

CHITTENDEN COUNTY HOMELESS ALLIANCE (CCHA)

Steering Committee Minutes

March 5, 2020 9:00 – 11:00

ATTENDEES:

- Travis Poulin, **CVOEO**
- Elaine Soto, **HC**
- Erin Armstrong, **UVMHC**
- Meghan Morrow Raftery, **ICA**
- Louise Masterson, **ICA**
- Brian Smith, **DMH**
- Terri Kingeter, **Community**
- Kevin Pounds, **Anew Place**
- Sarah Russell, **CIS/CVOEO**
- Steve Lunna, **SSVF@UVM**
- Jason Brill, **VA**
- Lacey Smith, **BPD**
- Kim Colvile, **VCIL**
- Margaret Bozik, **CHT**
- Olivea Graffeo-Cohen, **VLA**
- Todd Rawlings, **City of Burlington**
- Elizabeth Kannard, **Safe Harbor**
- Laura Zeliger, **BHA**
- Liz Whitmore, **BHA**
- Phillip Snay, **Veterans Inc.**
- LiMei Janik, **CHT**
- Tammy Santamore, **LUND**
- Amy Carmola, **UWNWVT**
- Persic Naylor, **Low Barrier Shelter**
- Jonathan Farren, **COTS**
- Sarah Phillips, **OEO**
- Jan Demers, **CVOEO**
- Stephen Marshall, **Lived Experience**

Please note: Unless quote marks are used, speech attributed to any specific person is paraphrased.

PRELIMINARIES

- Travis Poulin/ CVOEO: We have completed 434 tax returns at CVOEO so far this year (since Feb. 1st). (Double that number if you account for both state and federal.)
- Liz Whitmore/ BHA: We are making a lot of headway with our waitlist, so make sure to get a preliminary application for eligible clients. We also have project based 3 bedroom units at Franklin Square that we're trying to fill. And a couple of 2 bedroom units at different properties.
- Laura Zeliger/ BHA: We have some staff positions open right now if anyone is looking to work in retention.
- Jason Brill/ VA: Veterans Summit is happening this weekend.

- Brian Smith/DMH: We've had the opening of our first tiny house and plan to open our second one this summer. This is a model to keep in mind, especially for people with mental health challenges.
- Meghan Morrow Raftery/ ICA: We were able to submit a systems performance measures report early. It will be available on the website in the next month.
- Tammy Santamore/ Lund: Our transitional housing will be closing. That's seven units that will be coming out of the pool.
- Sarah Russell/ CVOEO: On April 14 – 16 the Spring Learning Session for Built for Zero in Washington DC will take place. If anyone is interested, please follow up with Chris Brzovic. The focus of the session will be on racial equality in social services.

GA Emergency Housing Restructure Workgroup

- Travis Poulin/ CVOEO: We established that we need more time. We've only met once. We want to make sure that we, first, understand how the current GA structure works. To find the meeting dates for this workgroup, go chavt.org to the **"immediate housing" page**.
- Regarding the gathering of local data, OEO will be distributing additional data in the coming weeks.

Veterans Committee

- Steve Lunna/ SSVF@UVM: We're looking for approval from this body to engage with the mayors of Burlington and Winooski to have a call to action -- we currently have 8 veterans on our by-name list, 2 of which are in transitional housing so we have 6 veterans who need housing. We also have, at the end of the month, a press conference scheduled with the regional directors of HUD and USICH. (We currently have 6 of 8 Vermont mayors taking the Mayors Challenge.)

MOTION: *The Veterans Committee seeks support from CCHA Steering committee to engage with the Mayors of Burlington and Winooski (both members of the USICH Mayors Challenge to End Veterans Homelessness) in order to request a press conference to make a "Call to Action" in Chittenden County.*

12 YES

2 Abstained: COTS and SSVF

0 NO

The Treasurer's Report: Laura Wilson was unable to attend today. This report will be delayed.

Coordinated Entry Report: Nothing today.

Strategic Planning Report

- **Margaret Bozik/ CHT:** (This has not been discussed in Strategic Planning yet because it appeared after the last meeting.) We have the opportunity to apply for a

planning grant from the community health investment fund at UVMHC (**March 31st deadline**). The focus areas are mental health and childhood & family health. As we begin to re-tool the emergency housing system, there are opportunities to make sure that people have access to mental health services and ways to engage with the response system that feel meaningful to them. And that addresses housing as a social determinant of health for families. And that promotes substance misuse prevention. My thoughts in terms of what we would ask for:

