

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance

Steering Committee Meeting

Thursday, September 6, 2018

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

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

MINUTES

CCHA Steering Committee Members in Attendance:

Margaret Bozik, committee co-chair, **Champlain Housing Trust (CHT)**
Travis Poulin, committee co-chair, **Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO)**
Jan Demers, **CVOEO**
Meg MacAuslan, **CVOEO**
Jane Helmstetter, committee facilitator, **VT Agency of Human Services (VT-AHS) - Burlington Field District Director**
Marcy Esbjerg, collaborative applicant, **Community & Economic Development Office (CEDO) - City of Burlington**
Lacey-Ann Smith: committee secretary, **Burlington Police Department (BPD)**
Nicole Kubon, **Committee on Temporary Shelter (CoTS)**
Stephen Marshall, **Homeless Community**
Lindsay Casale, **Pathways Vermont**
Stefani Hartsfield, **UVM Medical Center**
James Richmond, **Vermont 2-1-1 United Ways of Vermont**
Kim Colville, **Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL)**
Allyson Laackman, **Burlington Housing Authority (BHA)**
Stephanie Bixby, **BHA**
Sarah Russell [via phone], **BHA**
Elaine Soto, **Howard Center**
Will Towne, **Spectrum Youth & Family Services**
Dylan Foote, **STEPS to End Domestic Violence**
Diana Carminati, **United Way of Northwest Vermont**

(CCHA Steering Committee Members Absent: ANEW Place, Safe Harbor Health Center - Community Health Centers of Burlington, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Vermont State Housing Authority.)

Other Attendees:

Paddy Shea, meeting note taker, **Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)**
Chris Brzovic, **CCHA**
Meghan Morrow Raftery, **Institute for Community Alliances**
Caitlin Ettenborough, **Institute for Community Alliances**
Sarah Phillips, **VT AHS DCF Office of Economic Opportunity**
Emily Higgins, **VT AHS DCF Office of Economic Opportunity**
Geoffrey Pippenger, **VT AHS DCF Economic Services Division**
Laura Wilson, **Cathedral Square**
Steve Lunna, **Supportive Services for Veteran Families at UVM**

PRELIMINARIES

Jonathan Bond from **VERMONT TENANTS & MOBILE HOMES PROGRAMS, CVOEO**, made a presentation with regards to their effort to apply for a grant from UVM Medical Foundation :

“About 40% of our service delivery is in Chittenden County. We are applying for a grant through UVM Medical Center. We have a hotline service where we serve about 800 people, and we serve about 1,800 people overall (??). The data hasn’t been comparable year to year, so it’s been hard to measure progress. We’ve done a pilot program to expand it to the Rutland area, and it’s allowing us to compare results between the new site and our current work. We’re trying to bring a higher degree of measurement to our services.

We traditionally haven’t worked directly with homelessness prevention, but we do some.

We want the landlord tenant debate to be based more on fact, not just on anecdotal worst case scenarios. We have been able to look through our numbers and found 200 people who were having issues, but who were not undergoing eviction proceedings.

We submitted to the Community Health Investment Committee with September 11th being the hear-back date. This was a new opportunity for us that we hadn’t previously been invited to.”

It was agreed that someone from the committee would be contacted to come and explain the applications related to housing.

No voting on this matter today.

A Discussion of Continuum of Care Policies

Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity: Affirmative Outreach and Marketing Policy

- We got this wording from the BoS. (See edits written onto the printed document on page 1, 3.)

VOTE: To approve as amended.

Yes: 18

No:0

Abstain: 0

- Currently HUD only uses a 90 day lookback period.

- Jessica suggested she would be happy to provide a training about **VAWA (Violence Against Women Act)**.
- This particular item is for victims of sexual assault to be able to exit their lease without penalties.

VOTE: To approve the policy as amended.

Yes: 18

No: 0

Abstain: 0

Education policy

- Some particulars were borrowed from the BoS. Some changes were made based on the statute to make it a little more clear: the language was altered slightly to say the CoC programs would support the liaisons. The numbered items came right out of the statute.
- It was suggested that we need to put on the agenda a meeting with the school homeless liaisons to figure out how we will do this.
- With all these new policies we are required to have, we need to make sure we figure out how to stay on top of it.
- We also should figure out how we can connect with them more often.

VOTE: To approve.

Yes: 18

No: 0

Abstain: 0

Our discrimination policy

VOTE: TO approve.

Yes: 18

No: 0

Abstain: 0

Appeal of funding decision by CVOEO

- The possibility of seeking a Coordinated Entry Specialist is currently under consideration. This would be a dedicated staffer to work on CE for the CCHA (not for CVOEO). This person would do assessments and referrals to housing case management, and generally aiding connection at the front end.

