

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)

Steering Committee Meeting, March 4, 2021, 9AM

Online meeting

ATTENDEES:

- Travis Poulin, **CVOEO**
- Jane Helmstetter, **AHS**
- Richard Gagne, **Dismas House**
- Al Belluche, **BHA**
- Amy Carmola, **UW NWVT**
- Chris Brzovic, **CVOEO**
- David Regal, **CHT**
- Elaine Soto, **Howard Center**
- Erin Armstrong, **UVMCMC**
- Jamaica White, **Lund**
- Jason Brill, **VA**
- Karina McNamara, **ICA**
- Jennifer Hunter, **CS**
- Kevin Pounds, **Anew Place**
- Laura Gans, **VT Legal Aid**
- John Cronin, **UWNWVT**
- Louise Masterson, **ICA**
- Steven Lunna, **SSVF @ UVM**
- Lily Sojourner, **OEO**
- MaryEllen Mendl, **VT 2-1-1**
- Paul Dragon, **CVOEO**
- Phillip Snay, **Veterans Inc.**
- Rebeka Lawrence-Gomez, **Pathways**
- Robyn Stattel, **ESD**
- Sarah Russell, **CVOEO**
- Sean Thomas, **HUD State Director for VT**
- Tammy Santamore, **COTS**
- Wanda Hines, **JUMP**
- Will Towne, **Spectrum**
- Margaret Bozik, **CHT**
- Marcella Gange, **CEDO**
- Liz Whitmore, **BHA**
- Lacey Smith, **BPD**
- Emily Higgins, **DoC**

DRAFT

Send corrections to
edacosta@vhfa.org

PRELIMINARIES

- Margaret Bozik/ CHT: We hit a high with guests numbering 35 adults and 3 children at the Ho-Hum this week. Also we are continuing to look for motels that could be converted into affordable housing.
- MaryEllen Mendl/VT 2-1-1: We are still trying to become 24/7 in state and at this point our hours have been extended to 10PM and will likely be extended to midnight soon.
- Wanda Hines/ JUMP: We're going to have laundry vouchers available at JUMP.
- Richard Gagne/ Dismas House: We are now single gender houses. In March we're opening a house for women in Rutland. Soon one of our houses will be taking people with sex offenses.
- Liz Whitmore/ BHA: I want to encourage anyone you're working with to get on our waiting list. We have a number of BHA owned and managed properties that we have fairly short waitlists for.

DISCUSSION OF THE BUDGET

- Margaret Bozik/ CHT: Three items: 1. Survey about the admin support got light participation, so please consider offering your input. 2. We're pursuing funding options with private donors. 3. We're going to do a consumer survey and we want to offer incentive participating. And we think the funding will come from CCHA, with support from United Ways Emergency Funding.

EHI (Emergency Housing Initiative) Update

- Travis Poulin/ CVOEO: There is a workgroup to review the state's EHI proposal. Working with a very tight timeline, we got a letter out to the legislative committees as quickly as possible. We had nine people sign on to it. The House Appropriations Committee met on Feb 23 and decided to recommend that the proposal be pushed back by one year. It's too a large burden to think about a radical change to the GA HOUSING structure at this time. Jessica Radbord has drafted a letter from Legal Aid's perspective and I hope as many people as possible can sign.

Diversity & Inclusion Update

- Sarah Russell/ CVOEO: A small workgroup met and developed a work plan. We will work on language to incorporate into our charter in consultation with our Diversity & Inclusion director at CVOEO. Please let us know if you want to be part of this group.

Shelter Updates

- **Low Barrier Shelter:** Kevin Pounds / Anew Place: We have re-started accepting referrals and intakes. Huge thanks to Safe Harbor-CHCB.

