**Three County CoC Board Meeting**

December 19, 2019 11:00-1:00

***Meeting* –** Held at Vernon Street with some members attending via phone conference. Agenda and Quarterly Board Report were sent out previously to Board members for their review.

**Present:**

By Phone -- Phil Ringwood, DIAL/SELF; Cynthia Ray, MassHire; Jane Ralph, Construct; Justine Dodds, City of Pittsfield; Stacy Parsons, North Adams Public Schools; Kathy Keeser, Louison House; Diana Abath, Greenfield Community College; Earl Miller, Department of Mental Health.

In Person – Brad Gordon, BCRHA; Betsy Shally-Jenson, A Positive Place; Deb McPartlan, Way Finders; Timothy Rivers, Youth Action Board; Jay Sacchetti, ServiceNet; Andy Klatka, Eliot CHS; Theresa Nicholson, CHD; Heather Marshall, Elizabeth Freeman Center; Mike Hagmaier, Soldier On; Erin Cassidy, Amherst Housing Authority; Pamela Schwartz, WMNEH; Steve Connor, Vet Services; Sara Cummings, CAPV; Keleigh Pereira, CoC CAPV; Michele LaFleur, CoC CAPV; Brooke Murphy, CoC CAPV.

**Members not Present:** Dave Christopolis, Hilltown CDC; Tina Schettini, Berkshire Community  College;  Kasey Erickson, DCF CRA Unit

***Minutes:***

* **Call meeting to order, Introductions and Welcome**

Everyone introduced themselves and identified agency

***Vote on Minutes for September 10, 2019 Board Meeting--*** Vote to approve – all yes

* **Board Membership Updates and Vote on New Members**

*Introduction* of the full board, membership updates, and reading and Approval of final new 2019 Members.

*Updates***:** We had one exit from the board – Phil McTigue – Formerly Homeless seat. Phil is stepping down and submitted an email resignation to Brad and Keleigh. Brad notes that when someone leaves, it is different than having a vacant seat in that we can fill on an interim basis and approve at the annual meeting as a permanent seat. If anyone has any recommendations, they are encouraged to let Keleigh know. The Board continues efforts to diversify membership to better represent who we serve.

*New members:* We have three new members: Diana Abath – GCC Women’s resource center (Franklin Cty Rep), Earl Miller - DMH (Hampshire County Rep) and Andy Klatka - Eliot Homeless Services (Homeless Advocate). All participated by phone. New members had opportunity to introduce themselves to the Board.

***Review/vote on addition of new members* –** motion to accept approved unanimously

*Brief Discussion re: conflicts of interest, notification of any board members with Conflicts of Interest*

Under old charter, this policy was a little looser but now is more formalized. Brad reminded members that Charter indicates whenever CoC directors, agents, employees, members, or immediate family members have financial interests or personal interests, they must fully disclose and withdraw from lobbying or voting on that matter. Members do not have to bring to the table now—can be submitted in the form of an email and we can have discussion over email if necessary.

* **Reports of the CoC Committees—by CAPV**:

Keleigh shared, All of our committees except for the Ranking and Evaluation Committee have met at least once. During the first meetings, we have had good participation and robust conversations regarding what each committee will be doing. We continue to engage in outreach and encourage more in participation on committees. Many committee meetings will take place on Fridays because of our schedule. Currently, they are held at CAPV, due to space availability and technology for conferencing in. Each committee will have the opportunity to decide if the location should change based on the people attending. All committee meetings are open membership so Board is encouraged to participate and share with others. Contact Brooke or you can send her contact information. More detailed committee information can be found in the Charter.

*Brad suggested:* Hold event for rolling recruitment in Berkshire County. We agreed that would be interested and shared that we have had good participation so far from Bershire County.

Keleigh shared Upcoming committee meeting dates:

*∆Performance & Outcome Committee*: Quarterly on the 2nd Friday. Next meeting is 2/14 from 9-10:30.

*∆ Equity & Inclusion Committee*: Quarterly on the 2nd Tuesday. Next meeting is 2/11 from 3:00-4:30.

*∆ Data Evaluation Committee:* Monthly on the 1st Friday. Next meeting is 1/3 from 9-10:30.

*∆Ranking Evaluation Committee*: Quarterly on the 4th Friday (may meet more often May-July). First meeting is 1/24 from 9-10:30.

