

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)

Steering Committee Meeting, October 1, 2020, 9:00 AM

Online meeting

Attendees:

- Travis Poulin, **CVOEO**
- Jane Helmstetter, **AHS**
- Todd Rawlings, **CEDO**
- Amy Woodruff, **LUND**
- Ananda Sahihi
- Bill Schrecker, **VHFA**
- Chelsea Alsofrom, **Pathways**
- Chris Brzovic, **CVOEO**
- Daniel Blakenship, **VSHA**
- Elaine Soto, **Howard Center**
- Elizabeth Kanard, **CHCB**
- Erhard Mahnte, **VAHC**
- Erin Armstrong, **UVM**
- Geoffrey Pippenger, **DFC**
- Jason Brill, **VA**
- Karina McNamara
- Kevin Pounds, **Anew Place**
- Kim Colville, **VCIL**
- Lacey Smith, **BPD**
- Lily Sojourner, **OEO**
- Liz Whitmore, **BHA**
- Louise Masterson, **ICA**
- Stephen Lunna, **SSVF @ UVM**
- Marcy Esbjerg, **Pasco County/ Formerly CEDO**
- Marget Bozics, **CHT**
- Meghan Morrow Raftery, **ICA**
- Nicole Kubon, **Steps**
- Sarah Russell, **CVOEO**
- Tammy Santamore, **COTS**
- **United Ways / Vermont 2-1-1**
- Will Towne, **Spectrum**

DRAFT

Please send corrections
to: edacosta@vhfa.org

PRELIMINARIES

- Daniel Blankenship/ VSHA: We continue to have a rent relief program available to help with back rent. Also a “money to move” program, which helps pay for deposit and rent through December.
- Erhard Manke/VAHC: Since the legislature adjourned, we’re starting to set legislative priorities for next year. Please contact myself or Cindy Reid at Cathedral Square if folks have legislative priorities you want us take up.
- Bill Schrecker/VHFA: We have a mortgage assistance program and income limits were recently increased to, in some cases, 100 percent AMI. Also, regarding our updated qualified allocation plan, our final public meeting will happen on Oct. 15th. This plan guides the placement of low income tax credits, which is the single largest source of equity for affordable housing in the state. We invite public comment.
- Margaret Bozik/ CHT: We received applications for 9 apartments in Chittenden County to be rehabbed in the rental rehab program and the homeownership staff will coordinate this with Chris. The landlords make a commitment to provide affordable housing for 5 years to, preferably, homeless households.

VOTE ON STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- We have almost a full slate of membership. We do still have vacancies for a few of our community representatives.
 - Travis Poulin (CVOEO) and Liz Whitmore (BHA) will be our co-chairs.
 - Todd Rawlings (CEDO) will be our collaborative applicant.
 - Margaret Bozik (CHT) will be our new Treasurer.
 - Lacey Ann Smith (BPD) will continue as secretary.

 - Facilitator, Jane Helmstetter

 - Kevin Pounds, ANEW PLACE
 - Rita Markley, COTS
 - Lindsay Mesa, Pathways
 - Elizabeth Kannard, Safe Harbor
 - Jason Brill, VA
 - Erin Armstrong, UVMC
 - Mary Ellen Mendi, VT 2-1-1
 - Kim Colville, VCIL
 - Jennifer Hunter, Cathedral Square
 - Elaine Soto, Howard Center
 - Amy Carmola, United Way
 - Nicole Kubon, Steps
 - Will Towne, Spectrum

- Amy Woodruff, LUND

VOTE

- ✓ **MOTION To approve the CCHA Steering Committee Slate as presented.**
- ✓ **SECONDED**
- ✓ **0 No votes**
- ✓ **1 Abstention**

A DISCUSSION OF CCHA PLANNING GRANT

- Todd Rawlings/ CEDO: We receive about 30K from HUD as part of the planning grant for the CoC (this covers expenses for the collaborative applicant time, Built for Zero, and CCHA coordinator). This year HUD is requiring us to enter into a formal MOU with the people who have agreed to provide a match. Jane & AHS has committed to a \$8250 match and my office has committed to \$1000 match. Our request is to authorize the execution of those documents. (This is a new feature of the NOFA this year.)

