Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

April 4, 2019, 9 -11 AM

MINUTES

Attendees:

- Erin Ahearn, **CHCB**
- Stephen Marshall, **Lived Experience**
- Will Towne, **Spectrum**
- Lacey Smith, **BPD**
- Val Russell, **CEDO**
- Jane Helmstetter, **AHS**
- Chris Brzovic, **CCHA**
- Geoffrey Pippenger, **DCF / ESD**
- Jan Demers, **CVOEO**
- Nicole Kubon, **COTS**
- Jesse Tipton, **Lived Experience**
- Sarah Russell, **BHA**
- Steve Lunna, **SSVA @UVM**
- Tracey Sweeney, **VA Homeless**
- Jason Brill, **VA**
- Kevin Pounds, **ANEW Place**
- James Richmond, **Vermont 211**
- Meghan Morrow Raftery, **ICA**
- Caitlin Ettenborough, **ICA**
- Lindsay Morse, **UVMMC**
- Elaine Soto, **HC**
- Travis Poulin, **CVOEO**
- Margaret Bozik, **CHT**
- Jessica Radford, **VT Legal Aid**
- Melissa Farr, **COTS**
- Renada Walters, **Veterans Inc.**
- Temeila Thygesen, **Veterans Inc.**
- Erica Da Costa, **CCHA**

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

PRELIMINARIES

- The volunteer tax prep program still has slots open at CVOEO. If you're working with anyone who needs free tax prep, let us CVOEO know.
- Tracy Sweeney from the V.A. is here to discuss the recent Notice of Funding.
- 25 apartments will become available to homeless households – through CHT – beginning in August. Between August and December, 14 need to be filled.
- Through CEDO, Burlington receives community development block grant funds and for those communities who receive these funds, there has to be an action plan. CEDO's action plan will be released for public comment on April 10th and will be available on their website.
- A Coordinated Entry team returned from the "Built for Zero" conference last week in Atlanta. They received a commendation for having achieved "quality and reliable data."
- ICA has recently contracted with a state of New Hampshire so they will be hiring soon.
- **We now have a vacant spot on the steering committee**. Winooski Housing Authority is being considered but others are welcome to put themselves forward for this.

PRESENTATION BY TRACY SWEENEY OF THE V.A.

- Regarding, the recent Notice of Funding Availability for Veterans, this funding is to help with case management once a veteran first enters permanent housing, after having left an access point (for example COTS): **housing retention**. The funding lasts 6 months with the possibility of a 6 month extension.
- There is one V.A. case manager for all of Vermont. With funds received, you can potentially have 2 part-timers instead of one full-time person. Funding is for 2 years. Maximum award is $225K. There are funding priorities stipulated:
  - Priority #1: Those willing to do exclusively case management.
  - Priority #2: If you are a current grantee.
  - Priority #3: Everyone else. But if you fall into this category, you should not feel discouraged from applying.
- Read more here: **va.gov/homeless/gpd** or email Tracy: Tracy.sweeney@va.gov
- Tracy can't tell you what to put in your letter of support. But she can get information from you and that can prove useful to your application.
- Just to clarify: those applying are applying TO DO the case management themselves.
- Tracy asks: What are the needs, from your perspective?
  - RESPONSE:
    1. Housing Retention
    2. Streamlining the process
- It has to be an agency that serves the whole state.

PRESENTATION BY VAL RUSSELL: Update on Technical Assistance from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development on Ranking and Application Process

- When we gave back to HUD the $80K originally intended for SPECTRUM and informed HUD we couldn't find a replacement grantee, "our rep in the Boston office strongly suggested that we get T.A. on our ranking and application process to try to build into our system a way to avoid

this in the future (some kind additional risk assessment)" so Val has put in a request for that and it usually takes a month or two to find out whether we know if we're going to get the T.A. (very likely since they suggested it).

- This conversation should go to the STRATEGIC planning.
- Val will update us when the process is ready to move forward.

Data Quality, Point-in-Time Count and HMIS

- Meghan Morrow Raftery **provided preliminary data on the recent Point-in-Time count.** This is **VERY PRELIMINARY** and will be more thoroughly reported at next month's meeting. The caveats include: the D.V. numbers have not been added, there is still some cleaning up of non-HMIS data and there is one shelter's data that has to be re-confirmed. Once these issues are resolved**, numbers may increase or decrease.**
- With the caveats in mind, here are some of the numbers of homeless:
  - **Households: 220**
  - **Individuals: 275**
  - **Chronic households: 51**
  - **Chronic individuals: 76**
- OPEN QUESTION: Given that these are increased numbers over last year, is the increase due to system improvements or actual numbers increase?
- Chris Brzovic has 90 people on his list, with 13 pending inactive status. So these numbers roughly match.
- QUESTION: Chris, how many are meeting the HUD documentation requirements?
  - RESPONSE: They are definitely chronic – but whether we can get the technical documentation or not is up in the air.
- Meghan Further reported (preliminarily)
  - Under 18: 45
  - 18 to 24: 41
  - Over 24: 189

Next month will have cleaned-up data.

