



STEERING COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

May 3, 2019

9:00-10:00

Facilitator:	Casey Gordon		
Meeting Attendees:	<p><u>Steering Council members present:</u> Elizabeth Stoddard, Lisa Cruden, Hattie Tinney, Adrienne Goodstal, Alonda Trammell, Casey Gordon, Deanna Rolffs, Erin Banchoff, Beverly Ryskamp, Susan Cervantes, Tom Cottrell, Scott Orr, Lauren VanKuelen, Brianna Lipscomb</p> <p><u>Steering Council members absent:</u> Jeffrey King, Karen Tjapkes, Kwan McEwen, Shannon Bass, Rebecca Rynbrandt, Pilar Dunning, Shontaze Jones</p> <p><u>Community Members:</u> Max Barrigear, Julie Cnossen, Shandra Steininger, Kendra Avila, Becky Diffin, Erin Benson, Jamin Short, Brittani Barkley, Tahbu Aizer</p> <p><u>Staff:</u> Courtney Myers-Keaton, Wende Randall, Brianne Czyzio</p>		
Time Convened:	9:02	Time Adjourned:	9:59

Approval of Agenda		May 3, 2019	
Motion by:	Tom	Support from:	Adrienne
Discussion			
Amendments			
Conclusion	All in favor by acclamation with no dissent		
Public Comment on Any Agenda Item			
Discussion			
<p>Shandra Steininger stated that the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) funding is critical to breaking the cycle of youth homelessness. The community has never been in a better position. It is important to remember that this demonstration project is unique. HUD has expressed that they are not concerned with how lead agency is selected. There has been a lot of discussions around process. Youth Committee and Youth Action Board recently came together to elect their own leadership. She requested that Steering Council hear and approve recommendations so that the community can move toward to a more equitable future for youth.</p> <p>Julie Cnossen asked Steering Council to reconsider their decision. The decision to not peruse YHDP funding was a big, aggressive step that was not done in consultation with Youth Action Board which is a huge concern. She asked Steering Council to take time to hear from Youth Committee and Youth Action Board to reconsider vote. She recognized that timeline is short, but that has not scared people off before. The community is well positioned to be funded this year, in light of the funding that could impact youth, it is a big decision to make without input form those who will be impacted by these funds. Set aside some of the things heard about what is happening on in youth committee and listen to the Youth Committee intention to bring these funds to the community.</p> <p>Tahbu Aizer, Youth Action Board: The text of Tahbu’s public comment follows: “Who am I? I am a voice of the youth that hopes to spark change for my friends and family. I am a voice that refuses to be silent in the face of inequity, injustice, and unfairness. Today, we live in a world where these things run rampant because the people who have the power and the opportunity</p>			



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to change things, ultimately, let us down; bogged down by the crazy rhetorics and politics that have little meaning to the warriors in the street trenches.

When I heard about the Steering Council's decision to not apply for the YHDP grant, I almost lost half of the Youth Action Board to one thing; Discouragement. It is a plague in our society that keeps people in submission to the judges and victims living inside our heads; those who say, "Things will never change." Surprise! The only constant in life is change. So I am here today to change this process.

At the first youth committee meeting I attended last week, I made some motions. It was the greatest opportunity I've had, thus far, to challenge the Youth Committee to work with US; against the ticking clock, to get something presented to you today. Was it highly-organized? No. Did the follow-up meeting yesterday achieve quorum? No. Did we get something done in the midst of a flawed process? YES! That is all I needed to know. I didn't expect my unorthodox ideas to work. I did expect the Youth Committee to start working with us.

You all have young people hungering for a change; hungering to be involved; to help you achieve your goals and our common goals. I think that the processes, at large, may be flawed. We all are, but as my wise earthly father spoke to me, "There are no limits to what we can do together!" Therefore, I beg you. Overturn your decision. Give us another chance to try again, because if we don't apply, that's a true failure. Let's change this process together!"

Review of Request to Reconsider Decision to not apply for YHDP funding.

Discussion

Chairperson Casey Gordon opened to meeting and stated that the purpose of this special meeting is for Steering Council to review two requests brought by Youth Committee and Youth Action Board. The first is to review the request that the Steering Committee reconsider its decision to not apply for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project grant this year. The second is to review the request that the Steering Council delegates, for this funding source in this year's round only, their authority to the Youth Committee and Youth Action Board to select a lead agency and apply for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program grant.

Erin Banchoff moves to reconsider Steering Council's decision to not apply for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project grant this year. Lauren VanKeulen supports. All in favor by acclamation with no dissent.