VOTE

- ✓ **MOTION To authorize the CCHA Co-Chair(s) to execute MOUs with VT AHS and The City of Burlington CEDO indicating their commitment to match funding for the Planning Grant.**
- ✓ **SECONDED**
- ✓ **0 No votes**
- ✓ **3 Abstentions**

A Discussion of the CARES Grant: Rapid-Resolution Housing Initiative (RRHI) led by Travis Poulin, Chittenden Community Action CVOEO

- Travis Poulin: We are still actively accepting applications for RRHI — designed to help transition people who are experiencing Category I homelessness (literal homelessness). We have received a variety of applications, a few of which we had to deny because they did not meet the definition of literal homelessness. We've also had many approved. This is a great resource that can include everything from a deposit to up to 3 months rent to furniture. The funding is very flexible but the application must be clearly tied to a housing plan. Please send me your questions. This funding will only last until the end of December. We also still have HOP funding and United Way funding, the home heating program will be starting up shortly, the Covid-19 arrears program to help with utility arrears is also in place.

- Lily Sojourner/ OEO: I encourage people to be creative when applying for the RRHI program. We'd like to deploy more of these resources.

A DISCUSSION OF A NEW CHT ACQUISITION MADE POSSIBLE BY A CARES GRANT

- Margaret Bozik/ CHT: We were granted CARES funding to buy the Baymont Inn. It will be a 68 unit property called **Susan's Place**. We are ready to start moving people in today. We're going to have a vote later today on how to prioritize people from the master-list for this property. There will be a full-time CHT social worker on-site. Right now that person is Lily Taylor.

Community Housing Review Committee (CHRC) Update

- Chris Brzovic/ CVOEO:
 - Currently we have 519 total households on the master list . Comparing it with March, we had 239. We've more than doubled.
 - 85 percent are in emergency shelters.
 - 173 chronic households.

This is enormous. But it does track with March in terms of percentages. The percentage of chronic has stayed the same. We have 40 families now and 20 in March. Twenty are in the cue for CARES vouchers. A few may be inactive. All the active families will be granted rental subsidy in one way or another. We have 18 Veterans (8 in March).

- Regarding **Susan's Place**, some are subsidized with BHA vouchers, and some are unsubsidized. We're coordinating referrals. We also have 90 CARES vouchers which we hope to enroll by the end of the month.

SHELTER UPDATES

- Kevin Pounds/ Low Barrier Shelter: This morning we're shutting down North Beach Campground. The majority are moving to Holiday Inn. We've been working with CVOEO to make sure we're providing staffing for this interim period. We also just signed a purchase and sale agreement with a local property for our new shelter. Thank you to everyone on this call for your help with letters of support and other forms of support. The capacity at our new property will hopefully be for 50 people.

- Will Towne/ Spectrum: We're operating relatively normally and also gearing up for the warming shelter. Since hotels are not taking people under 21 years of age, it's a little more urgent. Our goal is to open the warming shelter on November 1st.
- Tammy Santamore/ COTS: Family Shelter remains full with a wait list. At the Way Station, we just accepted 3 more people. We currently have no more slots for women and 3 more slots for men. Motel outreach is very busy with over 12 or 13 motels across the county. I hopeful we'll get people into Susan's Place.
- Nicole Kubon/ Steps: We are at capacity with maybe one person coming into shelter. We will make an announcement about our new shelter very soon.

VOTE ON PRIORITIZATION PROPOSAL FOR SUSAN'S PLACE

- Chris Brzovic/ CVOEO: We have to have a balance of high and low needs households at Susan's Place. This means we have to modify our traditional prioritization. Here's the proposal:

Purpose

Given the scale of Susan's Place, some modifications to the CCHA CE prioritization policy are necessary to appropriately serve households active in CE with varying levels of service needs.

Policy

✿ For the Thirty (30) Units Subsidized With Mainstream Vouchers (BHA Local Preferences):

- Households must be in phase 3 (active on the BHA waitlist and ready for referral) and eligible for a Mainstream voucher to be considered for referral
- Households meeting the above criteria will be prioritized for referral according to vulnerability score (higher to lower)
- There will be no more than ten (10) households referred that have a vulnerability score of 10 or greater
- The remaining households referred must have a vulnerability assessment score 9 or lower

✿ For Available Unsubsidized Units:

- The standard referral process and order of priority will be followed for unsubsidized units:
 - Referrals will be made from the CHRC Homeless Unit Referral Queue (households must have vouchers/rental subsidy or income qualify to be added to the unit queue).

