFC will use them to score and prioritize programs for the annual CoC application, which may open this month. The full report is posted on CSB's website (<http://csb.org/news-and-publications/publications>).

- ⟨ Val asked how the wide variety of program types is measured. Michelle explained that each program has different outcomes that are specific to that program. CSB and each Partner Agency discuss and agree on outcomes every year, which are then included in the agency's contract with CSB. Programs are rated based on their own agreed-upon outcomes – they are not compared to other programs. Lianna added that the RLFC approves the performance criteria every year.
- ⟨ Tiffany asked if outcomes are ever re-evaluated and if low performers have corrective action plans. Michelle replied that CSB establishes corrective actions for low performers, as required via the annual contract with CSB, and provides technical assistance to help agencies improve outcomes. Some criteria can be adjusted, but some – such as the criteria approved by the RLFC – cannot be changed.
- ⟨ Lianna emphasized that out of 72 programs, only 4 are low performers – the rest are medium or high, indicating that Partner Agencies are doing an excellent job and the system as a whole is performing well.
- ⟨ Tiffany asked how the outcomes are determined. Michelle responded that they are based on historical performance, goals in the 10-year Rebuilding Lives plan, RLFC and CSB Board requirements, and/or HUD requirements.

- < Rhonda reminded the group that even though Maryhaven Engagement Center's performance is rated as low, it's a critical and successful community resource. Maryhaven does an excellent job serving a very difficult population. Law enforcement is responsible for ensuring that publicly inebriated individuals who cannot self-care don't harm themselves or others. Without the Engagement Center, these individuals would have to go to jail, which does not help the individual and is a poor use of law enforcement, jail, and community resources. Maryhaven fills a significant need. Michelle agreed, praising Maryhaven for choosing to serve some of the most difficult populations in the community. CSB is working with Maryhaven to find the most appropriate outcomes that best reflect the difficult mission.

Lianna reviewed the six-month semi-annual financial report, which summarizes revenue and expenses for each program from July 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015. Lianna explained that CSB analyzes the report to ensure that all programs are on track to use funding by the end of the fiscal year and expects programs to have spent approximately half of the available funding by December 31. The semi-annual report also analyses cost per household served (for shelters, prevention programs, Navigator/Rapid Re-Housing, and other programs) or cost per unit (for supportive housing) to help compare program efficiency and use of resources.

Lianna reviewed the Tier 2 HUD awards from last year's FY 2015 CoC application.

- < Two new projects were approved – CHN Terrace Place and CHN Sponsor-based Rental Assistance. HUD did not fund the other two new projects that we applied for – N^^ Commons at 161 and CHN's other new Sponsor-based Rental Assistance project.
- < HUD de-funded one renewal program – Southeast New Horizons transitional housing. This is the first year that we have lost a renewal program, underscoring the emphasis that HUD is placing on awarding funds based on performance and HUD's efforts to de-emphasize transitional housing in favor of permanent housing. The program, with 36 units, probably will have to close as of July 1, 2016. Michelle spoke with other Ohio CoCs, all of which also lost transitional housing programs. Terri asked what will happen to New Horizons clients. Lianna reported that Southeast has plans for housing for all but 10 clients so far. Southeast is discussing the issue with ADAMH, and CSB has offered assistance.
- < We received feedback on how HUD scored some (not all) of the FY 2015 CoC application questions. We believe that HUD made scoring errors on four of the highlighted questions. HUD did not give our CoC credit for our robust performance assessment system, Unified Supportive Housing Program, adoption of HUD's order of priority for permanent supportive housing, and prioritization of beds for chronically homeless individuals. We submitted an appeal on May 31 requesting that HUD re-score our entire application. Michelle noted that if we do not get a satisfactory answer from HUD, we may involve our Congressional representatives. Geoff asked when we expect to hear back from HUD on the appeal and Lianna responded that we don't know. Callie asked if this has happened before and Lianna explained that we don't know because this is the first year that HUD has given us insight into the application scoring.

Lianna reviewed the proposed budget for FY2017, including the HUD funding. Overall, \$46,129,718 in funding are supporting the homeless programs in our CoC, with CSB and HUD providing 60% of the funds.

- < Lianna also presented CSB's analysis of the average costs of PSH, approximately \$13,000 per unit. A number of other averages were presented which allow the system to compare programs.
- < Michelle introduced Resolution 3, which allows CSB to apply for funding from all the revenue sources cited in the FY 2017 budget. The RLFC Board previously reviewed the resolution and recommended RLFC approval. Rhonda moved to approve the resolution, Matt seconded, and the RLFC agreed.
- < Michelle introduced Resolution 4, which outlines FY 2017 fund allocation. The RLFC Board previously reviewed the resolution and recommended RLFC approval. Mary moved to approve the resolution, Jeff P. seconded, and the RLFC agreed. Becky, Amanda, Mary, and Tiffany abstained because their agencies receive HUD and/or CSB funding.