- A full-time person is preferable to some than a part-time position. We'd have a year to plan out how this position would work with ESG, etc.
- **Benefits of a full-time position** would be that it would greatly streamline the experience for the consumer, and it would greatly improve the data in our CE System.
- This will also alleviate the burden on our case managers, who are currently having to take the time to do the assessments. And it would allow us to incorporate at-risk households into our assessment process.
- It would likely lighten the load for CE hubs.
- We are currently sending back \$200,000 of rental assistance anyway because it is so hard to house people with those grants. Shifting some of the money to CE may help us house more people and use more of that money.

Possible Contraindications / Points of Disagreement

- Is it ideal to allocate more funding for this position rather than seek other funding? It could be better saved for rental subsidy.
- Will it create a quicker path to navigation, especially for our at-risk population? We don't have enough capacity to serve those at-risk (only those who are literally homeless).
- At a recent meeting, there was pushback that this would do anything to help with documentation. We have a pretty close match between the subsidy, service capacity, and the number of people who need to use it. So, I think we will use the subsidy now.
- Stefani Hartsfield mentioned that there is new funding from the Blueprint for Health for screening and navigation to services which will likely be available on January 1, 2019. Expansion of social workers. Those folks will ideally be fully trained in coordinated entry, both intake and navigation.
- Marcy: I'm looking at the budget right now. Full time person at about \$42K a year, and indirect costs of training, business insurance, office supplies, computer, etc., at about \$80K a year.
- We have individual agencies, but also we are a collaborative. Sometimes we have to think on behalf of our agencies, and sometimes about the whole. Sometimes it is a conflict. The individual agencies have the right to set salaries and benefits how they want. However, for the CCHA, I think we should give equal funding to the two agencies that are going to be employing people who are doing the same sort of work. It is much easier to start smaller and give more money later than it is to give more money now and pull it back later. If the continuum wants to add these two new positions, and if one of them needs to be half-time, I think that's a good way to experiment with building up. The application goes in now. The money won't start until a year from now. I hope that we'll put in those 8-10 people to use up that ECHO grant (that we already cut down a little bit). So, after a year, we'll see how much the community needs that rental assistance. I'd like to give them a shot to use that money.

- We will vote on their appeal to reconsider the 50K award and instead give the roughly 80K (taking about \$30K away from the ECHO grant).

Some members do not vote due to conflict of interest. *The group decides that only the ranking committee can vote.*

VOTE: To deny the appeal. The Alliance will look for alternative funding for this work that could be used in the near term.

Yes: 5

No: 0

Abstain: 1 (Lacey)

Report on Submitting the HUD NOFA Application

- The goal is to submit it on the 17th (Marcy leading with the help of Paddy). It's due on the 18th, but you never want to wait until the last day because the system goes bananas.
- We posted something on the website saying we were looking for new members, because HUD wants CoCs to seek members.
- We worked with many different agencies on this and went overboard this year on public postings because HUD requests it. We sent letters to the clerks of the various towns, advertised it in Seven Days, on the radio, and on TV. We send out an email and it was on the website.
- Our PIT Count went up. We also had a difference in the bed count because of the way we were told to count it last year vs. this year. So, we may lose points there, so that's why we went overboard in other areas to make up for it.
- We are asked to give numbers, and why numbers increased, and they ask who in our organization is responsible for making that change for the better.
- Education: We are a bit weak in the section about collaborating with education services.
- Working with mainstream programs: We will ask people to give me more information before the application is submitted.
- Racial disparity: We will use some of the data from The City of Burlington. They have looked at racial disparity in housing.
- Affirmative outreach: We will talk about the policy we just passed if there are other ways you have done affirmative outreach.

VOTE: To allow the Executive Committee to approve the submittal of the application to HUD, after the public comment period.

Yes: 18
No: 0
Abstain: 0

CHARTER CHANGES

1. We made the language consistent.
 2. We also added how the Steering Committee members need to serve on an additional committee.
 3. We lowered it to 2 Community Meetings a year because that is all that HUD requires, and last year we only had 3 and this year only 2.
 4. We Added Treasurer and Collaborative Applicant as officers.
 5. Also, it discusses CoC reviewing the ESG grants. It specifically says in the HUD regulations that the CoC has to review the ESG grants.
- We should consider whether we wanted to add wording about Paddy and Chris's positions. A lot of what is in the charter are duties that in actuality Paddy and Chris are doing.
 - Marcy mentioned that, "We did agree in the Monitoring Policy that, twice a year, they are supposed to come before the CoC to give reports."
 - Jane says, "I want to acknowledge the work these two women did. It's really helpful to bring this document in line with what we are actually doing."
 - Sarah Russell requested more information about the presentation required by HOP recipients.
 - There was one note made about the section on remuneration. It seemed to make it means tested which would make it hard for people to get reimbursed for things.
 - The HUD regulations say nothing about means testing, so **the Group decides to strike the part about means testing.**

VOTE: To recommend the charter changes to be brought to the Community Meeting, as amended.

Yes: 16
No: 0
Abstain: 1 (BPD)