

Meeting Minutes

Rebuilding Lives Funder Collaborative Meeting

Tuesday, May 16, 2017

11am – 1pm

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

Attendees

Rebuilding Lives Funder Collaborative (RLFC) Members: Becky Westerfelt, Buck Bramlish, Carl Landry, Deborra Armstrong, Christy Hendricks, Val Harmon, Matt Kosanovich, Jeff Pattison, Mark Paxson, Jonathan Welty, Lisa Defendiefer, Callie Query, Kim Stands, Mary Vail, Mary Wehrle, Michelle Heritage, Nancy Case, Patrick Jarvis, Carl Williams, Rhonda Grizzell, Robin Harris, Steve Gladman, Steve Sielschott, Sue Darby, Teresa McWain, Paula Haines, Veronica Lofton

Guests: Ryan Cassell (*Community Housing Network*); Colleen Bain (*National Church Residences Permanent Supportive Housing*)

Community Shelter Board (CSB) Staff: Lianna Barbu, Tom Albanese, Heather Notter

Welcome and Agenda Review

Michelle welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda. Michelle introduced Paula Haines, the new RLFC representative from Freedom a la Cart.

Administrative Issues

Michelle asked if there were any corrections to or comments on the minutes from the January 26, 2017 RLFC meeting. Steve G. moved to approve the minutes, Robin seconded, and the RLFC agreed.

Michelle reviewed nominations received as part of the annual RLFC membership review. The RLFC Board previously reviewed the nominations and made the following recommendations.

- < The RLFC Board recommends that Lisa Patt-McDaniel from the Workforce Development Board of Central Ohio replace Goodwill in the employment services category.
- < The RLFC Board recommends retaining Freedom a la Cart in the category of agencies that serve survivors of human trafficking. Alvis would be a good fit to consider in the future.
- < The RLFC Board recommends retaining YMCA for one more year in the category of non-profit homeless assistance providers and considering Community Housing Network (CHN) in the future.
- < The Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) nominated Jerome Johnson to serve on the RLFC, with Sally Shaffer as an alternate. The CAC would like for current RLFC member Steve Sielschott to continue serving on the RLFC and replace Jeff Cutlip on the RLFC Board. The RLFC Board recommends accepting the CAC's nominations.

- < As requested by the RLFC Board, Michelle contacted Mark Huddy, the Director of the Office for Social Concerns and Episcopal Moderator for Catholic Charities and Social Concerns for the Catholic Diocese of Columbus to ask if he would serve in the RLFC vacancy for faith-based organizations. He declined and will recommend another person for the vacancy.
- < Mark moved to approve Resolution 1 on the RLFC membership, Matt seconded, and the RLFC agreed.

Lianna reviewed minor changes to the RLFC Governance and Policy Statements and Annual Plan.

- < The only governance changes were adjustments to the names of the veteran and youth committees. There were no changes to the Annual Plan – the dates were just updated for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2017.
- < Jeff P. moved to approve Resolution 2 on RLFC Governance and Annual Plan, Steve G. seconded, and the RLFC agreed.

Heather highlighted the annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure form, which RLFC members are required by HUD to submit each year. Heather asked that members submit the form no later than July 1, 2017.

On veteran homelessness, Tom informed the group that the Veterans System Operations Workgroup (VSOW) intends to submit performance measures to HUD for confirmation by September 30, 2017. The VSOW is hoping for federal confirmation by the end of the calendar year that our community has ended veteran homelessness, according to federal benchmarks. Carl added that the VA reviews the veteran by-name list daily to quickly move each veteran toward housing. The VA and shelters conduct weekly case reviews for challenging cases.

On youth homelessness, Tom reported that a sub-committee of the Committee to Address Youth Experiencing Homelessness is working with HUD technical assistance providers to develop a comprehensive system plan.

- < HUD is providing 32 hours of remote technical assistance. The Committee is aiming to have a plan in place by the end of the calendar year.
- < Kim added that the Committee applied for a 100 day challenge with the Rapid Results Institute and A Way Home America. If accepted, our system will receive additional technical assistance focused on short-term youth housing efforts.
- < The Committee is embarking on several efforts to learn more about youth homelessness. Huckleberry House provided a session on adolescent development and the Committee will host a panel on the foster care system. The Committee would like to make adjustments to the adult homelessness system to better tailor assistance for youth.

