



Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County

No one should experience homelessness. No one should be without a safe, stable place to call home.

HCCSC BOARD MEETING March 11, 2014

Held at Sisters of Charity Foundation, Canton OH

In Attendance:

John Aller
Jean Van Ness
Darren Boyle
Trudy Brown
Vicki Conley
Lynne Dragomier

Maria Heege
Cathy Jennings
Beth Pearson
Jeff Shultz
Shirene Starn-Tapyrik

Excused:

Shauna Rozier

Absent:

Bev Jordan
Kirby Freeman

Jean opened the meeting and welcomed Darren Boyle as a new Board member. She reminded everyone about the conflict of interest policy .

HMIS Committee Leadership

Jean noted that finding an HMIS Committee chair has been an ongoing challenge.

She has contacted two people who work at Kent State – Stark Campus who were recommended by Linda Ferguson as possible committee chairs , but has not heard back from either person.

Lynne has contacted the Sisters of Charity Health System to see if they can identify an information technology person who can assist us.

Maria noted that Stark State has an excellent data person who may be able to help. She will e-mail Jean the name and contact information.

Jean indicated that, as a final option, John Kelley from University of Akron could be contacted again. His schedule does not permit him to attend meetings during workdays. If he is willing to help out, however, maybe the HMIS Committee meetings could be adjusted to accommodate his schedule.

2014 Work Plan

Jean noted that she had circulated a 2014 work plan for the Board. She indicated that every month this plan will be updated and e-mailed to the Board before its meeting. She noted that there has been progress in organizing

the various subcommittees together and arranging how they will work with the System Performance Committee. She also reported that:

A Corrections Discharge Planning meeting will be held within the next few weeks, and others will be scheduled. She omitted from the original work plan the existing Veterans Task Force. Natalie attends that group's meetings, but its efforts have not been well integrated into the plans/operations of the CoC as a whole. We need to know what they are doing and how we can help them.

Cathy Jennings noted that, at a meeting held last week with **some representatives from the Veteran's Administration**, she learned that the VA has a system in place that includes a hotline in Cleveland and a service center in Akron. Following discussion, Cathy volunteered to contact Cleveland to see if they have a technical person we could work with our CoC. Among other things, we need information on VASH Vouchers in order to integrate their information into our HMIS system. Over the last two years, information on veterans has been included in the homelessness count.

John Aller asked who was responsible for communicating with HMIS about the expectations outlined in the work plan. Jean indicated that it was the responsibility of the Executive Committee but that, since the Executive Committee had not met in a while, it was up to her to make sure that HMIS knew what the Board expected from the system.

Corporation for Supportive Housing – Gaps Analysis Update

Jean reported that Natalie has been working closely with CSH. The CSH consultants are finishing their gaps analysis and have submitted draft reports to the transitional housing providers. According to Natalie, Sally provided positive feedback on what is already in place. A report will be presented on March 18th at the System Performance Committee meeting. Jean encouraged everyone to attend this meeting; CSH's report will help shape the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) we are developing for the Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) capital funding .

Committee Reports

Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee

Beth Pearson noted that committee had reviewed the NOFA for the OHFA at its last meeting and tweaked it and that any further changes would await completion of CSH's analysis of our needs for permanent supportive housing. At its last meeting, the committee also reviewed the APRs and interim reports that have been submitted by providers thus far in 2014.

System Performance and Planning Committee

Maria reported that the committee addressed the following matters at its last meeting:

The work plan for the committee was reviewed.

The committee identified members who might be willing to chair some of the subcommittees envisioned by the work plan and discussed the possibilities of (1) appointing individuals that are not members of the System

Performance Committee to chair some subcommittees in the event that no chair can be recruited from System Performance Committee members and (2) asking those individuals to serve as liaisons to the System Performance Committee to keep communications open.

The committee considered how to ensure that the work of the focus groups formed last year on emergency shelters, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing would not be lost and would be transitioned to the new subcommittees being formed.

The charter identifies the PIT count as one of the committee's duties. Preliminary results from the 2014 count should be available at the next meeting.

