

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance Steering Committee Meeting

Thursday, May 3, 2018

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Champlain Housing Trust, 88 King Street, Burlington, VT – 2nd floor conference room

MEETING MINUTES

CCHA Steering Committee Members in Attendance: Champlain Housing Trust (Margaret Bozik: committee co-chair), Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (Travis Poulin: committee co-chair, Jan Demers, Chris Brzovic), VT Agency of Human Services - Burlington Field District Director (Jane Helmstetter: committee facilitator), Community & Economic Development Office - City of Burlington (Marcy Esbjerg: collaborative applicant), Burlington Police Department (Lacey-Ann Smith: committee secretary), ANEW Place (Kevin Pounds), Committee on Temporary Shelter (Nicole Kubon), Homeless Community (Stephen Marshall), Pathways Vermont (Lindsay Casale), Safe Harbor Health Center - Community Health Centers of Burlington (Erin Ahearn), Vermont Center for Independent Living (Kim Colville), Burlington Housing Authority (Allyson Laackman, Sarah Russell, Stephanie Bixby), Howard Center (Elaine Soto), Spectrum Youth & Family Services (Will Towne), Steps to End Domestic Violence (Sharon Rotax, Dylan Foote), United Way of Northwest Vermont (Diana Carminati).

(CCHA Steering Committee Members Absent: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, UVM Medical Center, Vermont 2-1-1 United Ways of Vermont, Vermont State Housing Authority.)

Other Attendees: Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (Paddy Shea: meeting note taker), VT AHS Department of Mental Health (Brian Smith), VT AHS DCF Economic Services Division (Geoffrey Pippenger), VT AHS DCF Office of Economic Opportunity (Sarah Phillips, Emily Higgins), Vermont Legal Aid (Jessica Radbord), Institute for Community Alliances (Caitlin Ettenborough), Vermont Housing Finance Agency (Maura Collins, Andrea Tieso), Cathedral Square (Laura Wilson), Vermont Family Network (Lisa Maynes).

Key Points:

- **CCHA Draft Monitoring Policy – vote was postponed**
- **CCHA CES Master List Inactive Policy Draft – approved**
- **CCHA Coordinated Entry Overview Draft – approved with amendments**

1. Introductions and Announcements

- Sharon Rotax (Steps to End Domestic Violence): I am leaving Steps to move out of state. Thank you, I've been honored to be a part of this group.

*** There is a round of applause in appreciation of Sharon.*

- Sharon Rotax (Steps to End Domestic Violence): Dylan Foote from Steps is shadowing me today.

- Jessica Radbord (Vermont Legal Aid): A publication came out that said Vermont had 39 eviction cases, but we know it was much higher than that.

June 11th-June 22nd would be a good time for you to meet with a group who will be trying to gather this data. Send me an email if you are interested in talking to them.

- Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): We need a tenant or tenants for the middle floor of 179 North Winooski. 3,000 or so square feet with an elevator. Lovely amenities. Let me know if you are interested.

- Lacey Smith (Burlington Police Department): The annual community barbeque is May 16th. Reach out to me if you want a table. It's at Pomeroy Park, from 4-7 PM.

- Jane Helmstetter (VT Agency of Human Services): I will be picking up some additional responsibilities in Addison County for Field Services. I will probably be exiting from some of the sub-committee work I have been doing locally, but I will remain as the facilitator of this Steering Committee.

2. Monitoring Policy (Marcy Esbjerg, CEDO)

See Appendix A: CCHA Monitoring Policy Draft

- Marcy Esbjerg (Community & Economic Development Office): Thank you to the Application Ranking Committee. People on the committee often wish for more information earlier on. This year, I got an early heads up in March about the NOFA coming, so I thought we could get into some of this.

It's a monitoring policy and set of procedures for this body to understand, in detail, the projects that are being funded by this CoC. But, we also thought it could, in the future, be used to monitor Coordinated Entry projects, so that the CCHA can understand what's happening in the community, and how the projects are performing.

"Desktop monitoring" means an agency asks grantees or sub-recipients to send them documents (as opposed to in-person). HUD could come to look at the City as the collaborative applicant. So, we want to check once a year to make sure all the paperwork is in place. There's a risk assessment section.

The part we want to get started ASAP is the presentations to the Steering Committee. We realized this would be good when Steps came to us when they were having trouble spending this money, and BHA Echo, and we realized that it would be good for us to get regular updates on the projects we fund, so we can offer assistance earlier on if needed.

Most of our grants are administered by Burlington Housing Authority, but they are doing the paperwork and vouchers, not interacting with the clients like case managers do. We want to hear from both groups.

