

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA) STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

December 6th, 2018, 9 -11 AM

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

MINUTES

Attendees:

- Margo Batsie, **STEPS**
- Jason Brill, **V.A.**
- Elaine Soto, **HC**
- Will Towne, **Spectrum**
- Travis Poulin, **CVOEO**
- Meghan Morrow Raftery, **ICA**
- Stephanie Bixby, **BHA**
- Daniel Blankenship, **VSHA**
- Val Russell, **CEDO**
- Andrea Hurley, **VSHA**
- Laura Wilson, **Cathedral Square**
- Lacey Smith, **BPD**
- Brian Smith, **VT-DMH**
- Andrea Tieso, **VHFA**
- Geoffrey Pippenger, **AHS/ DCF/ ESD**
- Jan Demers, **CVOEO**
- Dylan Foote, **STEPS**
- Emily Higgins, **OEO**
- Steve Lunna, **SSVF @ UVM**
- Kevin Pounds, **A New Place**
- Lindsay Mesa, **Pathways**
- Josie Curtin, **CHT**
- Sarah Russell, **BHA**
- Chris Brzoviz, **CCHA/ CVOEO**
- Erin Ahearn, **CHCB/ Safe Harbor**
- Jane Helmstetter, **AHS FS**
- Kim Colville, **VCIL**
- Melissa Farr, **COTS**
- Meg MacAuslan, **CVOEO**
- Stephen Marshall, **Lived Experience**

PRELIMINARIES

- I. **Legislative awareness day & homeless vigil** is on Wed Jan 16th. Are people planning on going? Can Erhard be contacted by email for questions about this? Erhard Mahnke, erhardm@vtaffordablehousing.org or 233-2902.
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A DISCUSSION OF THE RAPID REHOUSING GRANT CURRENTLY UNTETHERED TO AN AGENCY – LED BY DANIEL OF VSHA AND VAL OF CEDO.

- Spectrum’s board has re-considered its priorities (based on budget shifts) and will not be able to continue running its program at 141 Maple. So **we need to determine how to keep the grant money for this program in the community.** One way to do this is to change recipients and have someone else run the program under, more or less, the same terms. It would have to be rapid rehousing, tenant-based grant, with a target of 18 -24 youth experiencing literal homelessness, and a couple of other details.
- There are three components to the operation of a grant like this: **1. grant recipient 2. rental assistance administrator 3 service provider.** There are many ways an entity could approach this if interested — possibly contracting out for a portion of this.
- We had an executive committee meeting with Daniel to discuss how to keep the money in the community. The committee would like to:
 - **request letters of intent** from agencies ASAP (tomorrow possibly)
 - **bring together the ranking committee** to look at the letters of intent and make some recommendations for a possible alternative recipient.
- The grant is for **\$78,742** and goes for a year and the renewal has already been submitted for next year. 25 percent must go to services (minimum).
- Keep in mind: we need our HUD rep to approve it. And the fewer things that change, the more likely they are to approve it.
- **The building at 141 Maple Street does not have to be used for this grant but the building is available.** It’s a 9 bed building – shared living – all the common areas are shared including kitchens and bathrooms.
- ONE POSSIBILITY: People in Recovery (huge need for safe houses / recovery houses). With a recovery home you can require they live in a particular site for the full 2 years and then they are free to leave. Or, they can stay a year if they are not programmatically bound and then take the subsidy with them.
- Since it’s tenant-based rental assistance it can also be used for scatter sites (or a particular site PLUS scatter sites).
- **ALL HANDS ON DECK to keeping this money in the community.**
- We will not necessarily send out a full RFP. We want to communicate primarily: **“how can we make this work?”**
- Turnaround could be as short as 10 days.
- The new recipient will have to provide a match for services.

- **QUESTION:** Could one of the partner agencies be the lead agency in collaboration with a second? Assuming they serve the same population.
 - **ANSWER:** YES. You just have to have those three components: a grant administrator, rental assistance administrator and service provider.
- **QUESTION:** Have we identified groups that might be able to work with us?
 - DOC
 - Chittenden Clinic
 - Lund
 - VT Recovery
 - Teen Challenge New England
- **SUGGESTION** of the executive committee: we would like to be able to offer help to make this switch (**Technical Assistance**) of up to **\$2000 from CCHA**.