- **Spectrum:** Will Towne: Much thanks to Safe Harbor-CHCB. We have no beds in any of our housing programs right now. It was slow all winter until this last month. We filled up quickly. We hired Kina Thorpe for our Diversity and Inclusion director. Monday we are opening our drop-in center in St. Albans. To clarify, housing programs are full at pre-Covid levels but our shelters are at 70 percent of pre-Covid levels.
- **COTS:** Tammy Santamore: We have one male bed open. We are at Covid capacity. Family shelter is full with a short waitlist. Motels are very busy. The last count was 524 adults, not including the Holiday Inn or children. CHCB has been on site doing testing.
- **Holiday Inn:** Paul Dragon / CVOEO: The Holiday Inn number is 118 at the moment. More thanks for Safe Harbor/ CHCB. At the daytime warming center numbers are from 15 to 54 people. We maintain that *periods of ineligibly (POE)* are still too long and we've asked OEO to look at this. (The POE is implemented for not following rules in GA housing & motels. The first violation creates a POE of 15 days and the second one creates 30 days of POE. Property destruction would be an example.) We also want our clients to get vaccinated ASAP. Marcella from CEDO has been great to work with.
- **Harbor Place:**
 - Robyn Stattel / ESD: This project came out of concerns around substance use in motels. Also looking at overdose numbers. In multiple communities we're trying to find a single motel that is substance free (as much as possible).
 - David Regal / CHT: We make it very clear that this is not choosing between having a place and NOT having a place. It's just about the best choice. Turning Point is going to provide recovery coaches for anyone who's interested. Nothing is compulsory. We have service coordination on site for 20 hours a week. The goal here is to meet a need, not to punish someone. We're in a trial period right now, so we'll see if this does meet a need.
 - Marcella Gange / CEDO: Are you full now? And can you get employment support services to folks right now?
 - David Regal: Our first step is determine whether people want to stay at Harbor Place given the new rules. Then they'll have time to transition to a new motel. Then we'll add new people as others transition out. We recognize that moving is uncomfortable and some may not be a fit and yet still decide to stay. We'll handle this on a case by case basis.
 - Margaret Bozik/ CHT: As a motel operator, we don't provide employment services. The recovery coaches may be able to offer more.
 - Jane Helmstetter/ AHS: We're getting a grant to help support recovery coaching and employment will likely be part of that.
 - Rebeka Lawrence-Gomez / Pathways: I just want to be very careful around the language of substance use. We want to create the circumstances for honesty and not for shame.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

- **COORDINATED ENTRY:** Chris Brzovic/ CVOEO: We have 691 household in C.E. right now (this includes DV). 15 percent are black/ African American, 4 percent Native, 7 percent

Hispanic/ Latino. We saw 10 permanent exits last month. We had 30 in January and 37 in December. We have 49 families and 231 chronic. Much higher numbers than we've ever seen. We've made all our referrals for our CARES vouchers. We're developing some CE training that will be recorded and placed on the CCHA website. We're also working on the consumer survey already mentioned.

- STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE: This is really overtaken by the GA restructure meeting.
- PIT COMMITTEE: Louise Masterson/ ICA: ICA will be submitting the PIT/HIC to HUD at the end of April.
- NOFA: Marcella Gange/ CEDO: There was simply renewal this year. No competition. Those recipient will be getting updates soon.
- VETERANS: Stephen Lunna/ SSVF: Our number is at 17 right now. Our SSVF budget has been increased by about 950K for RRH and prevention.
- OUTREACH & MEMBERSHIP: MaryEllen Mendl /VT-2-1-1: Welcome to Emily Higgins. We also have a query into the Human Trafficking task force to send a representative.

FINAL NOTES

- Lily Sojourner/ OEO: We have round 2 of the RRHI (flexible funding to support people exiting motels and literal homelessness). We have an **updated FAQ**. We have two funding opportunities for: 1. Wrap around services for non-congregant shelters. 2. New funding opportunity for housing stability services. This is focused on rental assistance and utilities. Some of this is being channeled through prevention.
 - Marcella Gange/ CEDO: Is there any prioritization for vaccination for people who are in congregant shelters or literally homeless?
 - Lily Sojourner: At this point this is not a specific prioritization. But many people you're working with will be eligible under the high risk designation.
 - Paul Dragon/ CVOEO: History of trauma won't qualify as "high risk" but these are also the people who are least likely to follow Covid safety protocols.

Next Meeting: April 1, 2021

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