

## Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)

### Steering Committee Meeting

Thursday, June 8, 2023 4:30pm – 6:30pm

Location: South Burlington Public Library, 180 Market Street, South Burlington

## Meeting Minutes

### Attendees

Sarah Russell, Marcella Gange, Chanel Bastian, CEDO; Travis Poulin, Stephanie Smith, CVOEO; Elaine Soto, Howard Center; Taylor Thibault, Champlain Housing Trust; Jason Brill, Veterans' Affairs; Stephanie Bixby, Burlington Housing Authority; Jonathon Farrell, Tammy Santamore, COTS; Will Towne, Spectrum Youth Services; Jane Helmstetter, Facilitator; Lindsay Mesa, Pathways; Megan Bridges, United Way NWVT; Caty Mara, BPD, Community Liaisons; Sean Thomas, HUD; Erin Roelke, Derek Souza, AgeWell; Jennie Davis, CVSD; Thomas Moore, UVMHN Comm Health Improvement; Nicole Kubon, Ciara Kilburn, STEPS; Will Vilaro, SSVF at UVM; Kerri Duquette-Hoffman, AHS; Terri Kingeter, Community Members; Noah Hyman, Kate Logan, Sarita Austin, Angela Arseneault, VT State Representatives; Jazmine Hurley, City of Winooski; Virginia Finn, ANEW Place; Erhard Mahnke, Senator Sanders' Office; Charlie Giannoni, CCTV; Miles McGuriman, Senator Welch's Office; Courtney Farrell, Lund

### 1) Introductions and Announcements // Jane Helmstetter, CCHA Facilitator

- a) The Membership and Outreach committee has created a list of commonly used acronyms, please take a minute to review, edit, and add what you see fit [Acronym List \(Excel File\)](#)
- b) HUD VASH (Housing and Urban Development, Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing) program is currently on pause due to staffing capacity issues throughout VT
- c) Veterans Affairs recently posted 2 new job listings, more info can be found here [USAJOBS - Job Announcement](#) (White River Junction) and [USAJOBS - Job Announcement](#) (Burlington)
- d) CVOEO will be distributing Farmers Market Coupons starting July 3<sup>rd</sup>

### 2) 2023 HUD Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and Ranking Committee // Marcella Gange, CCHA Collaborative Applicant/CEDO\*

- a) \*VOTE Warned\*: The CCHA Ranking Committee requests approval from the CCHA Steering Committee to accept the amendments to the Ranking Policy and Procedures. The release of the FY23 NOFO may require changes to HUD and CCHA Policy Priorities and any changes will be returned to the Steering Committee for approval.
  - i) Sarah Russell made a motion to vote to approve the CCHA Ranking Committee Request, seconded by Caty Mara. The motion passed with 18 votes aye, 0 nay, 0 abstentions

### 3) Strategic Planning Committee Update // Nicole Kubon, Strategic Planning Committee Co-Chair/Steps to End Domestic Violence; Sarah Russell, Strategic Planning Committee Co-Chair/CEDO\*

- a) The Strategic Planning Committee will be receiving a no-cost contract extension with consultant Diana Carminati. The Committee is conducting outreach conversations to gain feedback from people with lived experience. Notes from the conversations will be compiled and reviewed to inform the strategic plan, which should be presented in draft form at the July Steering Committee Meeting

### 4) Emergency Motel Program Updates // Kerri Duquette-Hoffman, Agency of Human Services

**\*\*\*ESD Emergency Motel Program guidelines have changed from what appears below as of 06-20-2023\*\*\***

- a) Please see the [presentation](#) from AHS
- b) The Emergency Motel Program operates through the Department of Children and Families, seeing a large expansion during the Covid-19 pandemic. The program is a "last resort, shelters first" design and the closure is expected to have huge impacts on local communities as the funding returns to pre-pandemic levels
- c) Starting July 1<sup>st</sup>:
  - i) Households with housing vouchers will be given 120 days in the motel to find housing
    - (1) Others will have 28 or 84 days depending on eligibility requirements, more information can be found here, [DCF Addressing and Preventing Unsheltered Homelessness](#)
    - (2) Contact Economic Services or AHS for help determining eligibility
  - ii) Households will again be required to contribute 30% of income