Erin Banchoff asked for further background information on the YHDP from Courtney Myers-Keaton. Courtney Myers-Keaton stated that the YHDP is a demonstration project. It is an opportunity to be selected as a community by showcasing an ability to work collaboratively and innovatively. HUD is looking for creative ideas that will end youth homelessness, YHDP communities will be used to showcase potential solutions to other communities. HUD scores applicants on leadership capacity, collaboration, youth collaboration, financial management, community need, and data and evaluation. Funding for the project does not happen until the community submits a coordinated community plan, developed in assistance with HUD TA and every member of the YHDP team. Last year, the community scored well and is poised to potentially be selected for this current round. The application asks how the CoC will support the lead agency, how there is direct youth participation, how the YHDP team will bring in others who are not currently engaged. Last year, our application lost points because we did not have a youth count or needs assessment. However, Youth Committee and Youth Action Board



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(YAB) completed the Voices of Youth Count last October and the CoC will likely score higher as a result. Planning grant dollars do not necessarily go to the lead agency, but likely would because the lead agency would need staff support. Lead agency would need to comply with HUD regulations and have 25% match funds. United Way is the only eligible applicant for this application, as they are the collaborative applicant of the CoC for the community. Lead agency is separate from collaborative applicant, even though they could potentially be the same. There are many ways that communities across the country have selected a lead agency. Per HUD, there is no recommendation, and no right or wrong way to choose lead agency for the YHDP.

There was general discussion that when this topic was discussed at the last Steering Council meeting, the decision felt disjointed at the last meeting, Susan Cervantes asked, "What changed from April's meeting to today to make Steering want to reconsider their decision?"

The conversation at the last Steering meeting seemed to have multiple recommendations without a clear path and was missing representation from Youth Committee. From Executive Committee's perspective, the recommendation was to let youth committee decide. This led to discussion around concerns/conflicts within the youth space. There were concerns over protocol and logistics around the application. There was concern that there was not a good process to put together an application. What changed is the group considered the importance of this funding and the discouragement of young people who are looking for housing. As a CoC, YAB was given a held seat on Steering Council because of the value of the youth voice. If YAB and Youth Committee both are saying that they believe they can do this, this provides a different perspective that was missing from the last Steering Council meeting. From a Youth Action Board perspective, it is better to apply and try than to not get it at all.

Adrienne Goodstal motions to overturn the decision to not apply for the YHDP and to apply this year. Elizabeth Stoddard supports. Discussion: It is helpful to look back on the decision to see what happened. When this topic came to Executive a month ago, Youth Committee and Youth Action Board were working gathering information about the YHDP process. In learning from HUD and Traverse City, they learned some things that could make the application stronger. At Executive in April, the group came to the decision that that they want our application to be as strong as possible and want Youth Committee and YAB to make the decision. Deanna Rolffs noted that we talk about processes like they are unbiased, but they are not. Steering grappled with the equity of the RFQ process last year. They noted that last month the decision was in front of Steering, but members may have been caught up on the process instead of moving forward. Several Steering Council and Executive members went to the Youth Committee meeting. They listened and learned that perhaps they did not make the best decision. At the last meeting, there was a lot of discussion about process concerns and timeline. Last Friday, Youth Committee and YAB jointly decided upon a process, with quorum. Youth Committee and Youth Action Board made edits to RFQ rubric that Courtney has developed. The RFQ went out to the CoC (with the caveat that it did not have Steering Council's approval), and then was scored by Youth Committee agencies and Youth Action Board themselves. There was not quorum at the scoring meeting, and there were 3 abstentions. 2 for conflicts of interest, 1 due to concerns that there were not familiar enough with the process. There were 8 scores, Courtney has the results but has not released them for concerns of creating bias if the lead agency applications were to go to Funding



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Review Committee as a directive of Steering Council, if it was decided to vote against the petition to delegate the authority of lead agency selection to Youth Action Board and Youth Committee. At Youth Committee, it was decided that this process would be for this application for this round only. The next Steering Council agenda already includes discussing this process in the future to ensure good processes and procedures are in place if other similar opportunities come before the CoC. This is time bound with the idea that we will look at process proactively moving forward.

All in favor by acclamation with no dissent

	Person Responsible	Deadline

Review of Request to Delegate Authority for Lead Agency Selection to Youth Committee/YAB

Discussion

Steering Council members have been asked to review the request that the Steering Committee delegates, for this funding source in this year’s round only, their authority to the Youth Committee and Youth Action Board to select a lead agency and apply for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project grant. ***Lauren VanKeulen motioned that Steering discusses delegating, for this funding source in this year’s round only, their authority to the Youth Committee and Youth Action Board to select a lead agency and apply for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project grant. Tom Cottrell supported. All in favor by acclamation with no dissent.***

Thinking about the Governance Charter, this is a test of how much authority is given to a quasi-autonomous body, in this case - Youth Committee. Tom Cottrell expressed that they like the idea of giving this committee their own power to make decisions. Lisa shared that in the diversion team, the group was given the autonomy to decide how to set up the team. This led to buy-in from providers. There was discussion around who would be the best fit to lead the diversion team. The group had to have this difficult discussion, which has led to strength in the group. Giving authority to the group that does not go against what HUD is saying and what is in the Governance Charter; it would only make us a stronger applicant in collaboration. The RFQ rubric includes that lead agency must be willing and capable of upholding and implementing HUD regulations if they receive funds. This is a HUD requirement. With the rubric as a threshold, and with Youth Committee and YAB members have the opportunity to decide lead agency. This creates a different kind of buy-in when committee members are able to make the decision themselves, instead of receiving it from an external body. One cautionary note, in the decision-making process, the CoC would want some oversight from Executive or Steering to make a final endorsement. An additional note, there was not a quorum of Youth Committee or Youth Action Board at the meeting to score applications. Tom mentioned that in regard to process, scoring would not have to occur with a quorum. However, it would be wise for the vote to officially decide on lead agency as a result of the scoring would need a quorum. Members expressed that what happened with Youth Committee is inspiring after this process took all its turns. It was not perfect, but Youth Committee rallied and figured out a way to move forward. A decision around how this should go in the future deserves a different discussion. Today, Steering could make a one-time call that honors this is an impressive show of coming together. If Steering decide to move forward, there will likely be concerns that it could be biased for Youth Committee to select their own lead



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agency. The process may be flawed, but should the power be kept in the youth space? Everyone needs to understand what the process was and be capable to speaking to it. Susan Cervantes asked, "Is there any group on Youth Action Board/Youth Committee that would not benefit/receive HUD funds?" Likely not. KCCA receives HUD funds, and Susan noted that HUD has picked apart the conflict of interest as reason for concern. This YHDP process would be hard to defend on a black and white scale. However, this phase is a non-funded phase. If the community is selected, HUD TA works with YHDP team to put together a collaborative community plan. This includes how planning dollars are allocated, although Courtney Myers-Keaton pointed out that the planning dollars would like to go the lead agency in our community. HUD TA will determine whether allocations are determined in a manner that complies with HUD regulations. In other communities, projects needed approval from the entire YHDP team. From HUD webinars related to YHDP, the lead agency decision process is up to the community. If the CoC does not apply, they risk alienating the youth in the community. If the CoC does apply, the community may or may not be funded. There has been a lot of momentum around this application that the group would like to see continue. A concern brought to the table is that Community Rebuilders is not present to discuss the point of view from their agency's perspective. This is disappointing because it is voice that Steering would like to hear, and the council must stand behind its decision today. The hope is that Youth Committee and YAB will include all youth agencies if they are willing to be involved, along with other community agencies. It was noted that Community Rebuilders was present in the Youth Committee space and abstained from scoring lead agency applications because they have contracts with both.

It is important to have the voice of neutrality around the table. Whoever is currently involved with the decision will likely benefit because the YHDP dollars will benefit youth and agencies that serve youth. Thus, there are conflicts of interest with those who were brought into score the applications. Neutrality would bring equity to the conversation. How does this fit in the context of this being a non-funded part of the process? The process is not determining collaborative application. Lead agency is a smaller part of the application. This may be less important in the immediate but is something to think of moving forward. Lead agency will remain the same through the whole process, so Steering would want to make sure the best lead agency is selected. In consideration of timeframe, Steering may have to accept the process as imperfect.

Deanna Rolffs moves that Steering Council approves the request that the Steering Committee delegates, for this funding source in this year's round only, their authority to the Youth Committee and Youth Action Board to select a lead agency and apply for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project grant. Susan Cervantes supports. All in favor by acclamation with no dissent.

Next steps: Youth Committee and YAB will decide. Friendly suggestion from Tom Cottrell: A vote would not be a bad idea from Youth Committee, because this will ensure that there is buy-in from the community.

Lauren VanKeulen thanked the Steering Council for being willing to reconsider based on what the community wants. And Brianna Lipscomb thanked Steering Council members for their reconsideration on behalf of Youth Action Board. Steering Council was very impressed to have heard public comment from Youth Committee and Youth Action Board about what is at stake and who will benefit.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
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GRAND RAPIDS AREA
COALITION TO END
HOMELESSNESS

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Adjournment			
Motion by:	Tom Cottrell	Support from:	Lauren VanKeulen
Conclusion	All in favor by acclamation with no dissent		