Tom reported that CSB and the RLFC Board are recommending YMCA as the new provider for the Navigator Program. CSB is working with YMCA and system providers to develop tools, protocols, procedures, and plans for the program re-set. The criteria for program entry will narrow to

individuals with high service needs, pregnant women, transition-age youth, and veterans. Fewer Navigators will have smaller caseloads.

- < Lisa asked about those who will not be able to receive Navigator services. Tom explained that the approach will vary by shelter, but in general the rest of the shelter population will receive light-touch housing services. CSB assesses that the Navigators can serve all of the high-priority clients in the above categories. The rest have fewer barriers and will still have access to financial assistance.
- < Becky was skeptical that Navigators would be able to serve a higher-need population with fewer Navigators and less funding. Tom responded that caseloads will be lower. Becky asked if the target populations are prioritized and Tom responded that they are not.

Strategic Issues

Lianna reviewed Program Evaluation results for all programs for July 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016. Out of 72 total programs, only 4 were rated low, meaning that the programs achieved less than 50 percent of the outcomes.

- < The YMCA Family Shelter is rated low because families stayed too long in shelter. This is the first year YMCA is running a family shelter and they are still learning. Due to this, CSB has no concerns about YMCA's performance at this time.
- < The YMCA Triage Shelter was a pilot that didn't achieve the results we wanted and is now closed.
- < Homeless Families Foundation Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) and The Salvation Army Jobs2Housing RRH were rated low because they didn't serve enough families. Staffing changes also negatively affected Salvation Army. Both agencies know what they need to do and CSB believes that performance will improve. The low rating may affect the Jobs2Housing program during the upcoming CoC application process because the Program Evaluation is one element used to prioritize projects for funding.
- < Lisa questioned HandsOn's high rating, given ongoing concerns about Homeless Hotline wait times. Lianna explained that wait time was not one of the outcomes measured for the Program Evaluation. However, CSB recognizes this serious problem and will continue to work with HandsOn to reduce wait times. Tom added that the Program Evaluation is only one of several monitoring mechanisms that trigger CSB action regarding performance. CSB and HandsOn are developing mechanisms to better track call volume, exploring best practices from other communities, determining a reasonable average and maximum wait time, and improving diversion efforts. Lisa noted previous RLFC discussions about leveraging expertise from private sector call centers. Tom confirmed that CSB and HandsOn talked to private sector call centers and Lianna added that CSB met with the City's 311 call center.

Lianna reviewed the Semi-Annual Financial Report. The report represents the first six months of the fiscal year, so CSB is expecting programs to have spent approximately 50 percent of anticipated annual revenue.

- < NISRE is below 50 percent because they provide winter overflow services for sex offenders and the overflow season had just started. They ended the year on track.

- < YMCA seasonal Homeless Hotline services are below 50 percent because the program started with the winter overflow season. YMCA has agreed to extend overnight hotline services throughout the year when HandsOn doesn't have staff on duty for the Homeless Hotline.
- < Alvis/Amethyst is below 50 percent and will reduce capacity by 20 units as of July 1, 2017, per their request.
- < CHN Terrace Place is below 50 percent because it opened in December and there was disruption due to the move from North High.
- < CHN SRA II is below 50 percent because it's new. CHN Wilson and CHN Family Homes are below 50 percent, likely due to CHN prioritizing spending from other funding sources before spending their small CSB and HUD CoC grants for these programs.
- < Robin asked if CSB also tracks programs that are spending over 50 percent at mid-year. Lianna confirmed that CSB does track such programs and has no current concerns.

Lianna reviewed the FY18 budget. She explained each of the columns in the Revenue section. The column labeled "Leveraged Funds" represents program funding that is not provided by CSB and is not federal funding passed through CSB. Federal funds passed through CSB include City and County ESG funds and HUD CoC funds. Lianna reviewed the major changes under the Expenses section from last year's budget.

- < Maryhaven's Outreach program lost \$35,000 in funding, but the program will continue at the same staffing level.
- < YMCA shelter programs were cut significantly, and there will be additional future cuts unless additional resources are garnered.
- < As previously discussed, the Navigator program will have reduced funding in FY18.
- < Alvis/Amethyst's allocation is lower because of the previously discussed reduction in the number of units in the program.
- < CHN SRA III is a new rental assistance program that was awarded during the last CoC application process and will begin July 1, 2017.
- < The CAIHS Supportive Housing Leasing program will transition to CHN as of July 1, 2017.
- < It's not clear yet whether we will be able to use the HUD funding allocated for National Church Residences (N^^) Commons at 161 for another project in FY18, or if we have to wait until N^^ builds Commons at 161 to use the funds.