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- iii) Team-based care will be ramping down due to staff returning to pre-pandemic job responsibilities
- d) Letter of Interest (LOI)- 50 letters received so far. Applications are being received on a rolling basis and those interested in submitting can still do so
  - i) LOIs will be reviewed by a panel of the state
- e) An RFP was released seeking staffing contracts for congregate shelters, responses due June 11<sup>th</sup>
- f) Contact Kerri Duquette-Hoffman with any questions [Kerri.Duquette-Hoffman@vermont.gov](mailto:Kerri.Duquette-Hoffman@vermont.gov)
- g) Q&A (Answers provided by Kerri Duquette-Hoffman)
  - i) Do households with housing vouchers still have to meet other eligibility criteria or is possession of a voucher enough?
    - (1) (Answer provided after the meeting) Households will have to be households who are in the hotels at 6/30 to be eligible
  - ii) How is this messaging being communicated to folks in motels?
    - (1) Attempts have been made to send mail to folks with addresses on file, although some folks have moved. Communications have also been sent to motel managers and housing case managers for distribution. State benefit workers are still going out to motels to do outreach
  - iii) Could the State provide a technical assistance session for housing case managers?
    - (1) Yes, DCF hold open office hours, statewide
  - iv) What is the timeframe for folks to be eligible under “having been evicted” criteria? Will it go to the beginning of the pandemic?
    - (1) (Answer provided after the meeting) There is no timeframe if someone is in a hotel now. However, to access a hotel under this category the eviction must have caused this episode of homelessness.
  - v) 70ish households have been placed in units out of county, how will they be able to return to Chittenden County?
    - (1) VT Balance of State (BOS) uses Coordinated Entry to track where folks want to be placed
  - vi) How much funding is there to distribute between LOI proposals?
    - (1) The vetoed budget had around 12 million earmarked but many of the projects will be able to use a variety of funding sources such as HOP (Housing Opportunity Program)
  - vii) Can you provide an update on the direct deposits (up to \$3,300) for exiting motel guests?
    - (1) If you think someone should be eligible to receive a deposit, contact local Economic Services.
    - (2) To be eligible, folks must have been part of the transition program for only 4 months, in 1 motel.
    - (3) Folks should have received either a deposit or letter with itemized damages by end of April
  - viii) Is there a back-up plan should the budget fail to pass?
    - (1) TBD
  - ix) Can you provide more context to “team based care” ramping down?
    - (1) The goal is to transition to local based case managers as program staffing was done through temporary roles. One core function was to enroll people in coordinated entry
  - x) Do local organizations have the capacity to absorb this work?
    - (1) Yes, local orgs can transition motel outreach staff
  - xi) There seems to be a lot of assistance flowing through Burlington, does Burlington have the capacity to cover or will other areas be able to?
    - (1) There has been no response on COB (City of Burlington) LOI yet but the Mayor of Burlington put out a call for other areas to assist in coverage
  - xii) What can South Burlington do to help?
    - (1) Gaps can be addressed at the end of the meeting after organizations have presented their LOI proposals
  - xiii) Do the COTS Motel Housing Case managers have capacity?

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(1) There's an estimated 6-7 week wait for case managers, was at 4 weeks but has recently increased. Once someone is connected to case management there is another wait for finding a housing unit

**xiv) Approximately how many beds are currently needed?**

(1) See the PIT count and CE data for information

(2) 80+ people estimated to be currently unsheltered (source: outreach coordination meetings)

(3) 318 people estimated to leave the motel program on July 1<sup>st</sup>, before new voucher eligibility

**5) Coordinated Entry and Statewide PIT Review // Stephanie Smith, Coordinated Entry, CCHA;**

**Marcella Gange, CEDO**

**a) Marcella presented the 2022 PIT Count presentation and gave an overview of the highlights**

**i) See [powerpoint](#) for more information**

**b) Stephanie presented the Coordinated Entry data for May, highlighting that 20-25 households per month are moving to permanent housing**

**i) See [powerpoint](#) for more information**

**ii) Question: Does CE have a list of available housing units?**

**(1) Yes, homeless dedicated units are tracked and staff are working on more units coming online by doing outreach to local landlords, housing developers, etc**