Jean noted that we must figure out what we're going to do about supportive services only projects because we have to let providers know whether we'll be accepting applications from such projects for 2014 funding. She added that there had been some discussion about inviting those providers that have been receiving CoC funding for such projects to attend a special meeting. During an ensuing discussion, the following remarks were made:

John mentioned that the Mental Health and Recovery Services Board had received a request for more supportive services funding for Gateway 1 and 2. However, he expressed concern about possible sources of funding for other supportive services only projects. If resources are available, he said, we need to look into funding at this time. A larger community conversation may be in order.

Beth noted that, this year, HUD was very clear that supportive services only projects are not a high priority and that it is focusing on meeting housing needs first. She indicated that a pre-application workshop should be held no later than May for those interested in applying for 2014 funds. So, ideally, we should make a decision about accepting applications for supportive service only projects by April. Jean asked that we aim for mid-April to have a meeting to gather information. At this meeting it should be emphasized to all supportive services only projects that, while the Board does not question their value, we have to be looking for projects that are the best fit with current CoC funding restrictions.

John noted the need for a detailed strategy for dividing funding between large and small projects.

Jean indicated (1) that the question of what to do about supportive services only projects will be removed from the System Performance Committee's agenda and (2) that the Executive Committee will need to clarify the System Performance Committee's priorities, given that it has so much on its plate.

Centralized Intake and Assessment Committee

Shirene noted the committee will be meeting biweekly to work on the central intake and assessment policies and procedures and that Shirene and Jean will be meeting weekly. At this point, the SPDAT has been put on the back burner, and the committee is expecting to recommend continued use of the domain assessment already in place.

Homeless Certificate Issues

Beth noted that there have been concerns about the homeless certificates being filled out incorrectly. Two of the 10 agencies authorized to issue these certificates seem to be having problems. Natalie is talking with the two agencies and feels that additional training might be needed. We need to make sure that policies and procedures are being followed and that everyone is using the same definition of homelessness.

Habitat for Humanity

Jean reported that she had met with Beth Lechner, CEO of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Stark and Carroll Counties, which has received many calls from homeless people looking for places to stay. Although Habitat had

not been previously involved with the homeless council, Beth wanted to explore the possibility of a collaboration that might help Stark County address some of the existing needs for emergency shelter and housing. During their meeting, Beth and Jean touched upon the following topics:

Tiny Houses. Various versions of these houses have been used in communities to satisfy needs for both emergency shelter and low income housing. Where used for emergency shelter, such houses have been organized in colonies around a larger building where shower facilities are available.

Habitat's Resources. The resources that Habitat has available for use in helping the Continuum of Care meet current needs for shelter and housing include professional builders; scores of volunteers who can help with construction and serve as mentors; a new, spacious building on Raff Road that has extra land behind it as well as shower facilities, and meeting spaces; and programs to teach home maintenance and financial management skills.

Transitional Housing. Habitat also has a couple of houses that could possibly be set aside as transitional houses for use by families that qualify for a Habitat house while they are waiting for their house to be built.

Jean asked the Board for suggestions on how to pursue discussions with Habitat to ensure that we keep the enthusiasm and momentum going and avoid losing this opportunity for collaboration. Ultimately, a consensus was reached that Beth should be invited to the April Board meeting to further explore the possibilities. Jean indicated that, in the meantime, members might want to look the website www.rockymountaintinyhouses.com for additional information about tiny houses.

Members Meeting Agenda

Jean distributed a list of possible topics to be covered by various presenters at the March 17th members' meeting. The ensuing discussion included the following:

There was a suggestion that a presentation by Veterans Administration representatives be added to the agenda, and that we give them four or five minutes to speak about what they are doing.

Beth suggested that we try to involve members more actively in the meetings so that they are not simply passive recipients of information. She and others suggested a number of possibilities, including: making PowerPoint presentations on various topics; soliciting from members topics for in-depth exploration at meetings and asking them to come prepared for a discussion of one of those topics at each meeting; and highlighting projects and programs within the county, especially for the benefit of members who are not providers and are not familiar with the various programs.

Jean indicated that, for purposes of the March meeting, she will ask members to submit any questions they want the Board to address when she sends the agenda to them.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned.