

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)

Strategic Planning Committee Meeting

April 17, 2019, 3:00 – 4:30

ATTENDEES:

- Dylan Foote, **STEPS**
- Val Russell, **CEDO**
- Jane Helmstetter, **AHS**
- Steve Lunna, **SSVF@UVM**
- Margaret Bozik, **CHT**
- Jan Demers, **CVOEO**
- Sarah Russell, **BHA**
- Melissa Farr, **COTS**
- Kevin Pounds, **Anew Place**
- Amy Carmola, **UWNWVT**
- Stephen Marshall, **Lived Experience**

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

A DISCUSSION ABOUT HOW TO BEST QUERY HOUSING RETENTION SPECIALISTS (and other Housing Retention Stakeholders) TO FIND OUT WHAT'S WORKING & WHAT'S NOT

- Kevin began by re-visiting the main purposes of the Strategic Planning Committee: identifying gaps and service challenges in keeping people housed. We'll work through the Strategic Plan over time and decide which category the gap or challenge fits into:
 1. Accessing services
 2. Housing retention (make a list of housing retention service providers – and identify what we want to know. Let's come up with some questions to ask them.)
 3. Something else
- We want to create a survey to send to housing retention services workers -- and anyone affected by housing retention issues -- to get information generally about what's working and what's not working. **Coming up with well-crafted questions is the task at hand here.**
 - Margaret highlights the [“Resource Inventory” sheet](#) that was generated a couple years ago that could help us connect to everyone in the community who is engaged in this work. Let's update it by adding contact names, email address and updated names of orgs.
- When we create a survey for housing retention specialists, what do we want to know?
 - What's working well?
 - What gaps do you see?
 - What would we like to see in perfectly functioning retention system?
 - Anything else?
- Which stakeholders (besides retention specialists) need to be included in this survey?
 - The clients we serve

- Private landlords
- Public landlords
- Any others?
- **Note of Concern:** We don't want to frame the questions as if we already know the problems & gaps.
- **Note of Concern:** It may be important to clarify the goal of this survey. People want to know what is going to be done with the information they are volunteering.
- Let's return to the central question: **what do we want to get out of this?**
- Let's not forget to consider **what are the interventions we can actually make.**
- Sarah from BHA notes, we've been working hard to collect data around why people need help. Now, during intake, there's a REASON for the referral (primary reason and a secondary reason). We could provide some of this data.
- It might be a good idea if there was a committee or team that focuses exclusively on housing retention and they come up with the questions instead of us.
- Maybe we can do a one-time information-gathering meeting with retention specialists. We could try to get questions from frontline staff themselves, and those question can be the same ones sent to the other groups.
 - **Maybe the Community Housing Review meeting would be a good opportunity to have this discussion/focus group since many frontline staff are there anyway.**
- Let's send the two or three questions in advance.
- Sarah will take the lead on organizing this meeting.
- **Note of clarification: Case management does not equal housing retention.** There is overlap, clearly, but they are not identical.

A BRIEF REPORT ON STEPHEN'S MEETING WITH TOWN MANAGERS & CHARLIE BAKER (REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION)

- STEPHEN: Many of the town managers are very interested in meeting further with myself and others to talk about the PIT count and about how to bring services to homeless people in other towns.
 - Should this work be done through the Outreach Committee?
 - General Consensus: YES
 - STEPHEN: One question that came up: should we have an alternate day for the PIT count due to weather?
 - STEPHEN: The town managers talked about how their police forces were the primary contact for the homeless community. (Incidentally, in south Burlington there is a great sergeant who is very good at connecting with the homeless community.) But we need trained community members to work with people in the homeless communities OTHER THAN police or other institutional folks.
 - Jane has a regular meeting with community stakeholders and Val suggested doing some PIT COUNT outreach at this meeting.
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A DISCUSSION OF ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY ACTIVITIES

- Margaret provided a selection of the priorities (with recommendations and status) for review. Here are the activities only:
 - Activity 6: Inventory and build agreements around data sharing within and without the HMIS system
 - Activity 12: Engage in organizational development activities about using continuous feedback loops and human centered design.
 - Activity 14: Identify and strategize how to maintain adequate staffing and operating resources for the Alliance at the end of the current three year funding cycle.
 - Activity 8: Evaluate current efforts to engage individuals with lived experience. Expand current efforts to engage individuals with lived experience.
 - Activity 3: Enhance the ability of the Alliance to provide or collect outcome and compliance monitoring data on programs recommended for funding by the Alliance.
- Margaret also provided a brief overview of the 2019 – 2010 Action Plan with the following priorities:
 1. Streamline access to resources
 2. Improving housing retention
 3. Respond to trends going in the wrong direction
- Val wants to make sure that the term “long term” homelessness (a non-technical term) and “chronic” (a technical term) are NOT linked in any of the literature or in people’s minds since this creates a lot of confusion. We have data on “chronic” because it’s a HUD definition and we don’t have data on “long term” homelessness. We know that there are a lot more “long term” homeless people than **“HUD CHRONIC.”**
- Val asks if there’s a national lobbying organization for homelessness – a group that can work on changing the definition of “chronic,” for example.

NEXT MEETING: May 15.

Please go to cchavt.org to find the minutes archive.