*∆Youth Action Board (YAB):* The Youth Action Board is a youth-only committee. Meets weekly—every other week is YHDP planning team meeting.

* **Brief Report of the Ad Hoc/Special Committees:** Youth Homeless Demonstration Program (YHDP) and the PIT Count Committee

***Youth Homeless Demonstration Program:***

YHDP is an entire community effort. CAPV is the YHDP lead and Lisa Goldsmith is leading the first phase – creating a coordinated Community Plan. As we move to phases 2 and 3, the CoC will slowly take on leadership. We are working with Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC). Our YHDP lead meets on a weekly basis, usually by phone, to do the background planning around upcoming events and timeline for completion of different aspects of the plan. The planning team meets biweekly - made up of YAB members, DCF, YHDP lead, youth serving agencies, and few others, to work on completion of different aspects of the plan. There is also an Advisory Council made up of a broader range of community members interested in YHDP who give feedback on how the planning process is going. The council typically meets monthly and TAC facilitates meetings onsite. At those meetings, we have an average of 15-20 people in attendance.

YDHP Updates:

* The governance structure and vision statement are complete.
* Currently working on goals and objectives.
* At the end of the month, we have a draft due to HUD but there is no specific requirement of what needs to be submitted. We have hired consultants to do the draft.

YHDP Next steps:

* In January, planning team will decide on project design and hold project applicant training
* In February, the RFP will be finalized and then released in March.

Questions/Comments:

* *Is some of that funding going to be geared towards prevention?* In short, it’s likely yes. Our CoC funded projects do not fund prevention. But we are not looking blindly at CoC funded opportunities. Looking at entire continuum… what causes are, disparities, gaps, etc. and creating a plan to meet the needs. We want other funding sources that can cover prevention to contribute to these projects and ideas.

In addition, the CoC is about to under-go an evaluation of the current Coordinated Entry System. This is a requirement of our funding source, in HUD. We are utilizing the support of four Americorps members who are planning to conduct the evaluation, with a youth lens, in order to provide the CoC with recommendations for our youth coordinated entry, as we begin to work with our new YHDP project partners next fall.

***PIT Count Committee and planning:***

The PIT Count will be held on Wednesday, January 29th. The committee has been meeting and just held the last full meeting before the PIT count. The committee decided to go with methodology of past PIT Counts. On the night of the county, Eliot CHS will lead the street outreach efforts for unsheltered. For a week following, we will collect surveys from any organizations who saw people on that night and collect data from shelters.

Questions/ Comments:

* Wish this could have been timed with the Census (state sets date of PIT)
* Census timing may work well with Youth Count
* \*We do have a Census coordinator sitting on the PIT Committee to help that coordination between PIT sand Census.
* **Updates from CoC-Funded Projects**

***Center for Human Development Updates*:**

Experiencing on-going construction related issues with the PSH Miller’s Falls site. The contractor has been behind on construction and CHD is frustrated by lack of clear and upfront communication from the landlord. Landlord will give updates and deadlines, which then go unmet. As of this week, four people have moved into Miller’s Falls. [They] are waiting on construction on another 11 unit building in Miller’s Falls, which can house 15 people. Because the construction has been taking so long [CHD] is meeting with internal staff who looks for properties. Looking in Hampshire and Franklin County. All Berkshire beds are filled. Major issue for finding units is finding one that meet the FMR with utilities included. [They] can find the units but not under FMR. Will continue searching for units to try and move people forward.

CHD has 48 bed project with CoC, covering all three counties:

* 14 beds in Berkshire **-- full**
* 10 beds in Northampton **– 7 full, 3 unfilled**
  + 7 beds filled
  + \*\*Looking for additional 3 “floating units” but difficult to find under FMR
* 24 beds in Franklin – **9 full, 15 unfilled**
  + 5 beds in Greenfield – full
  + 4 beds in Millers Falls – full
  + 15 beds (11 units) under construction still\*\* -- unfilled

\*\*The landlord for Miller’s Falls has two 2-bedroom apartments in Turners Falls. Leases have already been submitted. May use these for the Hampshire “floating” units or instead of some of the Miller’s Falls units still under construction.

