

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

February 7, 2019, 9 -11 AM

Attendees

- *Caitlin Ettenborough, **ICA**
- *Stefani Hartsfield, **UVM**
- *Jason Brill, **VA**
- Andrea Tieso, **VHFA**
- *Margo Batsie, **STEPS**
- *Elaine Soto, **HC**
- Dylan Foote, **STEPS**
- Mary Ellen Mendl, **211**
- *Will Towne, **Spectrum**
- Travis Poulin, **CVOEO**
- Meg MacAuslan, **CVOEO**
- Meghan Morrow Raftery, **ICA**
- *Chris Brzovic, **CCHA / CVOEO**
- *Melissa Farr, **COTS**
- *Valerie Russell, **CEDO**
- *Geoffrey Pippenger, **ESD**
- *Steve Lunna, **SSVF @UVM**
- *Kevin Pounds, **A New Place**
- Sarah Russell, **BHA**
- *Lacey Smith **BPD**
- *Erin Ahearn, **CHCB**
- Laura Wilson, **Cathedral Square**
- Margaret Bozik, **CHT**
- Valerie Nikel, **State of Vermont**
- *Jane Helmstetter, **AHS**
- Amy Carmola, **UWNWVT**
- Kim Colville, **VCIL**
- *Jordan Redell, **City of Burlington, Mayor's Office**
- Miro Weinberger, **Mayor of Burlington**
- *Jesse Tipton, **Homeless Community**
- *Stephen Marshall, **Homeless Community**
- Erica Da Costa, **CCHA**

PLEASE NOTE: Unless quote marks are used, text attributed to a specific person is paraphrased.

LETTER OF SUPPORT REQUEST

- Steve Lunna: We need letter of support for supportive services for Veteran Families for NOFA grant. We have to have letters of support from the continuums we serve.
 - **VOTE: All support the letter of support**
 - **None opposed**
 - **One abstention**

DISCUSSION OF YEAR ROUND WARMING SHELTER

- Miro Weinberger arrives.
- Mayor: (paraphrased) **This is the fifth year of warming shelter and I think it's proven its value.** Much appreciation for everyone involved. Since the low barrier shelter has proved itself, we want to put more resources to it and expand the schedule. It will close June 15th this year. Used to close earlier.

We were originally considering turning this into a year-round shelter since there is a gap in services right now. We have to break up encampments from time to time during the summer so we thought a year-round shelter might be in order. **But the question arose, is this the right way to approach this?** What exactly should we apply extra resources to?

- Erin Ahearn: **The concern is that we might not have capacity in winter if it's a year-round shelter.** How do we provide services year-round but ALSO preserve this precious commodity we have in winter?
- **Perhaps a subcommittee can work on this.**

***Put a star next to your name if you want to be part of a more in-depth discussion about this (see list of attendees above).**

- We don't want a giant monolith shelter.
- We have rental assistance for PSH but we don't have services. So **let's make sure we also are pursuing funding for services.**
- What's **most needed in the shelter system is diversity:** planning for people with disability, social anxiety disorder, families without children, people in recovery. We need diversity of Supply.
- **Reiteration of the need for diversity** – esp. the need for services for people with disability.
- **And people with a companion animal.**
- There are still fair number of people who are falling through the cracks.
- Erin Ahearn: We need to start with the need, rather than take the position: “this is what we offer, how do you fit into that?”

CEDO UPDATE ON THE SPECTRUM GRANT & NEXT ROUND

- We have not been able to find a new grantee for the (formerly) Spectrum grant. We will be letting HUD know and giving the money back.
- Registration for the next round of applications is starting now. March 14th is the deadline. To be clear, you have to register to be able to subsequently apply.

A DISCUSSION OF THE BUDGET

- Laura Wilson: The CoC is in an operating deficit for the current fiscal year. But we do have cash on hand. There are two grants listed in projected income (one from United Way and one is through OneCare) but have not gotten approved yet (they're hopeful). The budget does not get voted on so this is just information for you and please reach out to ask questions or offer ideas for increasing revenue. One of the biggest expenditures will be the upcoming consultant.
- Margaret Bozik: Just to put this into context, we had a 60K grant that came in in year one and a 90K grant that came from Jane's trust and has been distributed over 3 years. The point is that a lot of revenue came in on year one. Revenue is down subsequently but we have a significant amount of unspent cash.
- Technically, we are in a good position.
- QUESTION: The CoC cannot do fundraising because we are not a 5013C. So should we form a non-profit to fund raise?
 - We do have a fiscal agent right now but they can't accept donations because they don't have the capacity to issue tax letters.

