

**Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County**

**Board of Directors Meeting**

**January 10, 2017**

**9:30 am at the Sisters of Charity Foundation**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

JoAnn Breedlove

Marty Chumney

Lynne Dragomier

Amanda Fletcher

Maria Heege

Cathy Jennings

Kellie Johnson

Beverly Lewis

Beth Pearson

Nedra Petro

Shirene Starn-Tapyrik

Bryce Talbott

Jean Van Ness

**EXCUSED**

John Aller

John Gabbard

Kimberly Kroh

Kelly Perry

Crystal Swartz

**SOCF STAFF**

Shannon McMahon Williams

**I. Welcome/Conflict of Interest Reminder/Approval of December 2016 Minutes**

At 9:35 a.m., Jean called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone, reminded everyone of the conflict of interest policy, and introduced new board member JoAnn Breedlove, Chief Operating Officer of the Workforce Initiative Association Serving Stark and Tuscarawas Counties. She announced that all board members should expect to receive the new conflict of interest forms for 2017 and sign them before the February meeting.

**Motion:** Jean requested a motion to approve the December 2016 meeting minutes, which had been distributed to the Board via email before the meeting. Lynne moved to approve the minutes. Beverly seconded the motion and it was approved by all except JoAnn, Cathy, Kellie, and Nedra, who abstained.

**II. Hiring of Executive Director of Stark Housing Network**

Lynne, chair of the Search Committee, announced that the Committee selected Kurt Williams as the first executive director of Stark Housing Network, Inc. (the Network). Kurt's résumé was attached to the Board Updates, which were distributed to the Board via email before the meeting.

Maria arrived at the meeting at this point.

Lynne reminded the Board that the committee had expanded its search after finding a highly-qualified candidate with experience working in homeless services, but whose salary requirement was higher than the amount stakeholders considered feasible. Through the expanded search, the committee identified three more candidates with expertise in management and skills in areas of social services besides homelessness. Kurt rose to the top of this candidate pool very quickly, displaying strong character, intelligence, experience, and eagerness to learn and lead. The committee acknowledges that there will be a lot for Kurt to learn, but is confident that with HCCSC members' help, he will succeed. The currently appointed board members of the

Network approved of Kurt's selection; the Network will employ Kurt after it receives its IRS recognition as a public charity. Until then, he is employed by and housed at Goodwill.

Bryce arrived at the meeting at this point, and Jean introduced him to the Board.

### **III. Election of DeAnn Covey to Replace Crystal Swartz**

DeAnn Covey has succeeded Gary Ickes as the new director of the Veterans Service Commission (VSC) and has agreed to serve on the HCCSC Board. She will replace Crystal Swartz, VSC relief investigator.

**Motion:** Maria moved to invite DeAnn Covey to replace Crystal Swartz on the HCCSC Board. Amanda seconded the motion.

**Discussion:** Amanda added that she has attended several meetings with DeAnn, and believes that she will bring a strong collaborative and client-directed perspective to VSC and to the Board.

**Vote:** Jean requested the final vote, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **IV. Introduction of New Executive Director and Discussion of Transition Process**

The Board welcomed Kurt Williams to the meeting at this point. Kurt introduced himself to the Board, described his past experience, and expressed his excitement to continue HCCSC's work.

Kurt's official start date will be Monday, January 23, 2017. His immediate priorities will include accompanying a street team for the Point in Time (PIT) Count, which takes place the week of Sunday, January 22; discussing data with Jennifer Keaton; meeting HCCSC provider staff members and touring their facilities; and meeting the currently appointed Network board members. After he has had a chance to settle in and determine what combination of skills and experience would be useful to assist him in managing the system, he will begin searching for a second employee for the Network, who will fulfill many of the responsibilities that Natalie filled as CoC Planner. That person will also be temporarily employed by Goodwill until the Network receives IRS recognition as a public charity.

Jean will remain in Canton through February and will train Kurt as needed in that time. After that, Jean will return monthly for Board meetings and continue to chair the Central Intake and Assessment Committee.

All of the entities invited to serve as founding members of the Network have accepted that invitation, although Stark County and the City of Canton are still working to finalize and submit their paperwork. Commissioner Janet Creighton will serve as the County's designee to the Network board. Jean expects to be able to submit Form 1023 to secure IRS recognition of the Network as a public charity within a few weeks.

All Board members received a Board Manual at the beginning of the meeting. The manual contains basic information and resources to reference, including the CoC Program Interim Rule, the first nine articles of

HCCSC's Governance Charter, a Board member roster, the history of federal and State funding earned by HCCSC, and various significant local data. In particular, the data should help the Board understand what information the committees are relying on when they formulate recommendations for Board approval.

