

**HOMELESS CONTINUUM OF CARE OF STARK
COUNTY BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, September 8, 2020 at 9:30am
Zoom
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present

Danelle Lightner
Lisa Warden
Steve Inchak
Rollin Seward
Kim Kroh
Julie Sparks
Cathy Jennings
Shannon McMahan Williams
JoAnn Breedlove
Shirene Starn-Tapyrik
Beverly Lewis

Members Not Present

Maria Heege
Captain John Gabbard
Marty Chumney
Lynne Dragomier
John Aller

SHNI

Marcie Bragg
Melissa Terrell

I. Welcome and Introductions

At 9:31 a.m., Marcie Bragg, Board Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the Zoom meeting. Marcie requested that Board members keep their phone on mute when they are not speaking and to state their name when making a motion.

II. Review and Approval of July 2020 Meeting Minutes

Board member, Shannon McMahan Williams, requested a correction to the July minutes; she was not present during the July meeting and her name should be reflected in the Members Not Present column.

Motion: Marcie requested a motion to approve the July 2020 Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County Board meeting minutes as amended. Danelle motioned to approve. JoAnn seconded the motion and it was carried by all members present.

III. Review of Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) Funding

Marcie stated that COHHIO will determine which applicants are selected for both of the funding opportunities that will be discussed during this meeting. COHHIO requested that one applicant apply for the Risk Mitigation Funds and that one applicant agrees to work with other providers in the community to administer the funds. Multiple agencies can apply for COHHIO's Housing Now for Families funding opportunity. Both of these funding opportunities are still pending a final decision.

a. Risk Mitigation Funds (RMF)

- i. Marcie discussed the COHHIO RMF opportunity which is a funding source aimed at retaining and recruiting landlords. This funding can pay expenses such as; the cost to repair excessive damages, rent above Fair Market Rent (FMR), or extra security deposits. These funds are targeted towards landlords who rent to Rapid Rehousing (RRH) and scattered-site Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) participants. The total amount of RMF available to the state of Ohio is \$500,000. A homeless assistance provider discussion was facilitated by the Stark Housing Network, Inc. (SHNI) to discuss this funding opportunity and the consensus of the group was to have Alliance for Children and Families (ACF) apply for the funding.

At this time of 9:36am, Steve Inchak and Kim Kroh entered the meeting.

Discussion: Shirene updated the Board stating that ACF applied for over \$80,000 in RMF funds. COHHIO was able to offer this funding opportunity due to unspent funding from an emergency pandemic fund. ACF also worked with Homeless Navigation staff on a calculation to determine the potential per participant need for financial assistance and the total amount of the grant request. The total amount awarded will be put towards expenses for RRH and PSH scattered site units.

At this time of 9:41am, Lisa Warden entered the meeting.

- b. Housing NOW for Homeless Families
 - i. Marcie discussed the COHHIO Housing NOW for Homeless Families funding opportunity with members. This funding opportunity is to support Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) eligible households that need Homeless Prevention or Rapid Rehousing assistance. There were several agencies that applied for this funding, including United Way, Domestic Violence Project, Inc., CommQuest and ACF.

Discussion: Shirene updated the Board that ACF's application was selected for funding in the amount of \$440,000. ACF had the advantage of having four SOAR trained staff members, two of which specialize in children and teens. Shirene also stated that ACF will be working closely with the Department of Jobs and Family Services (DJFS) and Legal Aid to receive referrals. There is a short time limit to spenddown the funding, but if the system does so successfully, there is a possibility that these funds could be renewable. Shannon updated the Board about the potential of engaging an independent evaluator to work with community partners and staff of the publicly funded homelessness prevention programs participating in the Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County's coordinated entry system to: (1) evaluate the programs' implementation and guide their efficiency in targeting the most at-risk population(s), (2) measure the programs' outcomes and guide the programs' effectiveness in using interventions to achieve positive outcomes, (3) aid in ensuring that the programs' designs, operations, and outcomes are equitable. Shannon mentioned that homeless prevention funds have not been prioritized by public funders so this will be a great opportunity to have an evaluator review these projects for efficient and effective practices.

At this time of 9:51am, Beverly Lewis entered the meeting.