- < Lianna noted several lines marked “TBD” on the budget and explained that the RLFC will discuss this funding later in the meeting.
- < Patrick asked where CSB sees budget risk. Michelle responded that the federal funding outlook is unclear for FY19 and beyond. Lianna added that our system has a federal CoC award for FY18, but the City and County don’t have a contract for federal ESG funding yet.
- < Carl asked how many units the system will lose as a result of budget cuts. Lianna replied that no housing units will be lost.
- < Kim asked about the impact of shelter and outreach cuts. Michelle responded that Maryhaven will be able to keep the Outreach program whole with other funding. YMCA Van Buren will reduce capacity by 41 beds for single women and will cut services for single adults in FY18. Sue explained that they are working through additional cuts for FY19 and FY20. Kim asked why CSB decided to cut funds to Van Buren and Lianna replied that the shelter is 100 percent funded with CSB funds and cuts would have the least impact at Van Buren as compared to other shelters.
- < Becky asked what funds were removed from the system. Michelle explained that several multi-year private funding commitments are ending. Kim added that CSB requested additional funds from the City to cover the shortfall, but City funding remained flat. Mark added that the County funding allocation was also flat and that flat funding didn’t go as far when costs are consistently rising. Kim is talking to the City Council and Mayor’s office about the reduction in beds.
- < Tom explained that CSB is trying to be creative about the reduced resources. CSB and HandsOn are developing a more dynamic waitlist process for shelter to continue diversion efforts while people are on the waitlist. The Navigator program re-set should help move the most vulnerable clients into housing more quickly, freeing up shelter space.
- < Carl asked whether the system has enough resources to increase diversion efforts. Michelle responded that diversion needs to be community-wide effort, bringing together everyone working on the Prevent Family Homelessness Collaborative, eviction reduction, and infant mortality efforts. CSB’s Women Leaders group raised diversion funds for people who would become homeless that requires a small amount of money to address. United Way continues to work with the Siemer Family Foundation on Stable Families programs. Efforts like these to reduce the flow of people into shelter frees up capacity for those with no other options.
- < Mark asked how much funding would be needed to restore the 41 beds at Van Buren. Sue estimated the cuts at \$1.1 million over the next several years and added that it will be difficult for YMCA to keep the number of beds cut at only 41. YMCA is hoping that the revamped Navigator program will help keep the number of people in shelter down.

- < Kim asked whether funding should be invested in shelter or the Navigator program, if additional funds could be found. Michelle responded that CSB believes we will have enough Navigators to serve the defined priority populations.
- < Becky expressed skepticism that the revised Navigator program is the best approach, observing that the first iteration of the program was not as effective as everyone thought it would be. Becky opined that the program needs major work to effectively serve the priority populations. She also questioned whether national priorities (plus pregnant women) are the best fit for our community and noted ongoing debate about the appropriateness of rapid re-housing for transition-age youth.
- < Tom responded that CSB has explored the national standards and priorities and assessed how and where the Navigator program fell short. CSB has high confidence in YMCA. As we execute the revised program, the model will need to be tailored to each individual person assisted. CSB and YMCA will need Huckleberry House's help to determine how best to tailor the program for youth.

Lianna reviewed the PSH unit cost matrix, which is based on information that Partner Agencies submit in Gateway applications. CSB gave the matrix to PSH providers during the annual spring one-on-one meetings so that providers can identify projects that are similar to theirs and compare costs. The variances in cost per unit for each project generally are the result of differences in population served, project size, and geography (single site versus scattered sites). CSB will continue to discuss this analysis with providers.

Carl moved to approve Resolution 3 on the FY18 Funding Strategy, Veronica seconded, and the RLFC agreed. Matt moved to approve Resolution 4 on the FY18 Funding Awards, Nancy seconded, and the RLFC agreed. For Resolution 3 and Resolution 4, Kim, Mark, Becky, Sue, Paula, Carl, and Jon abstained because of conflicts of interest.

Lianna reviewed the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count data.

