Three County CoC Equity and Inclusion

Committee Meeting Minutes

**Friday, January 17th, 2020 9-10:30am**

**Basement Conference Room, Community Action**

**393 Main Street, Greenfield**

**Introductions**

*Attendees:* Stacy Parsons; Rafael Burgos-Mirabal; Michele LaFleur; Vernetta Mara; Jena Duncan; Keleigh Pereira; Brooke Murphy

**Update - Racial equity and leadership training – YHDP and broader CoC Scope**

**Racial Equity Plan- Three County CoC (WMNEH funds)**

\*not a product of this committee but work overlaps and intertwines

***Little Background:***

* WMENEH will support Springfield and Three County CoC in racial equity work for the CoC
* Last year WMNEH did three day, in-depth equity training... done by Marc Dones Who runs consulting firm out of California – and
* Also doing YHDP, which has taken a lot of attention of CoC
* Wanted to combine so we can do work effectively
* WMNEH provided funding to both Springfield and Three County CoC

***Consultant for the Plan:***

* Would need a consultant for this plan and decided to stay with consulting firm working with YHDP and Youth Needs assessment
* Jo Consulting – great deal of experience and already had contract so didn’t have to procure
  + Have been drafting YHDP Coordinated Community Plan for CAPV
  + Also now taking on racial equity plan for the CoC with a youth leadership focus to maintain YHDP work and take a broader effort within the full CoC.
* Plan shared - is what was agreed on, so far

***Convening the Equity Workgroup:***

* Will remain small-ish – 10 folks
* Looking to use work with youth people- leadership training for youth to take leadership in some equity work- will be part of a team
* Wanted to start with youth and then engage with broader CoC
* **1 Goal:** Pull together Equity Workgroup
  + Different from this committee but committee members are welcome to support
  + Want at least 3 young people
  + Should be racially diverse.
  + People don’t necessarily have to have equity background because working with consultants who have extensive background
  + Looking for suggestions if you know people or you want to participate
  + YHDP just for Franklin County but expectation for this work is it will be across entire CoC
* So far what we have, but will speak with Jo Consulting to talk about how we want to incorporate with our funded projects before June.

***Initial Feedback***

* **R:** Some background, in someone from community who has experience being in homelessness and social services, many times questions would be more for self-education because practitioners have a lot of backgrounds
  + Consultants will be holding expertise in racial equity work and we will look to them
  + Also want to hear from community from what we want to see happen
* A lot of equity groups happening and so a lot of people involved but some people are getting tapped with a lot of the same work
  + Youth getting meeting fatigued
  + Should compensate them
* Tap Berkshire County
  + Jake
  + Pittsfield can be racially diverse but a lot of racial issues that youth may be open to identifying and discuss
* Want to pull in the other counties- diverse communities
* Connect with GCC
  + Have student organization
  + Tap into folks who have more capacity

***Issue Spotting for Racial Equity Plan:***

* Definitely disparities
* Young youth of color have harder time accessing and making it through the hoops
* Feeling discriminated against
* Financial literacy may not be taught equitably
* Guidance and support in schools and in youth programming
* Will target population of consulting be with people of color to convene grassroots work? Came from ServiceNet and concern about barriers of equity was to provide access to population, for example Hispanic population, who had language and culture... barriers are coming from the structures
* Intergenerational struggle- complexity
* Working with parents and caregivers important part of work

\*Aside, there will be more equity trainings for LGBTQ

**Restorative Justice Discussion**

* Training and Mediation Collaborative- has some grant applications in

***Restorative Justice***

* Comes from a place of recognizing structures that exist
* Why people are in circumstances
* People don’t always have control over circumstances in what they’ve placed in
* Not allowing equitable access to populations
* Do restorative work to address it
* Power dynamics
* Experience has been trusted
* Given chance to have impact heard and understood
* Opportunity for healing through listening and understanding
* Restorative justice and transformative
* Work with culture in own environment
* Validate what has been taken away
  + Colonial impact- time, value, dress, language, movement through the world
* Goal could be around creating organizational vision or strategies that recognize that use restorative justices and practices... that will still exist
* Think of it as systems change
* Looking at it from the backside
* We purposefully disempower
* People needing to speak about what...

**Committee Scope of Work** – based on brainstorm from the past meeting

* Coordinated Entry
  + How the By Names List works
* Focus on Three County CoC
* CE Assessment Training & Process
  + Looking at assessment process & who assesses
    - Talked about creating crisis assessment that filters people onto the BNL
    - Doing work with community health workers
    - MassHealth is requiring that 100% of patients get screened as social determinants of health
    - Seems like great opportunity to train the vulnerability assessment So access is broader
  + Benefit to having homeless services providers as lead assessors…
    - They will assess vulnerability... and then also help people apply for other housing options
    - Shelter and housing staff can help someone get documentation
  + Looking at assessment tool
    - Core specifics on assessment tool & pieces should have the same weight
  + Assessment process and tool itself that is not providing equitable access with housing options in CoC
  + Benefit to having homeless services providers as lead assessors…
    - They will assess vulnerability... and then also help people apply for other housing options
    - Shelter and housing staff can help someone get documentation
* Housing stock doesn’t offer…
  + Disability access
  + Shared living spaces
  + Sex and/or gender specific units…
* Need for mapping of those breakdowns through the system
  + Would require joint work
  + Can brainstorm other disparity reports
* **Does this committee focus on CoC region broadly or specifically Three County CoC projects?** 
  + About Three County CoC and CoC funded projects
    - Example: CoC documentation not offered in other languages
* Services offered
* Housing authorities hadn’t been working with CoC at all until recently
  + Started initiative to apply for mainstream vouchers for individuals with disabilities who are non-elderly
  + Hoping to use them to get assessed

**Next Meeting:**

* Next meeting, Friday February 21st