- The standard prioritization for referrals from the Homeless Unit Queue are:
 - First order of priority: Families, Individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, and households fleeing DV
 - Second order of priority: All other households.
 - Referrals are prioritized according to vulnerability assessment score as follows:
 - About 10% - above 10
 - ◆ Prioritizing from highest score to lowest.
 - About 90% - at 9 and below
 - ◆ Prioritizing from highest score to lowest.
 - ◆ At least 10% will be referrals for veterans.
- Margaret Bozik/ CHT: VSHA has generously offered up to 34 state project based vouchers. What we're currently talking to them about is project-basing our NEDS. So it looks like there will be additional subsidy available for this building. I just found this out yesterday. We don't want to exclude the possibility of having families at Susan's Place (sometimes families are not eligible for NEDS).
 - Chris Brzovic: This is great but when we developed this policy we were operating under the assumption that those 30 units were going to be unsubsidized. If people already have vouchers it does change things. So I'm not sure how this impacts our proposed policy.
 - This leaves us potentially with only 4 unsubsidized units, correct?
 - Margaret Bozik: I hate to suggest that we ever might turn down any project based subsidies, but we might have to accept less than 34. In addition, NEDS tend not go to families, and there are a few apartments that we want to go to families, so we may need to find another subsidy source for these families.
 - Margaret Bozik: Chris, can I suggest that we simply change the language in the proposal to read **"For available unsubsidized and project based units."** (the proposed revision is in bold)
 - Chris Brzovic: I believe that could work. Is it possible that some of the households that have CARES vouchers then could move on to a project based subsidy?
 - Daniel Blankenship/ VSHA: I floated the idea of using the CARES vouchers as a bridge for the units. I can speak to Kathleen about this further. A bridge could be made, for

example, targeting the VSHA project based vouchers that are not yet available but will be soon. Since we have this large number of CARES vouchers, perhaps we could come up with an MOU about a targeted preference. However, we don't have the capacity to provide a general preference like we do with our RRH or VRS, but it would make sense to have the CARES voucher as a bridge.

- Sarah Russell/ CVOEO: Regarding FUVs, I had a question about whether you were leased at capacity for the FUVs and if there's coordination that could happen between the Reach Up workers and the CHRC as you identify families that could be put forward for FUVS.
 - BHA: At BHA, we're completely leased up on our FUVS.
 - Lindsay Mesa (I think)/ Pathways: For VSHA, for all of 2020, we've only had the request for 20 FUVS on a list of over 200, so it's moving really slowly. All of those who have been prioritized this year have been in the youth-in-transition category.
- Margaret Bozik: So we're going to have to flexible. If someone already has a voucher, we don't want them to lose it. Let's also keep in mind that if someone was able to transition off of a CARES voucher onto a project based voucher, they still have to be NEDS eligible. This will exclude a number of people. In addition, anyone with a CARES voucher and a transition plan, we're going to look at the transition plan very closely because we don't want to have to evict anyone.
- PROPOSED REVISION for this Prioritization Policy for Susan's Place: "For available unsubsidized **and project based units.**" (the proposed revision is in bold)

VOTE

- ✓ **MOTION To accept the proposed prioritization for Susan's Place as amended above.**
- ✓ **SECONDED**
- ✓ **0 No votes**
- ✓ **1 Abstention**

[internet dropped here for several minutes]

NOFA UPDATE

- Todd Rawlings/ CEDO: As of this morning the NOFA has not yet been released. There is a rumor however that some HUD staff expect the process to be expedited this year.

- Daniel Blankenship/VSHA: I heard there was a proposal to eliminate the NOFA entirely this year.

FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- BHA is hitting our mainstream waiting list which is good news. We will be contacting about 50 people later this week.
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NEXT MEETING: Nov. 5, 2020

Please go to cchavt.org for dates, events and other resources.