- < Lianna explained that the decrease of individuals in transitional housing and overall PIT count is because of the closure of Southeast New Horizons transitional housing program.
- < The number of families in shelter decreased by 31 since the 2016 count and the number of individuals in adult shelters increased by 14. The unsheltered count remained nearly the same, increasing by only the one youth. The count identified no unsheltered families. The number of homeless veterans increased by nine.
- < The number of chronically homeless (CH) individuals increased by 72 since the 2016 count, a 46 percent increase. Lianna noted that the increase in the number of CH, veterans, and unsheltered individuals will negatively affect our scores in the CoC application.
- < Colleen asked if there was a change in the count methodology. Lianna explained that we changed the methodology last year, and that this year was the same as last year. Carl asked if a change in methodology could account for the CH increase and Lianna confirmed that

there was no methodology change for counting the CH population, but we did include Southeast's PATH program this year, which had a big impact on the numbers.

- ⟨ Veronica asked whether some unsheltered individuals are banned from shelter. Michelle responded that no one is banned from shelter for life – there are only temporary restrictions. CSB and shelter providers are developing standardized, system-wide restriction guidelines to ensure that people generally are only exited from shelter for serious safety issues. CSB is also discussing how to provide appropriate services for clients with severe mental health challenges who are disruptive or dangerous in shelter settings. Mary noted that Safe Haven programs used to be available for when a congregate shelter setting was not appropriate. Tom responded that federal funding for Safe Havens was discontinued and serving individuals who need specialized services, but not hospitalization, is a community challenge.

Lianna reviewed the System and Program Indicator Report for January 1 through March 31, 2017.

- ⟨ Family shelter indicators improved from the same period last year, as the number of households served decreased by 17 percent and successful housing outcomes increased to 66 percent. Average length of stay is 31 days. CSB would like to see this number decrease.
- ⟨ For men's shelters, the number served decreased by 2 percent, average length of stay remained the same as for the same period last year, and successful housing outcomes were low. The percentage of men who are newly homeless was 35 percent.
- ⟨ For women's shelters, the number served increased by 10 percent over the same period last year because of increased capacity (which will now decrease again because of the previously-discussed spending cuts). CSB wants to see an increase in successful housing outcomes and a decrease in average length of stay.
- ⟨ The Navigator dashboard probably will change as the program transitions to YMCA. The success rate of 24 percent is lower than the same period last year. Average length of stay is good at 37 days.
- ⟨ Indicators for permanent supportive housing programs are good.

Lianna reviewed the monthly Occupancy Report. Most dips in occupancy rebound quickly. CSB is concerned if there is a pattern of low occupancy.

- ⟨ For Columbus Area Integrated Health Services Scattered Sites program, occupancy is intentionally low because the program is out of funds. We will reduce the number of units from 75 to 50 as of July 1, 2017 to make the program sustainable.
- ⟨ CHN North 22nd occupancy is low because of criminal activity. CHN is addressing these issues before leasing back up.
- ⟨ Alvis/Amethyst occupancy is low because Alvis will reduce the number of units in the program as of July 1, 2017.

- ⟨ Veronica asked about low VA VASH occupancy. Lianna explained that VASH units are not actually underutilized, but the occupancy rates seem low because VA is still entering data into HMIS. The occupancy rates will be more accurate as the VA catches up with data entry. Carl confirmed that they are working on it.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Project Development

Michelle described several pots of funding that are available for the RLFC to allocate.

The first pot of funding is \$116,850 in HUD CoC funding that will be reallocated from HandsOn. The enhanced family diversion program led by HandsOn will be closed because it was not effective. This funding is renewable and will be available as of July 1, 2017.

- ⟨ Three providers submitted Concept Papers to apply for this funding – Volunteers of America of Greater Ohio (VOAGO), Equitas Health, and Huckleberry House. VOAGO proposed adding eight family units. Equitas Health proposed to add five units for transgender individuals with disabilities experiencing homelessness. Huckleberry House proposed to add four transitional living units for transition-age youth.
- ⟨ The RLFC Board recommends that the RLFC award this funding to VOAGO because of the larger number of units and more competitive cost per unit. The RLFC Board recommends that VOAGO prioritize transition-age youth and pregnant women.
- ⟨ Buck asked about the need for units for transgender individuals and transition-age youth. Lianna responded that CSB analyzed the data and identified 20 transgender clients in our system for the entire year. We don't know how many of these individuals have disabilities and would qualify for PSH. Michelle added that CSB discussed the proposal with Equitas and determined that Equitas can serve transgender individuals with disabilities experiencing homelessness within Equitas' current unit inventory.
- ⟨ Michelle and Lianna acknowledged a need for housing for transition-age youth, but CSB is not sure whether additional transitional housing is the best approach. Prioritizing the additional VOAGO units for pregnant women and youth would help address this need.
- ⟨ Lianna explained that CSB will keep on file all Concept Papers submitted so that the RLFC can consider them again for future funding opportunities.