- We're being asked by the state to take on the emergency housing program on our own dime but we might be able to ask for funding to support the people who will be putting this crisis response system together.
- We also do have pressing organizational issues. So we might think about working with a consultant around how to move forward as an effective coalition. We have functioned all of this time with volunteer leadership and some paid admin support and the question is if this remains the best way forward. I recognize that there's always tension between putting money into administrative structure versus into helping people directly. Ideally we would seek someone for a leadership position who was familiar with us AND was familiar with the way other continua operate in other places.
- Sarah Phillips/ OEO: The VCEH is also undertaking a look at its own organizational structure in response to its strategic planning and has put forth for a vote among its members about whether to continue down the line of formalizing its structure as, potentially, a nonprofit with paid staff. That might be an opportunity to bring those conversations together.
- Kevin Pounds/ Anew Place: It's a 40K ceiling, yes?
 - Margaret Bozik: Yes. It's a planning grant to look at restructuring the homeless crisis response system, and a major piece of that is the GA program. The other piece is larger coalition structural issues.
- Jan Demers/ CVOEO: Is there an implementation grant for 150K as well?
 - Margaret Bozik: I think it's 100K.
 - Kevin Pounds/ Anew Place: I think it requires matching funds though.
- Stephen Marshall: We are also getting funds from the state for staffing of our new version of the GA program, yes?
 - No.
 - Stephen Marshall: So the state is asking us to invent a completely new system without helping us pay for it?
- Sarah Russell/ CVOEO: Regarding the admin position we currently have for the coalition, we don't have any existing revenue now. So regardless of any other consideration, we're going to have to think about how to fund raise for that position.
 - And this is an opportunity to do this.
- Brian Smith/ DMH: What does the hospital get out of this?
 - Erin Armstrong/ UVMHC: The hospital designates certain funds for 2 cycles of grants for community based efforts. Drawn from our Community Health Needs Assessment the program grants up to 40K or 50K in this cycle for our priorities of mental health or children/families and then in fall cycle you can request larger amounts.

- Brian Smith: The cost of people who are homeless and mentally ill in acute care beds is a striking issue for UVMHC and for us. Our department has rental assistance to support folks in their exit who fit that criteria (homeless and mentally ill in an acute care bed). If there's an interest in having a conversation about this, let me know.
 - Erin Armstrong: The hospital is aware of this.
- Travis Poulin/ CVOEO; Today we're trying to put together a letter of support since the deadline is coming very soon.
- Amy Carmola/ UWNWVT: I sit on the committee that grants these funds. I just want to make sure I understand what the scope of the letter of intent would be. It sounds like we have this opportunity with GA restructure and we also have an opportunity for the coalition to reorganize and those two align with the existing structure and success of this group to advance a more effective, comprehensive system. It does feel like a great opportunity.
- Travis Poulin: Today we're asking for a vote.
 - The motion: **The CCHA Steering Committee seeks support from the CCHA Steering Committee to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) to the UVMHC Community Health Investment Committee to fund the administrative position and consider building additional capacity for the CCHA.*** [it was moved out of Strategic Planning Committee because of timeline considerations]
 - **13 YES**
 - **1 Abstain (UVMHC)**
- Stephen Marshall: We should also look for other money besides this. We also need to figure out what kind of staffing is going to be required.
- Sarah Russell: We also need to think about who will be the lead agency.
 - Margaret Bozik: VHFA will be the official applicant.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Point in Time

- Stephen Marshall: The key members of the PIT Committee (myself, Terri Kingeter, David McKay and Bob Stock) have decided to meet next Thursday at 9AM at Burlington Day.

NOFA

- Todd Rawlings/ CEDO: We registered the CoC. I reached out to Val about things we can do to prepare. We recently filled Val's position and just hired for Marcy's old position as well.

VETERANS

- Steve Lunna/ SSVF: We have 8 veterans on our by-name list: two veterans in transitional housing, 3 in emergency shelter, 3 unsheltered. We continue to have bimonthly case conferencing meetings. While we are seeing the number drop, it's not translating to our USICH benchmarks. That's why we want to meet with the mayors.
 - Jason Brill/ VA: One of the benchmarks is addressing time from identification to housed. The target is 90 days. Ours were around 42 to 47 days, which is one our bright spots. Every second and third Monday of the month we do case conferencing at the CHRC.
 - Jason Brill: When Tracy Sweeney from the VA was here talking about the Grant Per Diem NOFAs, she anticipated that a new model NOFA might be released and it was, subsequently released on Feb 18th. It's the **Transition in Place model GPD. It's not due until the end of April. It's open to current GPD providers or new providers.**
 - Sarah Russell/ CVOEO: Do have housing plans for the 8 people you have on your list and how are those needs being communicated to resources like CHT or BHA etc.?
 - Jason Brill: Some of that is happening at the CHRC. The two at Canal Street currently have just been awarded BHA vouchers. And then there's follow up after the case conferencing.
 - Travis Poulin: I'd like to have a conversation with you after the meeting regarding a veteran who came through our office.
 - Amy Carmola: I'm confused about how this fits with the by-name list. Is this a parallel process or a separate process?
 - Jason Brill: Yes this is a parallel process. We have a statewide list. And they are also enrolled in Coordinated Entry. We compare lists a couple times a month and make sure we always have the same lists or if not, what the reason might be. Our vets get housing through coordinated entry unless they are not eligible for some reason, but even in those cases, we're still tapping into the Coordinated Entry knowledge, resources and ideas.
- Laura Zeligler: I want to make sure that everyone who is eligible is applying to BHA because we are making a lot of progress on our waitlist

OUTREACH AND MEMBERSHIP

- Susan is out on medical leave right now.