*Comments from CoC about leasing vs rental assistance and FMR:* With leasing dollars, projects cannot go above FMR for units. Positive to leasing dollars is that the tenancy is between the landlord and the agency so the program participant is not necessarily being evaluated by the landlord, which can help when trying to house people from By Names List. No match is needed for leasing dollars and tenant portion of the “rent” can be used as program income and match. With Rental Assistance dollars, projects can go above FMR if they prove “rent reasonableness”

*Comments/Questions:*Is there flexibility to bring FMR issue to HUD attention and ask for higher FMR? Can projects scale down number of units and spend more money per unit?

***DIAL/SELF Updates:***

Progress made towards filling beds. The TH program is in Turners and PSH mostly in Orange, but also can be in Greenfield. There have been few recent offers where [they] had folks ready to come into TH and the day of move-in, people changed their minds. PSH has had similar experience and have not had some move-ins because of law enforcement. Having some flooring and contracting issues but all flooring in PSH has been addressed.

Current beds filled:

* 2 PSH in Orange are filled
* 2 TH in Turners Falls are filled
* **HMIS Privacy, Confidentiality, and Security Policies—by CAPV**

Documents distributed prior to meeting via email and during meeting via packet: Release of Information, Training document and Checklist

***Discussion re updating the documents/policies:*** All three are existing documents that CAPV received from Hilltown CDC- the versions we are reviewing have been edited in collaboration with the Data Evaluation Committee.

* ***Release of Information:*** We looked at the Springfield CoC ROI, the DIAL/SELF ROI and took feedback from the committee. When reviewed at Data Evaluation Committee, there was a lot of feedback and a lot of back and forth. Tried to balance making it accessible but also meet legal standards. We added options for disclosing information for entry into general system and/or for entry into Coordinated Entry. Added that we share information for three reasons: using Coordinated Entry system to access housing, reporting to funders (HUD, EOHHS, DHCD), and managing data systems. Added additional option for HIV/AIDs.
* ***Checklist:*** To be kept at workstation as someone is conducting assessment
* ***Training document****:* Added section about HIPPA, CoC is not a covered entity but some of our organizations are

***Questions/Comments:***

* Will we have these forms also in Spanish? Yes, we have that as a goal along with other CoC documents.
* How does this relate to statewide data warehouse initiative? Michele explained that we Looked at release to make it stay in line with state, will likely need an additional ROI for state.
* Does Board vote on these? No, the Data Evaluation Committee votes to approve.

CoC wants the Board’s feedback. *Opportunity to share during meeting or members are encouraged to send follow up email to Michele.*

* **HMIS Update from CAPV**

*Background:* As the new Collaborative Applicant, CAPV looked in to a few options, and chose Social Solutions ETO for our Enterprise because our systems leadership found it really exciting and it has been used successfully by the Springfield CoC. Would also allow for more control over touchpoints and more user friendly. With state ETO, user level would have been funder level. Been frustrating process and Social Solutions really sold us on their package.

*Issues:* Went into contract with Social Solutions to build a system for us. Over past six months, there have been unmet deadlines, which CAPV has tried to hold Social Solutions accountable for. We entered the contract, we believed the 25 users included were entities and not the number of individual staff entering data. We’ve since learned it would be an additional $850-$900 per individual user. We also learned the cost of the system, $45,000 , was not a one-time costs but required of us annually. We’ve tried to negotiate reducing costs and recognizing when a deadline was unmet but haven’t been successful. CAPV has been billed a lot of money, $300/hr, for Social Solution’s time. When Michele attended an HMIS training and learned that we should have gone through a procurement process that was different than what we did. HUD recommended data support.

*Next steps:* Since then we have technical support through ABT, our rep is Mary Schwartz. HUD is going to support us. Mary’s suggestion is to exit contract with Social Solutions and use state system. We need to have conversation with all projects. How we exit is TBD, Clare working on this. Mary is willing to have convo with DHCD with us around access and level of user support. Will not have to go back to bid for DHCD state system and all projects except for two are already in the system. Currently, our plan is to move partners in to the system for 1 year and then reevaluate.