The second pot of funding is CoC bonus funding that usually becomes available as part of the CoC application. We don't know how much bonus funding we will be able to apply for this year.

- ⟨ The RLFC previously approved and prioritized three projects for this bonus funding: 1) CHN Briggsdale II, 2) CHN Parsons Place, and 3) CHN SRA IV. The RLFC needs to confirm that these priorities should remain.
- ⟨ Carl asked about the cost effectiveness of each program. Lianna explained that this prioritization was mainly determined because of submission timing and tax credits from the Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA). Briggsdale II was awarded tax credits last year, so CHN will start construction soon. CHN needs CoC rental assistance and services funds to run

the project once it's built. If there is no CoC bonus funding, CHN and CSB will talk to CMHA about vouchers.

The third pot of funding is from Alvis/Amethyst, as they reduce the number of units in their PSH program. This funding is available in two phases: 1) \$186,973 available as of July 1, 2017 for one year only and 2) \$186,973 in renewable funding available as of July 1, 2018.

- < For the \$186,973 available for one year only, the RLFC Board previously agreed to give funds to CHN to stabilize the units that CHN is taking over from CAIHS. CHN requested \$242,475 for this purpose, and CSB plans to address the \$55,502 gap via a mid-year budget reallocation.
- < For the \$186,973 that is renewable, two providers submitted Concept Papers. Equitas Health requested that the RLFC reconsider the proposal for five units to serve transgender persons. N^^ proposed designating 25 units from their existing inventory as homeless units. These units are currently used for other populations and would transition to homeless units via attrition. N^^ requested \$100,000 for these units.
- < In addition, N^^ requested \$250,000 for medical and employment services for PSH residents. N^^ usually requests mid-year budget reallocations to support these services, as reallocation funds become available, but does not have stable, reliable funding for the programs. N^^ and YMCA are also discussing expanding medical services to the PSH residents at YMCA 40 West Long, so allocating funds to these services could support multiple PSH projects.
- < The RLFC Board recommends selecting N^^'s proposal for the \$186,973 that is renewable, to pay for the 25 re-designated units and part of the medical and employment services. The cost per unit for the N^^ expansion would be \$7,479 for 25 units, while the cost per unit for Equitas' proposal would be \$23,370 for 5 units.
- < Carl asked how re-designating 25 units would affect the other populations served at N^^ properties. Colleen responded that N^^ will still have some undesignated units for other populations and no one will lose housing since the transition will be completed via attrition. She added that veteran units at Livingston probably would see the least impact. Carl noted the value in having non-homeless units available, but noted that increasing the number of homeless units is good, too.

Michelle reviewed the resolution on PSH development. The resolution recommends that the RLFC award the HandsOn renewable expansion funds to VOAGO, confirm the previously-established prioritization for CoC bonus funding, and re-allocate the \$186,973 in available renewable funding to N^^ to expand its PSH projects by 25 units.

- < Lianna added that CHN and Huckleberry House submitted a Concept Paper for a PSH project that would serve transition-age youth. The project is in the formative stages and the Concept Paper does not include funding details. The resolution recommends that CHN and Huckleberry House submit a more detailed Project Plan to the RLFC for further discussion and consideration.

- ⟨ Kim moved to approve Resolution 5 on PSH development, Robin seconded, and the RLFC agreed. Becky and Jon abstained.

PSH Project Updates

Ryan informed the RLFC that OHFA provided additional funding for Briggsdale II because of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit equity pricing drop in anticipation of tax reform. Construction will begin in August 2017.

CHN applied for tax credits for Parsons, but does not anticipate receiving an award this year. Our community's first priority project is N^^ Commons at 161, which already has HUD CoC funding, and there were more applications submitted to OHFA than there is available funding.

Colleen reported that N^^ is waiting for OHFA's award announcement and is hoping that moving the site of Commons at 161 will allay OHFA's previous concerns about the project.

Meeting Adjourned