IN SUMMARY: Money is coming back into our coffers because Spectrum is not able to use it for Rapid Rehousing on Maple St. We need to come up with a plan that is similar to the one currently existing for the current target population. It has to be tenant based rental assistance and the services need to be provided by the recipient of the grant. It's a great opportunity.

- **VOTE on whether to allow \$2000 alliance funds for Technical Assistance and to move forward on this RFP.**

✓ **Motion**

✓ **Second**

✓ **VOTE: 16 yes / 1 abstention**

- PLEASE NOTE as an aside: the building on Maple will be empty and we need to know what to do with it. Running it as an SRO (without services) is too challenging. We want to have a place with onsite services. SHROEDER PLACE might be a model to think about. KEEP THINKING ABOUT THIS and spread the word.

A DISCUSSION OF COMMITTEE UPDATES:

I. STRATEGIC PLANNING

- The members of the strategic planning committee donated a huge amount of time working on this and the process was very transparent. Diana was very rigorous in her approach. Nothing has been objected to which seems an indication of consensus.
- Should we vote to approve the organizational development plan as developed over the last couple of months?

- **VOTE ON WHETHER TO VOTE ON IT TODAY**

- ✓ **motion**

- ✓ **second**

- ✓ **Discussion: the organizational development plan is a sound plan, well put together, however the implementing of the plan is going to take a lot of work and leadership and commitment that is no longer present. We have a lot of ambition but how we will need a plan around the wide array of what we want to do.**

- ✓ **VOTE: 16 yes / 1 abstention**

- **VOTE ON WHETHER TO APPROVE THE ORGANIZATION PLAN**

- ✓ **motion**

- ✓ **second**

- ✓ **VOTE: 16 yes / 1 abstention**

- **Next Strategic Planning Committee Meeting: WED Dec 19th at 3:00.**

2. COORDINATED ENTRY

- Chris is stretched thin with coordinated entry. They applied for funds for an admin person to help but that won't start until Sept. So **Lacey will be filling in to help Chris. BUT LACEY WILL BE THE ONLY ONE AT BPD WITH ACCESS TO HMIS.** The laptop she will use is specific to this job – it is not BPD property.
 - Next step will be to find out more about the agreement between BPD and CCHA.
- Erica should have access for data entry to help relieve some of the burden from Chris.
- There is also a **wallet-sized card that has been developed for clients:** A gold card for someone who has had an assessment and knows their caseworker and a blue card for someone who's had an assessment and is waiting for a caseworker.

VETERAN'S REFERRAL POLICY (approved by Balance of State)

- Meant to be an annex to the coordinated entry policy for Chittenden County.
- It follows as closely as possible the C.E. process for Chittenden County.
- **VOTE ON APPROVAL OF VETERAN'S COORDINATED ENTRY POLICY & PROCEDURE:**

- ✓ **Motion**

✓ **Second**

- **Discussion: Section 5 (about Domestic Violence) is left somewhat vague deliberately because different agencies have different policies. Whatever the specific agency is doing, the assessment will follow their own policies about DV.**
- **Also, there's one small fix in section 2: Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness needs to be changed to VHA.**