SHELTER UPDATES

- Kevin Pounds/ Anew Place/ **Low Barrier Shelter:** We're trying to increase our occupancy capacity at the low barrier shelter by five. Staffing has started to get thin as is usual in late February/ early March. Terri Kingeter has agreed to come in

a couple nights a week to help people connect to services. We close April 30th. So what do we do during the warmer months? We want to stay connected to clients.

- [low barrier shelter worker who attended this meeting but I don't see that she signed in]: BPD has dropped people off a couple of times without calling first to see if there's space. We have also found communication with the hospital to be missing at times. Usually the hospital calls us to let us know that one of our residents is there, but lately, I've had to initiate the call.
- Amy Carmola/ UWNWVT: I believe in former years there was an opportunity for a shelter debrief after it closes and I wanted to offer — as a member of the Chittenden County Hunger Council — to be part of a debrief, specifically to see if the Hunger Council might be able to be part of food provision at the shelter and details around that.
 - Great.
- Jonathan Farren/ **COTS**: The Way Station has been at capacity. Day Station numbers are up, especially at lunch time. Sometimes as high as 80 per day. Family Shelters are still full. We have a somewhat reduced waitlist however.
 - Margaret Bozik: Are they the same faces you're seeing every day at the Day Station or new people?
 - Jonathan Farren: A little of each. We do see a few new people regularly.
 - Margaret Bozik: Are all of these at the Day Station experiencing homelessness or are some of them precariously housed?
 - Jonathan Farren: The Day Station is open to everyone so there are some people who are in fact precariously housed and for a few, it's their only social connection.
 - Travis Poulin: I'm seeing something similar at the Here to Help Clinic. The majority are experiencing homelessness there are a few who use it as a place to connect.
 - Stephen Marshall: I wonder what fraction of the community that goes to the Day Station is listed in HMIS. And what fraction uses the services without ever getting into HMIS.
 - Jonathan Farren: Great question but I'm not sure.
 - Brian Smith/ DMH: Some people who have been homeless return to their old haunts for a variety of support needs. I don't think you can say anything that would be universal about that group.
- Jan Demers/ **Extreme Weather Shelter**: We haven't opened yet this year. I want to bring up one thing. There are people who we do not admit in general to our community shelters — though the Extreme Weather Shelter will take anyone.

I'm wondering if in our planning, that we consider that group. [this comment may need revision as I didn't quite hear it]

LUND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

- Stephen Marshall: The Lund family center was discussed on the VCEH legislative call as one of the concerns that came up along side the concern about when the GA restructure gets implemented. I'm interested in what stresses LUND is experiencing? Can you define the stress you're experiencing and what advocacy you might need from us?
 - Tammy Santamore/ LUND: **This regards specifically our transitional housing program. Our residential treatment program is NOT closing.** It's our seven unit transitional housing program and the stress comes from the fact that it was almost exclusively state funded and we were told on Dec. 20th that the contract would end on June 30th. And because we have a lease with Cathedral Square, we had to give 120 day notice which essentially left us with 60 days to come up with a little over a quarter of a million dollars to fund the program or decide to transition the program. We were unable to come up with the money in that timeframe. So there are 6 families living there now. And we will be transitioning those families — the have BHA vouchers. Hopefully most of them will be moving into CHT units. Cathedral Square will be re-purposing the building and I'm not sure how. The building is 5 efficiencies and 2 one-bedrooms. Our families will be transitioning between April 1 and June 1 with everyone out by the 30th. Of the 5 staff, 3 will be looking for new positions.
 - Sarah Russell/ CVOEO: Is there any possibility that they might be willing to move to one of BHA's units and possibly give up that voucher?
 - Tammy Santamore: Maybe, but they are motivated to not be on that waitlist.
 - Margaret Bozik: Is your preferred model still to have people in congregant housing?
 - Tammy Santamore: We feel that on the continuum of housing that there are still people who need congregant transitional housing, with on-site supports. And our outcomes demonstrate that it really does work for this population. At the state level, that is not their focus however.
 - Sarah Russell/ CVOEO: Are these families on the master-list since they do fall under the HUD definition of homeless?
 - No. Because they have a voucher.
 - Sarah Phillips/ OEO: They do not meet the HUD definition of homelessness.

- *[there was some general disagreement about whether they meet the definition of homeless or not]*
- Sarah Phillips: Housing insecurity is not why people go into the residential programs, so perhaps you could speak to who makes up your populations.
 - Tammy Santamore: Women and children who go into our treatment program all go into it with a mental health or substance use diagnosis. About 90 percent have significant trauma, significant substance use. They are pregnant and parenting women. We prioritize youth who are in custody or minors who are pregnant or parenting women who are IV drug users. And they're from across the state. Many of the women have been trafficked. Many are homeless but that's the criteria.

Please go to cchavt.org to find future meetings, events, etc.

Please send corrections to: edacosta@vhfa.org

Next Meeting: 4/2