DISCUSSION OF THE CONSULTANT

- The decision to pursue a consultant grew out of Strategic Planning meetings. We realized that we needed someone to help us sort this highly complex process out. Meg MacAuslan put together the RFP and we got 4 viable options.
 - This is not a consultant who would evaluate our policies (the HUD T.A. did that already). It's about streamlining the consumer experience. It's a very complex system. Consultant evaluation is focused on the front end – getting people into the system.
 - We were surprised by the numbers that came back on the bid. Very high. The top bidder was 30K. The low bid was 16K plus travel. However, when we looked at what the low bidder proposed to do, it no longer seemed unreasonable. The consultant we chose did similar work in the Brattleboro area with an organization called GroundWorks. They also did some work with BoS. They also had stellar references.
 - We have a couple of prospective grants, one being the OneCare grant, to help pay (in small part) for the consultant. Stephani will give a brief overview of what the OneCare proposal consists of.
 - Stephani: We hope for more support around Coordinated Entry so this proposal has 3 components: 1. Support of Coordinated Entry (helping to fund the consultant, and based on the consultant report, supporting another position for C.E.) 2. Assessment of the ecosystem of everyone offering services in Chittenden county 3. Support of training and technical assistance for all the people working in C.E.
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- Stephen Marshall: Be sure to build in mechanisms into the system so that the consumer feedback is taken seriously.

- There was a Salvation Army dinner recently that gave us a lot of direct information. Maybe we should continue going to S.A. dinners.
- We want the blessing of this group to move ahead with the consultant.
- Concerns Expressed: Is there a portion of the data gathering that could be done for mutual benefit and reduced cost (for example, interviewing each other instead of having the consultant do so)? We also want to consider what happens if either of the funding sources doesn't come through?
- Suggestion: What if United Way volunteers did internal interviews?
 - **MOTION: To authorize the executive committee to negotiate with the low bidder contingent on securing the grant.**
 - **All those in favor: All**
 - **No oppositions**
 - **1 abstention**

A DISCUSSION OF THE PRIORITIES FOR BUILT-FOR-ZERO

Discussion Led by Chris Brzovic

- We interact with Community Solutions/ Built for Zero through bfzchangepackage.org (password required).
- But **data timeliness (including updates) continues to be an issue** (we're missing Dec & Jan data). We are not confident that the updates are in (people are housed that have not been noted as such).
- Community Solutions assists with implementation and measurement of effectiveness of a change idea but it required accurate data.
- One project we are doing through Community Solutions is to try to decrease the time it takes from the moment we gather documentation on chronic homelessness to actually getting them into PSH.
- Maybe a monthly data scrubbing meeting would be a good idea.
- The question before the committee right now is this:
We would like to establish the following priorities for housing: chronically homeless single adults and those fleeing DV and families that have the highest Vulnerability Scores.
- **OPEN QUESTION:** what do we lose when we formalize the priorities?
- **ANSWER:** These are – in some cases -- federal benchmarks. We're not going to be ignoring anyone else but we have to have somewhere to start. It's prioritization, not exclusion.
- **NOTE OF DISAGREEMENT:** Prioritization equals exclusion.
- **RESPONSE:** C.E. has a prioritization built in. And there's been a lot of concern expressed about that. But the Vulnerability Assessment is a common framework. But it's true that it's flawed (it's self reported, etc.). It's a place to start however. Chronic homelessness is much more objective, on the other hand.
- **MOTION: To establish the following priority population for the BFZ and the CHR:**
 - 1. Single adults who are chronic OR fleeing DV**
 - 2. Families with the highest V.S.**

- **All those in favor: 10**
- **Opposed: 1**
- **2 abstentions**

LAST ITEMS

- Strategic Planning Committee: we still need a co-chair.
- Schedule for March Meeting:
- STEPS and COTS will provide updates on HOP grants.
- Review the Point in Time count (process review).
- Don't forget to attend to Stephen's P.I.T. de-brief meeting: February 27, 2019 PIT COUNT Debrief meeting @ CEDO 149 Church St, 3rd Floor, 1:00

To find meeting & event dates and minutes for previous meetings, please go to **cchavt.org**