A DISCUSSION OF DATA PRODUCED BY COORDINATED ENTRY WITH THE HELP OF "BUILT FOR ZERO"

- The Built For Zero conference took place in Atlanta recently and Chris Brzovic was an attendee along with a few others. BFZ provides data analysis tools that are just coming into usefulness & Chris gave everyone a tour. PLEASE NOTE: Clean data is fairly recent (from approximately December) so long term data is not yet available. You can view the data available here:

  - **Bfzchangepackage.org**
  - **builtforzero2018 (password)**

- Chris says that data scrubbing has been focused on chronic individuals and vets, so those two sub-populations are the most accurate at this moment.
- ICA now has a link to BFZ inside ServicePoint.

- DV will always have to be manually added – it is not captured by HMIS.

- Chris reports that the task now is to get the micro-level data so we can advocate for the SPECIFIC resources we need. Community Solutions is encouraging everyone to shift away from a strict prioritization policy because we're finding that it is just is more complicated than that. We want to always be looking at the whole homeless population. And then bringing the providers together. We are currently seeing roughly 200 days from the time of assessment to someone being housed.

- Chris offered Provider Engagement numbers:
  - 58 on our list are actively engaged with service provider
    - 29 Safe Harbor
    - 11 COTS
    - 6 with Howard
    - 6 with CVOEO
  - 31 are not engaged with any provider

- Jane Helmstetter mentioned that the 31 who are not engaged may not fit anything we have to offer and we should consider housing options besides the standard one person/ one unit.
- QUESTION: Will you be tracking information about how people became homeless in the first place?
- One of the confounding issues is that you don't become eligible for resources until you become "chronically homeless."
- Chris mentioned that twelve people are now document ready – but we just don't have the vacancies or service dollars. There just isn't the capacity. But they WOULD qualify.
- Margaret mentions that ten to twelve 1 bedrooms will be available soon through CHT. But it's not going to solve the service problem.
- PATHWAYS does still have service capacity, but has been advised to move more slowly because they have people looking for units who have ALREADY been matched with services.
- We need service capacity. We continue to have a large population of chronically homeless.

DISCUSSION OF THE WORK OF STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE LED BY THE NEW CO-CHAIR, Kevin Pounds

- The original purpose of the strategic planning team was to identify gaps in the system and service challenges. And the overall guide is the Strategic Plan (a visual of "mutually re-enforcing activities"). **Click here to see the Strategic Plan** (it's on the website).
- We're working through service challenges/ gaps in the system and putting everything into one of three buckets:
  - Accessing services
  - Housing Retention
  - Something Else

- At the last meeting, we also discussed the possibility of a merger with BoS. We decided that a merger is not advised at this point, but we do want to identify ways to collaborate and to work more closely together.
- We want to build a relationship before raising the possibility of a merger. Based on the population in Chittenden, we also want autonomy to be able to respond exactly to what we see HERE.
- One of the stumbling blocks is around HMIS and datasharing: the local continua in BoS share data within themselves, but between the local CoCs, there is no systemic sharing. We need to begin with the increasing the sharing of data.
- Perhaps we could build in an automatic check-in about increasing collaboration, once or twice a year. It will help us stay committed to the process.

(**Reminder:** There are notes that need to get out to the steering committee (from Town Meeting day). Not CCHA minutes.)

RANKING COMMITTEE REPORT ON GENERATING A STANDARD LETTER OF SUPPORT

- The problem we have tried to solve is to simplify and standardize the process of granting letters of support for those who come to CCHA for this.   Is there a way to streamline the process of granting letters of support when they are requested?
- A small group came up with a process that everyone is welcome to look at: Jason, Jane, Kevin & Amy.
- **Link to the DRAFT process for receiving letter of support**
- Emily mentioned that HOP applications process has gone through a similar revision. She says, We have come up with a process for "letters of support" – which is just a standard form with check boxes – and we are going to forgo the formal letters of support. It doesn't require a vote. It's not an endorsement but it suggests that this project meets a need in the housing world. It will debut with an RFP next week.
- QUESTION: Do we need a contingency for issues that come up around timing? It seems timing might become a problem if a letter is required more quickly.
    - RESPONSE: Maybe we should establish a contingent mid-month meeting for quick turn-around applications.
- Comments still welcome on this process.

A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF THE UPCOMING COMMUNITY MEETING

- **THE DATE HAS BEEN SET FOR MAY 29 – no time yet set.**
- The spring meeting is for PIT, Data and Coordinated Entry (the fall meeting is for business).
- Stephen asks, What is it that we want to share, FIRST? Then who do we reach out to?

- **Let's connect the meeting to not only the data and PIT Count but also the encampments, expansion of low barrier shelter and governors discussion about a new year round shelter.**
- We could present it as a kind of Town Hall type event in which we offer a lot of information about what it actually takes to get housed as it is not broadly known.
- Let's revisit this conversation in much more depth.
- Stephen will give an update on camp closures at the next meeting.

The next meeting is May 2, 2019

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