#### **V. Vote on Board Officers**

At the December meeting, the Executive Committee recommended that the Board postpone election of Board officers until after the executive director of the Network was named, anticipating that that person may serve as chair when Jean steps down. Jean reminded the Board that the Charter states that the Board needs to appoint a chair, vice chair, and secretary to serve two-year posts.

Now that Kurt has been named the executive director, the Executive Committee proposes that Lynne and John serve as vice chairs, Beth serve as secretary, and Jean serve as immediate past chair, with Kurt serving as the chair of the HCCSC Board for 2017. During the ensuing discussion, the following points were raised:

- While the current language in the Governance Charter does not preclude a non-member from being chair of the HCCSC Board, the Charter should be revised to state that the Board can appoint the Network's executive director as chair and, in so doing, make him a non-voting member of the Board. These changes could be approved at the March members' meeting. Until then, Jean proposes to remain chair.
- There could be potential for conflicts of interest with respect to executive sessions and evaluations if the executive director serves as Board chair.
- The Community Shelter Board in Columbus, whose example HCCSC is following in setting up the Network's structure, currently appoints its executive director to serve as chair of its CoC Board, and seems to have no issues with conflicts of interest or otherwise with this arrangement.
- Evaluations will be the responsibility of the Network's Board (not the CoC Board), which will have a volunteer chair.
- In formulating its recommendation, the Executive Committee considered the extensive role that the HCCSC Board chair currently plays, and the potential difficulty in finding a volunteer willing to fill the position, even when the responsibilities of that office decrease as the result of having an executive director in place.
- The revised Charter language can be flexible to allow for either the Network executive director or a volunteer to serve as chair of the HCCSC Board.
- Although the Charter states that Board officer terms last two years, the Board can recommend to make them year-to-year appointments.

**Motion:** Jean moved to elect Lynne and John as vice chairs, Beth as secretary, and Kurt as chair (pending approval of the appropriate changes to the Governance Charter as discussed above) of the HCCSC Board for 2017. Amanda seconded the motion and it was approved by all except Maria, who abstained.

## **VI. Results of 2016 Continuum of Care Grant Competition**

HUD announced the results of the 2016 CoC Grant competition in mid-December. Beth reported the following about those results:

- HCCSC received all renewal funding it applied for and \$11,209 in bonus funding for ICAN's new RRH project (this project also received \$85,000 in reallocated funding).
- Coleman's transitional-age youth PSH project in Massillon did not receive the \$115,824 in bonus funding for which it applied. That project was ranked the lowest in HCCSC's priority listing, and HCCSC had concerns that it would not be funded because, in the 2016 competition, HUD restricted bonus funding for PSH projects to projects dedicated to serving 100% chronically homeless individuals and families.
- Anthony Forte, HCCSC's regional HUD representative, has not announced yet when projects should expect their grant agreements.
- Typically, HUD adjusts awards based on changes that occur from year to year in fair market rent values. This year, no such adjustments were made, possibly because no changes had occurred to fair market rent values since the 2015 CoC grant competition awards were announced.

Jean congratulated the HCCSC for these results. She noted that the Board could find past CoC grant competition award totals in their manuals and noted that the totals have climbed nicely in the past few years.

## **VII. Discussion and Vote on Endorsement of Family and Community Services Request**

HCCSC received a request from Family and Community Services for endorsement of its plans to expand its Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)-funded services into Stark County. Amanda reported that the agency is located in Portage County and has a long history of serving veterans through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) SSVF and Grant Per Diem (GPD) programs in several northeast Ohio counties. The agency has already committed a staff member to implement RRH for veterans in Stark County using its existing funding. Once the agency receives approval to expand its service area, it can seek the additional SSVF funds it would need to continue this effort.

Throughout its discussion of the possible endorsement, the Board considered the following:

- Family and Community Services currently submits data to the Balance of State CoC HMIS. Data on Stark County veterans could be submitted to HCCSC HMIS in a report.
- SSVF-funded RRH programs are good options for veterans in Stark County.
- Lately, the numbers of veterans on the prioritization list have increased. As reflected in the snapshot data provided by Jennifer Keaton, which was distributed to the Board at the meeting, seven veterans were on the list for RRH and six were on the list for PSH as of January 7, 2017. Lisa Waikem (HCCSC's Veterans Coordinator) has not heard from some of these veterans in months, and so is working to develop a process for contacting them to get an update on their housing situation.