**6) CCHA Letter of Interest // Sarah Russell, Co-Chair CCHA/CEDO; Will Towne, Co-Chair, CCHA/Spectrum**

**i) The Alliance collaborated on the letter together to coordinate their request from the state. The Alliance is advocating to extend motel stays until the most vulnerable populations can be housed, ultimately preventing unsheltered homelessness. There is also a request to fund 1 FTE to coordinate this work. Households must be engaged in CE in order to receive prioritization**

**(1) Question: Has a number of households been identified that fit this prioritization?**

**(a) Yes, 68 households with 121 children, 15 people 65+, 2-4 pregnant (not in 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester), 92~ people with disabilities (number of people is fluid, the budget is based in 160 people)**

**(2) Question: Can the prioritization be amended to include families currently in shelters?**

**(a) The group discussed this question at length, including COTS use of CE and number of COTS units dedicated to CE dictated in past MOU, and the possibility of revisiting this MOU to include more CE dedicated units.**

**(3) Question: Will this prioritization have an impact on the Veteran prioritization and reaching functional zero by the end of the year? The data shows the prioritization has been effective by halving the number of homeless veterans**

**(a) This prioritization will likely take precedence over the Veteran prioritization**

**(4) COTS agreed to prioritize motel guests for family shelter openings**

**(5) Question: How are people in motels connecting to CE?**

**(a) CE receives a list of folks in the motel program and does outreach to connect with people. CE also receives referrals through the CCHAvt.org website, or by contacting CVOEO. Folks will need to move through the CE phases in order to reach the top of the waiting list**

**ii) \*VOTE Warned\*: The CCHA Executive Committee requests the approval of the Steering Committee for the ESD Motel Crisis Prioritization Policy to ensure the following vulnerable populations do not become unsheltered:**

**(a) Families with minor children**

**(b) Households receiving home-health and/or hospice services**

**(c) Seniors, 65yrs and older**

**(1) Amended vote: The CCHA proposes adopting a CE prioritization policy for mainstream resources that focuses on the vulnerability of populations that cannot safely access congregate shelter.**

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These identified populations (families with minor children, households who are receiving or eligible for home health care, and households 65+) will be prioritized for mainstream resources ahead of all other populations due to their particular vulnerability within the ESD and DV Motel Program, and in family shelter.

(a) Jason Brill made a motion to vote to approve the CE prioritization policy as amended, seconded by Stephanie Bixby. With 16 votes aye, 0 nay, 1 abstention, the motion carries

iii) **\*VOTE Warned\***: The CCHA Executive Committee requests execution of the Letter of Interest, to be submitted to VT Department of Children and Families, on behalf of the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance, in response to the ending of the ESD\*\* Emergency Motel Program.

(1) Travis Poulin made a motion to vote to approve the Executive Committee request, seconded by Jason Brill. With 16 ayes, 0 nays, and 1 abstention, the motion carries

**7) Presentation of Letters of Intent Submitted by CCHA Partner Agencies**

a) Lindsay Mesa, Pathways VT

i) Pathways is proposing to expand their Permanent Supportive Housing program, expand household capacity in Chittenden County, and requesting to increase rental assistance through the HOP grant

b) Sarah Russell, City of Burlington

i) COB is proposing to create a short-term, temporary congregate shelter on Cherry St that operates until the Adverse Weather Conditions policy begins in December. 50 beds would be available with a collocated day-station. Funding for staffing is also being requested

c) Travis Poulin, CVOEO

i) CVOEO is proposing to increase resources at the Community Resource Center given the estimated increase in usage. CVOEO is also requesting \$50,000 in direct service dollars plus funding for staffing

d) Stephanie Bixby, Burlington Housing Authority

i) BHA is proposing funding to create an outreach staff that assist with increasing accessibility to their waitlist. BHA would also like to work with Cricket Wireless and provide phones for people to increase their accessibility. BHA is also proposing workshops for direct service staff to reduce staff burnout and increase staff resources

e) Taylor Thibault, Champlain Housing Trust

i) CHT is proposing to expand their contract with Harbor Place and increase the number of units they offer for families, 6-9 months

**8) Open Forum**

a) Due to timing, the group was unable to hold Open Forum but answered questions throughout the meeting

\*Community Development and Economic Office, City of Burlington

\*\*Economic Services Division