IV. Review of Ohio Housing Finance Agency Funding (OHFA)

- a. Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OHMAS) Criminal Justice Housing Program
 - i. Marcie discussed the OHFA / OMHAS funding opportunity that was provided to Stark County in the amount of \$41,742.25. The Stark Housing Network, Inc. (SHNI) is the recipient of this funding and will select a sub-recipient to administer the grant. This funding opportunity is for individuals that have been released from an institutional setting within the last six months. The funds can be used for Homeless Prevention, Rapid Rehousing, Emergency Rental Assistance, and in some cases, hotel /motel stays. The Recipient Approval Evaluation Committee (RAEC) chair, Shannon McMahon Williams, and the SHNI identified two potential agencies to administer the funds and determined that the Refuge of Hope (RoH) would be recommended to administer the funds. The determination was made due to the ability to expedite the spending process and the connection with the target population served; the contract between the SHNI and RoH has not been finalized.

Discussion:

- a. With the amount of funding being awarded to Stark County, there should be a summary sheet created that will show which agency has been funded, and which project types, and include an order of priority to spenddown the funding by the deadlines set forth by the funders.
- b. Due to the amount of funding for each project type, working with Legal Aid during this time and strategizing a method for referrals from Legal Aid is warranted. Working with Legal Aid may assist Stark's efforts within the courts to avoid evictions.

- c. There was conversation regarding the TANF funds and the ability to spend down the full amount awarded before the deadline. Working with Lisa Warden, Canton City School Homeless Liaison, as a referral source both in and out of the Canton City limits, could also assist with spending down the OHFA HP funding. The TANF final program guidelines have not been released and a policy will need to be created prior to utilizations of funds.
- d. The TANF funding requires contact with Homeless Navigation to receive assistance so there was discussion about working with Lisa Warden to create a referral “check and balance” system that allows Homeless Navigation and Lisa Warden to know who is seeking assistance and if the families have sought assistance. Discussions are occurring during the COVID19 Task Force calls that include plans on how to create a data sharing system via Google Docs; a Release of Information will need to be created for this process.

V. Approval of HCCSC OHFA Recordkeeping Policy Revision *(See Attachment 1)*

The OHFA Recording Policy was HCCSC Board approved on July 14th, 2020. After the July HCCSC Board meeting, there has been discussion regarding the requirement to have a participant signed HMIS release form in each participant’s file. The discussion was based on providers’ ability to meet in-person with participants and preparing for the event that providers are unable to meet in-person with participants due to the pandemic. The new language in the policy will allow for verbal consent to be given for the HMIS release of information.

Motion: Marcie requested a motion to approve the Ohio Housing Finance Agency Record Keeping Policy as amended. Lisa motioned to approve. Kim seconded the motion and it was carried by all members present except for Shirene and Julie, whom abstained. Both Shirene and Julie are recipients of the funding and have a conflict of interest in voting.

VI. Update on COVID-19 Homeless Task Force Activities *(See Attachment 2)*

- a. Marcie reviewed the Stark County Homeless System COVID19 Response document that was posted during the Zoom meeting. There are two pending awards outlined on the document; the COHHIO Risk Mitigation Funds (RMF) and Housing NOW for Homeless Families. There is a remaining balance from the COHHIO Emergency Pandemic award that provided funding to support alternative shelter sites. This funding award is set to expire on September 30th, 2020. Marcie is reaching out to the agencies awarded the funding to determine the total amount remaining and plans to have a conversation with all funded providers to determine next steps, such as seeking a grant extension to spend down the full award.
- b. There were two new outcomes from the Task Force calls
 - 1. The need to develop service coordination between Legal Aid and homeless prevention providers for referrals and data sharing. Due to the CDC’s eviction moratorium, Stark County service providers will need additional information on how this will affect the local eviction processes. Education to landlords may be needed to gain by-in to continue to work with our projects/ participants and to inform landlords about the financial assistance that is available for tenants.
 - 2. The need to organize an Educational Coordinator peer support group lead by the City of Canton Homeless School Liaison, Lisa Warden. Lisa was interested in hearing which school systems should be included in the conversations. It was determined that Alliance, Canton, Massillon and Plain Local should be included in the conversations. Lisa has seen an increase in student absences with both remote and in-person learners; this should be included as a topic of conversation. Lisa will work with Melissa to coordinate efforts.

VII. Update on FY2020 Funding Competitions

Marcie stated that HUD has not released the FY2020 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). HUD has indicated that CoCs should focus on preparing and responding to COVID19 rather than preparing for the CoC program competition. Throughout the COVID19 pandemic, HUD has provided various webinars regarding new funding streams and provided CoC’s with guidance on working through processes and changes during this time. The guidance provided by HUD representatives is that CoC’s should be focusing on the response to the pandemic and should not be as focused on monitoring, performance measures and/or CoC governance. Currently CoC’s are waiting for additional HUD guidance that will outline this year’s competition and any competition nuances due to

the pandemic.

VIII. Update on HCCSC Racial Equity Discussions

- a. Cathy Jennings shared her thoughts about the recent 15 Day Unity Challenge to Dismantle Racism (Challenge). Cathy stated that the Challenge exceeded expectations and over 2,000 people took the Challenge. The Challenge went so well that Aultman Hospital is going to utilize this tool for nursing programs and some schools will be using the tool for ongoing training workshops and orientations. The Dismantling Racism Coalition of Stark County (Coalition) is still actively working with the Urban League and Health Departments as racism is a public health crisis. The YWCA is working with other YMCA's to create a curriculum for a series of training workshops.
- b. Marcie reported to the Board that the System Performance Committee (SPC) has been reviewing data to identify racial disparities within the homeless system. The Federal Fiscal Year (FFY October 1st – September 30th) was used when pulling the data because the System Performance Targets and Longitudinal Systems Analysis (LSA) follow the FFY. The SPC discussed individuals who entered the system and plan to review data on those that have been exited to non-permanent destinations and recidivism of those who have exited to permanent destinations; this data will include a racial and ethnical breakdown. Each project type and recidivism of those who exited to, and did not exit into, permanent housing destinations will be reviewed. Since the data follows the FFY, there will be an additional year of data to review after next month. SPC members also plan to review the Ohio Housing Finance Agency funded Homeless Prevention projects, possibly in October, to look for any trends / disparities.

IX. Old Business N/A

X. New Business

The City of Canton has Coronavirus Relief Funding available and the Mayor is inquiring if the homeless system is in need of any of these resources. Rollin reported that there is a fast timeframe associated with the funds which have to be expended by December. Anyone interested should contact Rollin immediately because the request will need to be approved by City Council. Rollin will email Marcie the dates and times of upcoming meetings so that applicants can prepare accordingly.

XI. Adjournment

With no further business to be discussed, at 10:47am the meeting adjourned.

**Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County (HCCSC)
Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) COVID19-
Standards for Sub-Recipient Recordkeeping Requirements**

Purpose. The Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) on March 18, 2020, approved financial assistance for the OHFA Emergency Housing Assistant Grant Program. The Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County (HCCSC) has established recordkeeping policies for this one-time OHFA funding opportunity that expires on March 31, 2021.

Section - I. Recordkeeping Requirements for OHFA Emergency Housing Assistant Grant Program Sub-grantee Projects

A. In General. Every sub-grantee of OHFA grant funds must establish and maintain standard operating procedures for ensuring that those funds are used in accordance with the requirements of the OHFA Emergency Housing Assistance Grant Program Guidelines and the HCCSC's Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) COVID19-Policies Governing Eligibility and Prioritization to Receive CoC Assistance and Standards for Administering Assistance. Sub-grantees must maintain sufficient records and enable the HCCSC's Collaborative Applicant and OHFA Grantor, Stark Housing Network, Inc. (SHNI), access to these records.

1. Records, Access, and Maintenance

i. Sub-grantee must:

- a. Establish and maintain for at least three (3) years from the expiration or termination of grant agreement such records as are required by Grantor, including but not limited to, financial reports, intake and participant information, and all other relevant information.
- b. Provide records required by Grantor with respect to any questioned costs, audit disallowances, litigation or dispute between Grantor and Sub-grantee shall be maintained for the time needed for the resolution of said question and that in the event of early termination of the grant agreement, or if for any other reason Grantor shall require a review of the records related to the Project, Sub-grantee shall, at its own cost and expense, segregate all such records related to the Project from its other records of operation.
- c. Provide an updated OHFA COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Grant Tracking Report Template to the SHNI on a monthly basis, starting one month after receipt of funding. Reporting will continue to be due on the 15th of every month until the month following the exhaustion of funds.
- d. Provide reports from Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data input to the OHFA COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Grant Tracking Report Template, including information about recipients, i.e. date of birth, age, race, ethnicity, income, geographic origination information, family status, members in household, etc. Data should be anonymized and de-identified prior to reporting through the use of a hashing process. The hashing process will provide a unique identifier in lieu of personal identifying information.
- e. In the event of Unusual Circumstances Affecting Performance that the Sub-grantee cannot meet any or all of the obligations placed upon it by the terms of the grant agreement the Sub-grantee shall immediately notify Grantor (SHNI) in writing.
- f. Submit to Grantor a Final Performance Report within 60 days of the end of the term of the grant agreement. This status report should be accompanied by details of individuals assisted, from HMIS system, OHFA COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Grant Tracking Report Template and any other systems that are used for reporting and tracking grant relevant information.

**Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County (HCCSC)
Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) COVID19-
Standards for Sub-Recipient Recordkeeping Requirements**

2. Standard Sub-grantee OHFA Operating Procedure Policies

- i. Sub-grantee must abide by the following operating policies:
 - a. Acceptance into OHFA Project. Projects will accept referrals from Coordinated Entry and verify applicant eligibility.
 - b. Intake Process. Sub-grantee will complete the intake process including eligibility documentation requirements, Fair Market Rent calculation, any forms that may be utilized (ex. zero-income self-certification), and if applicable, participant verification of receipt of any agency project guidelines and/or policies (ex. receipt of HMIS Release of Information and Cause for Termination Statement).
 - c. OHFA Assistance Calculation. Sub-grantees will abide by a Universal Procedure established to determine the amount of assistance that the project will provide to participants including how much rental assistance will be provided and the length of assistance, based on the individualized assessment of the participant and potential negotiations with the landlord. Procedures must align with the Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County (HCCSC) Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) COVID19- Policies Governing Eligibility and Prioritization to Receive CoC Assistance and Standards for Administering Assistance.
 - d. Tracking OHFA Participants Assistance. Sub-grantee must track assistance and funds provided to participants via the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for the OHFA COVID-19 Emergency Housing Assistance Grant Tracking Report Template.
 - e. Prioritization of Eligible OHFA Participants. Agencies will take referrals from the Prioritization List. Agencies will document updates to the list in a timely manner.
 - f. Participant File Confidentiality. Sub-recipient will follow the HCCSC's System Privacy & Security Policies.
 - g. Conflict of Interest. Sub-Grantees will abide by the Conflict of Interest Statement included in the Sub-Grantee Grant Agreement. If a referral is for a household being served in another program of a sub-grantee, that household may not be assisted with OHFA assistance from the same sub-grantee. However, the referred household may still be served with OHFA assistance by another sub-grantee administering the OHFA program.
 - h. Participant Termination. Sub-grantee's may terminate a participant from the program under the following circumstances:
 - i. Fraud
 - ii. Failure to report income within the specified timeframe (ten days)
 - iii. Failure to make contact with sub-grantee for thirty (30) days
 - iv. Violent or Threatening behavior towards staff
 - v. Head of Household has deceased and there is no co-applicant
 - vi. Failure to comply with established financial assistance plan

**Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County (HCCSC)
Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) COVID19-
Standards for Sub-Recipient Recordkeeping Requirements**

Section – II Recordkeeping Requirements for OHFA Emergency Housing Assistant Grant Program - Project Participant Eligibility Required Documents

A. OHFA Participant Eligibility Required Documentation

1. Eligibility Documentation. Every sub-grantee of OHFA grant funds must establish and maintain eligibility documentation in a participant file to ensure that those funds are used in accordance with the requirements of the OHFA Emergency Housing Assistance Grant Program Guidelines and the HCCSC’s Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) COVID19- Policies Governing Eligibility and Prioritization to Receive CoC Assistance and Standards for Administering Assistance.
 - a. Identification. Participant acceptable identification documentation includes a driver’s license or state identification card indicating that the participant is a resident of Stark County; geographical area must be included in the documentation.
 - b. HMIS Release of Information. The Participant Informed Consent and Release of Information Authorization form must be signed by each Participant seen in person whose data is to be entered into the HMIS. Verbal consent must be obtained in situations where the Participant is not seen in person, such as telephone intakes, registrations, and assessments. Participant refusal to sign the consent or verbally agree to data sharing will prevent individual data from being shared. The non-identifying data will still be used in aggregate reports.
 - c. Household Composition. Household Composition and family-status of all members in household must be included in file.
 - d. Household Demographics. Documentation including date of birth, age, race, ethnicity, income, geographic origination information for all household members must be included in file.
 - e. Sub-grantees will document the agency’s attempts to contact applicants for assistance and document applicants’ failure to respond to the agency. Agencies have the ability to move on after two attempts within three business days from the first day on contact.
 - f. COVID19 Health and/or Income Hardship. Verification of a decline in wages, unemployment, or health impact acceptable documentation includes the following: participant pay-stubs backdating from the date requesting assistance; letter from employer; unemployment letter and/or verification that unemployment has been applied for; zero-income self-certification form signed by participant.
 - g. Fair Market Rent (FMR) Eligibility. Documentation for calculating rental payments which must not exceed 120% of the HUD Fair Market Rent (FMR) for the CoC servicearea.
 - h. Imminent Risk or Imminent Eviction (At-Risk). Acceptable forms of documentation includes the following: a court ordered eviction notice; a notice from landlord to vacate the premises; signed statement from owner/tenant of location being asked to leave, including the date in which the participant is required to leave the premises; template letter signed and dated by the landlord/owner/tenant asking participant to vacate the premises; and in some cases a self-report with supporting documentation if released by an institutional setting (any health record documentation that includes a diagnosis or any medical information should be blacked-out or removed prior to placing documentation in file).