Lianna reviewed the results from the January 2016 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count. The number of sheltered homeless individuals decreased, but the number of unsheltered homeless individuals increased. Michelle explained that the increase in unsheltered homeless is partly the result of a better methodology for the count this year. CSB tries every year to identify as many homeless people as possible.

- < Amy outlined the PIT Count efforts this year, which included an early morning count, soup kitchens, Star House, service-based locations, hospital emergency rooms, Metro Park Rangers, and City park staff.
- < Michelle added weather can significantly affect the PIT Count. Milder weather – which we experienced this year as compared to last year – increases the unsheltered count.
- < Amy noted that while a more accurate count is good, our CoC will be penalized for the increase in the unsheltered count in the FY 2016 CoC application. The higher count may reduce the level of funding our community receives. Michelle added that despite this potential negative outcome, our community will continue to improve the count so it is as accurate and thorough as possible.
- < Becky asked if there are any PIT Count benchmarks to help anchor the data. Michelle replied that there are fluctuations in the counts and it's very difficult to compare different communities, especially given that it's only a snapshot in time. Homeless populations also depend in part on the climate and whether the area is a magnet destination.
- < Emerald suggested that the fact that our CoC goes above and beyond to improve the count, despite potential negative funding consequences, is a story that we may want to tell our Congressional representatives. Michelle agreed, but noted that no community will admit to conducting an inadequate count to increase their chances of receiving more funding.
- < Carl asked if the data was de-duplicated and Lianna replied affirmatively, but cautioned that we often did not have enough information on the surveys of unsheltered people to make a positive match. Carl asked if the unsheltered information includes the outreach program and Lianna replied that it does.

PSH Project Development

Lianna reviewed two Concept Papers for PSH development submitted by CHN and YWCA. CHN is proposing to replace the current Parsons project with a new 60-unit development, an addition of 35 new units. CHN is asking for RLFC capital funds and rent subsidies, but no additional services funding. A 2019 project opening date is shown in the Concept Paper. YWCA would like to increase supportive services funding for the additional WINGS units that will come online in the next fiscal year, \$75,000 for 21 new units.

- < Since HUD did not award funds to N^^ Commons at 161, which was already approved by the RLFC, the RLFC Board recommended that Commons at 161 be awarded the first priority status for the next CoC application.
- < The RLFC also already approved CHN's Briggsdale II project, which also did not receive HUD funds. CHN, however, would prefer to prioritize Parsons over Briggsdale II.
- < The RLFC Board recommended the following prioritization for the CoC application: 1) Commons at 161; 2) Parsons (pending RLFC approval of a Project Plan); 3) Briggsdale II; and 4) YWCA WINGS (pending eligibility).
- < The CoC also has to determine priority for Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) tax credits. The RLFC Board recommended maintaining the same prioritization as for the CoC application, except for YWCA WINGS, which does not need tax credits. If Commons at 161 and Briggsdale II receive OHFA tax credits this year, Parsons would be the first priority for next year's OHFA tax credit application (pending RLFC approval of a Project Plan).
- < Don noted that CHN previously conducted an extensive renovation of Parsons and asked why it needs to be replaced now. Ryan responded that Parsons was rehabilitated 15 years ago and was originally built in the 1920s. A physical needs assessment determined that the building requires \$860,000 for immediate needs and would require much more over the long-term. CHN determined that it would be more cost effective to replace Parsons.
- < JC asked if Parsons could be torn down and replaced in the same location. Ryan responded that it would be difficult because it's a historic building. Buck asked what would happen to the building and Ryan described the community outreach CHN is engaged in regarding future plans for the site. There are multiple ideas and CHN wants to see a positive use for the building. Discussion is ongoing.
- < Carl asked about the rationale behind the prioritization recommended by the RLFC Board. Lianna replied that the RLFC Board recommended that Commons at 161 be the first priority project because it was already approved by the RLFC and was the highest priority new project that HUD did not fund in the current funding cycle. The same rationale could apply to Briggsdale II, which was also approved and unfunded, but CHN requested that the RLFC prioritize Parsons over Briggsdale. YWCA was last in the priority recommendation because the funds are for services only and the RLFC Board wanted to prioritize projects that add new units to the system.

- < Carl moved to approve the resolution on PSH prioritization, Terri seconded, and the RLFC agreed.

PSH Project Updates

Ryan informed the group that CHN Terrace Place construction will be finished in October.

Kim updated the group on VOAGO's Van Buren Village, which opened in January and is currently at 98% occupancy. Collaboration with N^^ on services is going well.

Stewart reported on the continued renovation of the residence for YWCA's WINGS program. The timeline has been moved back because of unforeseen complications in renovating the historic building. They expect to move the residents back to the building in the fall and are excited about being able to provide a better, safer residence for tenants.

Colleen reported that OHFA was initially concerned about the fact that HUD did not fund N^^ Commons at 161, but N^^ and CSB discussed the issue with OHFA, hopefully allaying the concerns. N^^ is awaiting a decision from OHFA on the tax credit application.

Meeting Adjourned