At the end of this, Sarah Phillips shared that they want the CoCs' HOP grantees to provide updates to the Steering Committee at least twice a year.

The system-level Performance Monitoring System – we compete nationally for NOFA money against 400 other CoCs across the country. They will look at the system, and how we are doing as a county. So, we'll work with ICA to be able to see how our system is performing. They look at the Point In Time Count, and this year, our numbers went up.

We put a Coordinated Entry System place in the policy, but it's phrased as "might," so it's just a placeholder for now.

I think we should say we will do this reporting at a certain time each year, from January-March. We added that the Steering Committee would talk once a year about how it (the Steering Committee) was doing, as well as key partners.

The monitoring is about being able to provide technical assistance, and making sure we can use the money we are being given, and remain competitive. Under roles and responsibilities, we outlined who would be responsible for what. We have not yet developed the tools, but as they are developed, they would come before the Steering Committee for approval.

- Jane Helmstetter (VT Agency of Human Services): There is an awful lot of work that would happen with this policy. Twice a year seems like a lot. I don't know how we would fit this into our schedule.

- Stephanie Bixby (Burlington Housing Authority): On-site monitoring is very stressful. And, you need to have a monitor who knows what they are looking for. If they don't know what they are looking at, it's very frustrating because you have to explain everything to them.

- Marcy Esbjerg (Community & Economic Development Office): That's a really valid point. And Sarah Phillips made that point to me about peer reviews being good for that reason. I think we expect the monitoring to take on a qualitative and a quantitative review. I think for the qualitative part, anyone on the committee could do that part.

- Jane Helmstetter (VT Agency of Human Services): This conversation is going over our allotted time, so keep that in mind.

- Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): Some of the language with the bullets list is confusing. There aren't enough verbs.

- Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): That's results-based accountability language.

- Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): Also, it seems like there is not enough monitoring about the PIT Count.

- Marcy Esbjerg (Community & Economic Development Office): That would be something that would go in the timeline.

- Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): I'm proposing that we de-brief the PIT Count in the first quarter of the year, and in the second quarter, after the report is produced, we could do some data analytics and try to see how effective we are at the PIT Count.

- Marcy Esbjerg (Community & Economic Development Office): It might be duplicative of what the statewide PIT Count committee does.

- Sarah Phillips (VT AHS DCF Office of Economic Opportunity): Maybe you could just report that back.

- Emily Higgins (VT AHS DCF Office of Economic Opportunity): Who is doing the assessments/monitoring? At OEO we have a full-time position to do that.

- Jane Helmstetter (VT Agency of Human Services): That hasn't been established yet. It is a huge amount of work that is being suggested here.

- Kim Colville (Vermont Center for Independent Living): The Ranking Committee wants to have oversight, but we are opening it up to more people because it's so much work. As things get going, HUD is going to see that we are doing this work.

- Sarah Phillips (VT AHS DCF Office of Economic Opportunity): It is a huge amount of work to put together a plan like this, and I appreciate that. I have some tweaks around language that I'd like to suggest. We view monitoring mostly as technical assistance and compliance. More generally though, I think it would be really helpful to establish a preamble or guiding principles around monitoring; something that explains our goals (not just what HUD requires). The Alliance is welcome to borrow from our language. Such as mutual respect, open communication, joint problem-solving. And, to the extent that the Application Ranking Committee excludes those who are getting funding, then only letting them be the monitors would exclude the peer monitoring, so you would want to open it up that the *monitors* *could* be from agencies that get funding.

- Maura Collins (Vermont Housing Finance Agency): You have gotten so far in the past 18 months. This is a wonderful data collection opportunity, and maybe you could grab some success stories to share about ways that these programs have really changed people's lives.

- Sarah Phillips (VT AHS DCF Office of Economic Opportunity): There are a lot of partners involved with coordinated entry who don't get any CoC related funding. For instance, I don't think ESD would allow the CoC to come in and monitor case files.

- Allyson Laackman (Burlington Housing Authority): There are some qualitative questions that can be asked, but most of it is very technical. Maybe we could partner with Vermont state. They are the only other entity who gets it, so maybe we could partner with them. We need to have a real structure around this, and we may need to have funding around it.

- Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): I would like to reengage the conversation around the PIT Count. I'm very disappointed about how the Statewide PIT Count Committee has not come to Burlington to do de-briefing, or to do an analysis about how many people on the streets were not counted. I have asked people on the streets if they were counted, and they say no. I want there to be specific monitoring about what we will do in each quarter.

- Jane Helmstetter (VT Agency of Human Services): We are going to talk about PIT soon.

- Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): Can we postpone this for a month for voting?

- Travis Poulin (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity): Yeah, because we don't have a finished document to vote on.

- Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): Okay, so we can vote on it in June.

- Marcy Esbjerg (Community & Economic Development Office): I have a time concern. I would still ask that we still go ahead starting in June to do the presentations. Because we only have June, July, and August.

- Jane Helmstetter (VT Agency of Human Services): Could we start off with the monitoring policy for grants, and hold off on the monitoring for other things?

- Marcy Esbjerg (Community & Economic Development Office): I think that's 90% of it.

- Jane Helmstetter (VT Agency of Human Services): How are we going to make the presentations happen?

- Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): If Marcy can send me a list of the current CoC grantees, I will reach out for volunteers. (We'll set aside the HOP ones for now.)

3.) Point in Time Count Results (Marcy Esbjerg, Community and Economic Development Office)

See Appendix B: CCHA Point In Time Count Analysis of the Final Numbers

- Marcy Esbjerg (Community & Economic Development Office): Shout out to Paddy for doing most of the administrative work for the PIT Count this year.

The numbers represent HUD's definition of literal homelessness: those who live in a place not meant for human habitation, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and hotels paid for by gov't or charitable org. (Precariously housed has not been included for the past 5 years.)

For students in public schools, the McKinney-Vento Act Eligibility does count those who are doubled up due to loss of housing and economic hardship (whereas HUD's definition of literally homeless doesn't). The McKinney-Vento services are provided for the whole school year, even if the kid becomes housed. Of the students considered homeless in Vermont in the SY2015-2016:

- 61% were considered doubled up
- 20.4% were living in hotels/motels
- 13.3% were living in shelters, transitional housing, or awaiting foster care
- 5.3% were living unsheltered (cars, parks, camping, abandoned buildings)

For 2016-2017, there were 129 children considered homeless (66 of whom were doubled up) Compare that to our PIT Count, where we counted 54 "literally homeless" children.

- Paddy Shea (Chittenden County Homeless Alliance): Those numbers are pretty close.

- Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): Seeing how high the numbers of precariously housed are, we will have to take that into account.

- Marcy Esbjerg (Community & Economic Development Office): We see a huge decrease in the number unsheltered. Big shout-out to the emergency shelters and the GA motel vouchers. There were a lot

more people in emergency housing, and a downward trend in transitional housing. The spike in motel vouchers could be partly because it was an “adverse weather conditions” night.

We have a lot more homeless households that are adults-only (255 people) vs families with children (104 people).

For the sub-populations, almost all of the numbers went down. We have continued to see chronic homelessness decline ever since we started using the VI-SPDAT.

When we do the PIT Count, we also do the HIC (Housing Inventory Chart).

Not everybody knows they’ve been counted, because they weren’t interviewed, the shelter workers, etc., fill out the form based on their client records.

- Paddy Shea (Chittenden County Homeless Alliance): The vast majority of people don’t know they’ve been counted.

- Marcy Esbjerg (Community & Economic Development Office): True.

- Sarah Phillips (VT AHS DCF Office of Economic Opportunity): I do think that when we have shelters that serve families, sometimes they will have an empty bed, but that is because they might have a family in a 4-bedroom room, but they only have 3 family members and they don’t want to put a stranger in the room with the family. So, we count rooms instead of beds to account for that.

- Emily Higgins (VT AHS DCF Office of Economic Opportunity): Why does CVOEO Rapid Re-Housing say they have 0 beds, vs COTS Rapid Re-Housing has 17 beds?

- Sarah Phillips (VT AHS DCF Office of Economic Opportunity): It shows actual use, not capacity.

- Marcy Esbjerg (Community & Economic Development Office): We can see that we had 141 ESD emergency housing, 92 individuals with emergency housing, and 51 families with ESD emergency housing.

- Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): The increase this year was an increase in single adults in motels. So, that seems to validate that it’s appropriate that we are focusing on single adults at first on coordinated entry.

- Jessica Radbord (Vermont Legal Aid): It looks like there were some vacancies in SROs (single room occupancy).

- Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): SROs are not for everyone. It can be hard. Also, one program was transitioning, which would account for some of the vacancies. I will write a press release about the PIT Count.

- Geoffrey Pippenger (VT AHS DCF Economic Services Division): We had high numbers this year because of the adverse weather condition night.