- Family and Community Services has been involved periodically in the Stark County Veterans Task Force. If the endorsement was approved, the agency would not only be expected to participate more actively in the Task Force's meetings, but would also be invited to the monthly meetings with Lisa, VSC, and the local VA to discuss veterans on the prioritization lists for housing.
- VSC is implementing a new RRH program for veterans with the funding it previously used to support motel stays. This will help to decrease the numbers of homeless veterans.

**Motion:** Maria moved to provide a letter of endorsement to Family and Community Services for its expansion of SSVF-funded services into Stark County. Beverly seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### **VIII. Dates for 2017 Member Meetings**

Jean asked the Board to review the possible dates for HCCSC members' meetings for 2017, as listed on the document distributed before the meeting, and inform her by the next day of any conflicts they had with the dates listed. The final dates will be set and sent out to the membership after they are agreed upon by the Board.

#### **IX. Questions about Board Updates**

The Board had no questions about the Board Updates.

#### **X. Old Business**

##### **A. HMIS Funding**

At a meeting with Jean the day before the Board's meeting, Jennifer Keaton and Jennifer McIntosh shared that previous HMIS funding-related issues have been largely resolved. However, the Hotline is now required to record the origin of calls to determine what portion of total calls comes from each jurisdiction, and subsequently to justify the use of CDBG funds from each jurisdiction to support the Hotline. In the budget for the Network, CDBG funds were included as major support for the Hotline, but this rule may complicate the budgeting process in the future. Discussion ensued about the difficulty in using the origin of calls as the basis for determining funding levels, given that people may be calling from a social service agency located in a jurisdiction separate from the one in which they last lived. Jennifer Keaton will attend the February Board meeting and discuss this.

##### **B. Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton Grants Approved in Fourth Quarter 2016**

The Sisters of Charity Foundation Board approved continued (two-year) funding for shelters to use to move residents who do not need ongoing case management quickly into permanent housing. The Foundation first awarded funds on an experimental basis for this use in 2015, when the shelters were experiencing gridlocks. Subsequent tracking of clients served with those funds indicated that their recidivism rate was significantly below that of the general shelter population. This demonstrated to the Foundation Board that the shelters were using the funds wisely.

The Foundation Board also approved a small grant to be used for incentives for provider agency staff who completed SOAR training before the end of 2016. At least one staff member from each HCCSC agency completed the training in that time frame. Some funding is still available, and Jean will request a short extension to allow those who started the training in 2016 to finish it and collect their incentives.

### **C. HMIS Software**

The escalation letter sent from StarkMHAR to AdSystem, the software company, has thus far gone unanswered. HMIS staff continues to ask providers to document issues they experience with the software and will soon be performing speed tests with each provider agency to determine if some of the problems lie with the internet connection, as AdSystem staff has posited. If problems persist, StarkMHAR will escalate the issue again.

### **D. Stark County Regional Planning Commission's Memo to ODSA re: APR Requirements**

Following up on discussion from the Board's December meeting, Beth sent a memo to Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) asking if it plans to continue using the outdated APR Guidebook as its template when reviewing APRs submitted by projects. In reply, an ODSA representative replied that, when its software is functional again in the spring, projects will be required to submit APRs that meet HUD's requirements.

### **E. HMIS Software Glitches' Impact on Reporting**

The Board discussed the problems that providers have experienced with the HMIS software (e.g. data disappearing, reports not matching the raw data, and data does not appear identically on all users' screens at the same time), providers' fears that these problems will negatively impact their performance reports to funders, and the extra work that these problems have caused for provider and HMIS staff. It was suggested that the Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee consider these problems when reviewing projects.

## **XI. New Business**

### **A. ICAN Subpoena to Appear in Massillon Court**

ICAN received a subpoena to appear in Massillon court on behalf of a person with a housing issue. ICAN is not familiar with the person and is unsure what will transpire.

### **B. Reporting Requirements**

Marty shared that the various reporting requirements (including APRs and monthly performance reports to the Collaborative Applicant) have become burdensome, and asked what functions the reports serve. As representative of the Collaborative Applicant, Beth responded that the monthly reports provide an

opportunity to assess projects' performance and expenditure of funds. The monthly reporting schedule was established in the last year, when it was determined that the quarterly schedule that was in place was too difficult to manage, given the differences between projects' start dates. Beth invited Marty to submit any suggestions to be reviewed by the Recipient Approval and Evaluation Committee.

### **C. Data to Review at February Meeting**

Jean requested that Board members send her suggestions of specific data to review at the Board's next meeting.

## **XII. Adjournment**

Shirene thanked Jean for her efforts for HCCSC.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 am.