*Comments/Questions:*

* CHD -- Want to make sure board knows what this means for projects. Right now, CHD has ETO for shelters but not for program. All files are in paper form. Because we haven’t had a data system to input, we haven’t been able to draw down from HMIS dollars allocated for staff.
* CAPV – Moving to DHCD system means we can move forward with data input. State system has gone through changes based on HUD requirements. Coordinated Entry was not required in data systems until this year. As of April 2020, Coordinated Entry data requirements change, big change.
* *Could be using GreenRiver for Coordinated Entry? Is that enough for HMIS compliance for HUD?* We don’t know yet. Boston is using as their HMIS but we don’t know how HUD data requirements will impact that
* DIAL/SELF has begun their joint component program in state ETO. Glad working with ABT as consultant, will be great resources.
* **WMNEH racial equity funding - $17,000, description of use**

*Goal:* To support the Three County Continuum of Care in advancing racial equity in its homelessness response, with a particular focus on youth and young adults experiencing homelessness leadership training to then meet the needs of the broader CoC.

*Activities:*In order to build capacity for the Three County Continuum of Care to embed racial equity in its homelessness response system, JO Consulting will provide a range of support to Continuum of Care (CoC) leadership, the Youth Action Board (YAB), and the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) Workgroup. The process will also address related equity issues, such as developing programs that are responsive to the needs of LGBTQ youth and young adults.

Throughout this process, we will strive to embed equity across the homelessness response. Further, we will coordinate this work with statewide efforts to address racial equity and homelessness, including supporting Community Action and the YAB to collect and analyze additional quantitative and qualitative data related to race and homelessness.

*Questions/Comments:***How did we come up with a plan without consulting CoC?**

*WMNEH:* Genesis came from WMNEH. Commitment from WMNEH Steering Committee to designate $34,000 in funding between Springfield and Three County CoCs and to zero in on Youth Population. Wanted to approach with considering every population. Network has money from state earmark. Steering committee decided parameters as a way to help guide work. CoCs are in charge upon allocation of how to use funding.

*CoC:* Since funding came from WMNEH, based on Steering Committee’s decision. CoC decisions for how to utilize fundin also about capacity. Because of YHDP’s workload, it made sense for both CoCs to leverage opportunity in collaboration with YHDP. Because YHDP had already contracted with Jo Consulting for Youth Needs Assessment, this plan wouldn’t require reprocurement. During YHDP planning, brainstorming ideas of how to use funds. We wanted to serve whole CoC, making sure covers whole three county area.

*Take away*: Should continue to have conversations about racial equity funding. Should continue conversation regarding decision making, communication, and planning with activities that impact CoC.

Additionally, WMNEH discovered additional $17,000 in network funds that can be allocated between CoCs. Hope is to empower CoCs to focus on equity work for transgender population. WMNEH steering committee made up of broad swatch of CoC members. Imperfect system but balancing some level of representation with efficiency.

***YDHP Comment/Questions:***

* *Based on what been talking about, does population include youth and young adults who have children?* Current YAB does not have any members who are young parents. Since Franklin County awarded $1.9 million to provide housing and supportive services over two years, there could be focus on this population if community plan decides to serve young adults with children.
* *How will projects know what to do with the money when they get it?* After project ideas are finalized, CoC going to release Request for Funding in March. When projects apply, they will have described what they are planning to do with the money, if awarded. Projects will begin next fall.
* **811 Mainstream Vouchers Updates—by CAPV**

CoC had encouraged housing authorities to apply for 811 mainstream vouchers, for non-elderly individuals with disabilities. HUD encouraged partnership between housing authorities and CoCs to help house chronically homeless people. Four housing authorities applied: Greenfield, Franklin County Regional, Amherst, and Northampton. All were awarded vouchers: 43 in total.

Intention, with encouragement from HUD, is to house chronically homeless individuals off of By Names List with vouchers. Proving to be complicated. All housing authorities have opted to wait to start vouchers in April or May to have time to try and set up preference. Housing authorities have to be able to change internal preferences so that they can create preference for chronically homeless people. If we house individuals from By Names List, vouchers will be considered units for CoC. Springfield and Three County CoC are in communication and are waiting for a meeting with tech support to figure out how to support housing authorities with preference.

Vouchers require that supportive services are made available for voucher holders. When applying, worked with supportive services agencies and housing authorities. Last month, a meeting was held in Franklin County to identify supportive services available in county and scope. A similar meeting will be held in Hampshire County this month.

***Questions/Comments:***

* *Can 811 vouchers be project-based?* Yes, there is an ability to but would take time. Will not happen in this round but perhaps in future.
* MJ Adams has been doing a lot of work with landlord outreach and engagement. Held landlord training recently and about 45 landlords attended.

**Adjournment**