**Homeless Continuum of Care of Stark County (HCCSC)
Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) COVID19-
Standards for Sub-Recipient Recordkeeping Requirements**

- i. Resources Exhausted. Documentation that other community resources were attempted prior to providing OHFA assistance. Acceptable forms of documentation include a participant signed community resources list provided by agency.



STARK COUNTY HOMELESS SYSTEM COVID-19 RESPONSE

FUNDING SOURCE	ACTIVITY	AMOUNT	AMT. DISBURSED	AMT. REMAINING
Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton	Shelter Operations/Street Outreach	\$5,000.00	\$3,290.71	\$1,709.29
Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton	Shelter Operations – Cleaning Services	\$16,500.00	\$16,289.25	\$210.75
Stark Community Foundation	Shelter Operations – Cleaning Services	\$28,500.00	\$27,735.75	\$764.25
Faith Family Church	Shelter Operations	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio	Shelter Operations/Alternative Sites	\$10,000.00	\$8,602.87	\$1,397.13
Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio	Alternative Sites	\$60,000.00	\$45,000.00	\$15,000.00
Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA)	Homeless Prevention/Rapid Rehousing/Rental Assistance/Hotel	\$208,711.24	\$208,700.00	\$11.24
Emergency Solutions Grant CARES Act Round 1– City of Canton (SHNI/HCCSC prioritized agencies for the City of Canton to award funding)	Shelter Operations/Street Outreach/Homeless Prevention/ Rapid Rehousing	\$705,459.00	\$0.00	\$705,459.00
Emergency Solutions Grant CARES Act Round 2 – City of Canton	Shelter Operations/Street Outreach/Homeless Prevention/ Rapid Rehousing	\$738,045.90	\$0.00	\$738,045.90
Ohio Development Services Agency – Homeless Crisis Response Program	Rapid Rehousing	\$86,700.00	\$0.00	\$86,700.00
Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA)	OHMAS Criminal Justice Housing Program	\$41,742.25	\$0.00	\$41,742.25
TOTAL		\$1,905,658.39	\$309,618.58	\$1,596,039.81
Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio	Risk Mitigation Funds	\$85,000.00	PENDING	
Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio	Housing NOW for Homeless Families	\$410,000.00		
TOTAL (Potential)		\$2,400,658.39		

COVID-19 HOMELESS TASK FORCE OUTCOMES

- Implemented weekday 8 am calls with representatives from shelter, housing, behavioral health, health department, federally qualified health clinic, and homeless school liaison (*calls have been reduced to twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays*)
- Secured two locations for alternative shelter sites totaling 15 units
- Established relationships with three hotels for alternative site locations
- Equipped shelter rooms with a mini refrigerator and microwave to allow for the closure of shared kitchen spaces
- Awarded \$105,000 for system-wide grant applications to fund alternative shelter sites and cleaning services for shelters
- Partnered with Alliance Family Health Center to develop Stark County CoC COVID-Triage Sheet, Telehealth Services, and Mobile Health Clinic for Shelter Residents including COVID-19 testing
- Established medical transportation for service shelter and permanent housing residents
- Created peer support group for shelter and housing providers



STARK COUNTY HOMELESS SYSTEM COVID-19 RESPONSE

- Created HCCSC Committee Workgroups to create and amend current HCCSC Coordinated Entry Policies for COVID-19 related OHFA and ESG funding
 - Organizing Educational Coordinator peer support group lead by Homeless School Liaison
 - Developing service coordination between Legal Aid and homeless prevention providers
-