4. Coordinated Entry (Chris Brzovic)

See Appendix C: CCHA CES Master List Inactive Policy Draft

See Appendix D: CCHA Coordinated Entry Overview Draft

- Chris Brzovic (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity): This is the first time we have met in a while, and not everyone was at the Community Solutions Action Lab, so I'll review. This is the scorecard we made at the Action Lab *[showing it on screen]*. We made a list of "aims" (goals). We went through a 13-question scorecard to evaluate how we were doing. We scored 7 out of 13. We should be able to turn all the "No"s into "Yes"s and have a quality by-name list by June 30th.

- Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): United Way is interested in helping use volunteers to do data entry. HMIS told us what they would need in order to have volunteers work on HMIS.

- Marcy Esbjerg (Community & Economic Development Office): I talked to 2-1-1 and they are also onboard with helping with the hump, and they already have license money. So, maybe we could go with that for the long term.

- Chris Brzovic (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity): What we are talking about is getting the list of clients that providers are already working with, and getting them entered into the system. Once we get through those, they will already be in the system and we will be over the hump, and only have to enter newly presenting people into the system.

I'd like to turn to the Inactive Policy. We needed this because sometimes people leave the area, or find housing on their own, etc. So, we need a way to take those names off the active list, so that our list is accurate and up to date. We don't want to take people off prematurely, so we give it a 90-day window. And, if the people turn up again, they can be moved back onto the list without having to re-do the whole assessment process.

- Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): So, if you are determined to be inactive, you would not be offered housing, because we can't get in touch with you.

- Chris Brzovic (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity): Right.

- Brian Smith (VT AHS Department of Mental Health): The Department of Mental Health reaches out to people who have a serious mental health illness, and who don't want to come in to agencies, but who need help. So, we bring them soup, boots, etc., to try and help and reengage them.

- Jane Helmstetter (VT Agency of Human Services): So, those people who get visits by those workers would still be on the list.

- Emily Higgins (VT AHS DCF Office of Economic Opportunity): What if someone is offered a housing opportunity and then declines it?

- Chris Brzovic (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity): They would remain on the list.

- Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): I just wanted to mention that this policy has been approved by the Coordinated Entry Committee.

- Chris Brzovic (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity): And, remember that we are doing this prioritization by your vulnerability score, not first-come-first-served, so being moved to inactive and then back to active would not make people go to the back of the line.

- Nicole Kubon (Committee on Temporary Shelter): It really just means that we know people are still in the area and still homeless.

VOTE: To amend current Coordinated Entry policies to include an official Master List Inactive Policy.

Motions to approve: Diana Carminati (United Way of Northwest Vermont)

Seconds: Travis Poulin (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity)

Yes: 16

No: 0

Abstain: 0

MOTION PASSES.

- Nicole Kubon (Committee on Temporary Shelter): Here is the Coordinated Entry Overview. This is our elevator pitch. We wanted some easy language to help people learn about coordinated entry.

- Sarah Russell (Burlington Housing Authority): Several people were involved in crafting this, including front-line service providers.

The group discussed the draft, and overall, 5 amendments were suggested throughout the document, and Nicole Kubon offered to incorporate them into the document.

The changes are:

- 1: In the 2nd sentence: change “homeless households” to “households experiencing homelessness.”
- 2: In the 3rd bullet point: edit to read “If a household is eligible for housing case management...”
- 3: In the 3rd bullet point: replace “insert time frame” with “5-10 business days”
- 4: In the 4th bullet point: replace “by-name list” with “master list” (its official name in our CE policies)
- 5: In the “It is important to note...” section: several suggestions were made for rewording it (Nicole has the specifics)

VOTE: To approve language for CE messaging (the Coordinated Entry Overview), with the 5 amendments we discussed.

Motions to approve: Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust)

Seconds: Marcy Esbjerg (Community & Economic Development Office)

Yes: 14

No: 0

Abstain: 0

MOTION PASSES.

- Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): We will be working in the future on developing a system to help those who are precariously housed.
- Nicole Kubon (Committee on Temporary Shelter): What is the best way to make the FAQ list? Should folks send suggestions to me, or to Chris?
- Chris Brzovic (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity): They can send them to me.
- Travis Poulin (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity): Make it clear in the subject line that it is suggestions for the FAQ list.
- Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): And, if you have a suggested answer, please include that too.

6. Next Quarterly Meeting (Jane Helmstetter, VT Agency of Human Services)

*** This was not really discussed due to time constraints.*

7. Schedule and Agenda for June CCHA Steering Committee Meeting

For the June meeting, here are things for the agenda: Coordinated Entry update and the potential start of program presentations, from CoC funded grants recipients.

***** Next CCHA Steering Committee Meeting:** Thursday, June 7, 2018, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM, Champlain Housing Trust, 88 King Street, Burlington, VT – 2nd floor conference room.