✓ **VOTE: 16 yes / 1 abstention**

A DISCUSSION OF THE UPCOMING PIT COUNT

Led by Daniel of VSHA

- Some changes that were made from last year:
 - The AHS field service section was removed.
 - There was feedback from the Veteran's Committee that was implemented.
 - The old form has all explanations (glossary) on the back of the form but in this iteration the explanations were moved up.
 - We added age ranges which will help us avoid duplication (we cannot request DOB of DV individuals).
 - Dylan states that they hope to move to aggregated reporting for DV agencies.
 - There is an ongoing/open question about preventing duplication.
- **SUGGESTION:** The term "long term disability" is not clear, because it might suggest you need to have a disability for longer than 6 months. Can we make it clearer? Also, substance abuse is not a disability UNTIL you are in recovery.
- **SUGGESTION:** On the last page, under, "do not count," it says do not count if they are "precariously housed." How about adding a question: "would you be outside if the weather was warm?" This would be for our purposes, but not for HUD purposes.
- **SUGGESTION:** We might ask "have you been counted by anyone else"?
- **QUESTION:** We're counting only transitional housing dedicated to homelessness but I'm just wondering what are those programs exactly:
 - STEPS
 - Canal Street
 - Smith House
 - Transitional
 - Others?

- Everyone in the CoC has to do an inventory of beds as well as beds filled during the PIT count. We will count all emergency shelter beds, transitional housing dedicated to homeless, rapid rehousing & permanent supportive housing. TH is in the PIT count as well.
- Another change was the date. HUD requires the count take place in the last 10 days of January. **Now it's the 4th WED in January moving forward. In 2019, it's JANUARY 23rd.**
- The question should be asked: “where are you currently staying”? OR, if the instrument is street-outreach on the following day (the 24th), the question should be posed like so: “where di you stay last night?”
- If you are someone who enters data into HMIS (emergency shelter, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing) — you don't do these interviews — you just pull reports from HMIS.
- Trainings for HMIS are forthcoming.
- For the providers who don't enter into HMIS, **an online form was created in Google Forms.** A link to the form will be sent out through a newsletter & listserv, and there will be a training on this as well. This is the 4th year that ICA is doing this. You can use the form offline and when you get back online it will populate. It should only be transmitted on a network that's password protected.
- **QUESTION:** What about using your cell phone for transmission? Not sure. Answer should be investigated.
- **The definition of homelessness** is very specific for our purposes: streets and other places not meant for human habitation or housing dedicated to homelessness.
- We separated out options to fill in information that doesn't fit this definition and is meant for a larger picture.
- **Schools**, in the past, have not been able to participate in PIT count. There is an opportunity to complete the forms at schools but only if they know the makeup of the whole household. Schools can refer people to 211 – and that's where they would do the PIT form.
- **WHO WE DON'T COUNT ACCORDING TO THE HUD DEFINITION:**
 - couch surfing,
 - institutional stays (hospitals if they are not admitted),
 - hotels stays not paid for by an organization.
- **SUGGESTION:** We should contact a hospital representative to count homeless who are NOT admitted.
- The question about **Veteran status** has been modified to avoid people claiming Veteran status when they are not. Yes or No gets some inaccurate reporting.

- Erica will be collecting paper forms.
- We need a list of counters & groups/areas we hope to count & try to make a correspondence between the people who are going to count and where they are sent to do the counting. **The Community Outreach Team** will come to the next PIT Count Committee meeting DEC 12th at 2:00 at 101 college street. The Community Outreach Team is a unit of Howard Mental Health & the BPD works with them.
- Stephen plans to reach out to libraries, food shelves, community justice centers and so forth & recruit someone at the university (census & statistics) to help with developing a data check (how good are we at counting?). We don't know how well we're doing with people who are living outdoors. **The goal is to have a survey in the Spring to ask people if they were counted in January.**
- Paddy produced **badges / nametags** in the past for people who are doing the PIT count last year. Let's do that again this year.
- In other regions/ towns, ideally we will get a PIT count going to reach out to people & organizations who might be interested. Include faith-based. The interfaith council of churches exist and might be interested in sharing information about PIT count. Also the Rotary Club.
- Burlington Parks & Rec might be useful in this.
- PIT count posters: we need pictures and logos or perhaps just logos (no pictures).
- REMINDER: The Steering Committee is part of the PIT count.

Jan. 3rd is the next meeting.

A few items for the next meeting:

1. Rapid rehousing grant
 2. C.E. agreement
 3. PIT count.
 4. Template for letters of support
 5. HOP presentation got bumped to next month (BHA & Safe Harbor & OEO)
- One more update: Vermont state HA was awarded 57 new housing vouchers (family reunification).