



**GRAND RAPIDS/WYOMING/KENT COUNTY
CONTINUUM OF CARE
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES**

June 27, 2019
9:30-11:00am

Facilitator:	Casey Gordon		
Meeting Attendees:	Dreyson Baker (Community Member), Tom Cottrell (YWCA), Anna Solomon (Safe Haven), Tammy Yeomans (Kent Regional Inclusive Community Coalition), Kwan McEwen (Urban League), Pilar Meyer-Dunning (Salvation Army), Maria Moreno-Reyes (Urban League), Sherrie Gillespie (KCCA), Darrell Singleton (City of Wyoming), Victoria Sluga (Pine Rest), Emily O'Brien (Salvation Army), Tim Beimers (Salvation Army), Brittani Barkley (Hope Network), Donald Johnson (Hope Network), Ciarra Adkins (HealthNet), Deanna Rolffs (ICCF), Anya Ward (ICCF), Mary Engle (Mel Trotter), Johanna Schulte (City of Grand Rapids), Veronica Arvizu (ICCF), Elizabeth Stoddard (Fair Housing Center), Stephanie Gingerich (LINC UP), Casey Gordon (Kent ISD), Jeffrey King (Arbor Circle), Nancy Haynes (Fair Housing Center), Kendra Avila (3:11 Youth Housing), Laura St. Louis (Disability Advocates), Linda LaNew Scott (Goodwill), Amanda Sterzick (Family Promise), April LaGrone (Urban League), Deborah Armstrong (Home Repair Services), Cecilia Rush (Veterans Administration), Julie Cnossen (Arbor Circle), Michael Bohnsack (community member), Steve Ward (Volunteers of America), Mallory Bouwman (Hope Network), Emily Schichtel (United Way), Gayle Witham (Veterans Administration), Laura Oesch (Grand Rapids Housing Commission), Alexandria Nix(Grand Rapids Housing Commission), Trenessa Allen (Grand Rapids Housing Commission), Wanda Couch (Grand Rapids Housing Commission), Alisa White (LINC UP), Alisha Pennington (MDHHS), Nickole Glass (Senior Neighbors), Hattie Tinney (Grand Rapids Housing Commission), Felicia Clay (Grand Rapids Housing Commission), Katherine Besaw (Genesis), Julie Kendrick (Degage), Wende Randall (ENTF), Courtney Myers-Keaton (CoC), Brianne Czyzio (ENTF/CoC)		
Time Convened:	9:33	Time Adjourned:	10:55

Approval of Minutes			
Motion by:	Steve Ward	Support from:	Tom Cottrell
Discussion			
Amendments	None		
Conclusion	All in favor by acclamation with no dissent		
Open Call for New CoC Members			
Discussion			
CoC Members are accepted at any time throughout the year. Members are encouraged to invite anyone they feel would bring something to this space. Applications are available on the website (endhomelessnesskent.org) or through contacting a CoC staff member (bczyzio@hwmuw.org).			
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline	
Strategic Plan			



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Discussion		
<p>The strategic plan is a standing agenda item at Steering Council and at the full CoC to ensure the CoC is on track with this updated plan that will be in place through April 30, 2020. Courtney Myers-Keaton recapped the 2016 baseline data and changes in the 2018 system performance measures. She also provided updates on progress towards the goals. Please reach out to Courtney (cmyers-keaton@hwmuw.org) with thought or questions around the current strategic plan.</p>		
<u>2020 Strategic Plan Process</u>		
<p>It is time for the CoC to begin developing a new strategic plan that will be in place starting May 1, 2020. Steering and Executive have looking into the next steps for developing a new strategic plan. The hope is to develop an actionable strategic plan that has 3 to 5 goals. Important questions to consider include: What are the priorities? Where should we be going as a CoC? What does our community need? How can the CoC incorporate community voice? Steering asked Executive to bring back some options for strategic planning. One option is a process consultant. This consultant would focus on identifying the values that are important to the CoC and community, and then develop priorities based upon these goals. The other is a more traditional approach that would focus only on developing a strategic plan. Deanna Rolffs shared why it is important to keep values at the center of strategic planning. Without values, the broader CoC and community may not feel connected to the process. Courtney Myers-Keaton asked attendees to think about what they would want to see as part of the strategic planning process, specifically deliverables to include in a Request for Proposals. Please reach out to Courtney (cmyers-keaton@hwmuw.org), Casey (caseygordon@kentisd.org), or Brianne (bczyzio@hwmuw.org) if you have additional ideas or thoughts around the upcoming strategic planning process.</p>		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Committee Updates		
Discussion		
<u>Coordinated Entry:</u>		
<p>Tom Cottrell, the current chair shared an update on the Coordinated Entry Committee. It had been on hiatus for the past year and has re-gathered. To focus their work, they developed a purpose statement: To ensure our community experiences equitable access to housing resources, the committee will develop, evaluate and continually improve our coordinated entry system. They also elected officers: Tom Cottrell from the YWCA will serve as chair, Anna Solomon from Safe Haven as vice chair, and Catherine LaPorte from HAP as secretary. They are narrowing their focus to be an evaluative group of the system. An internal evaluation of the coordinated entry system (CES) is something that HUD would like to see on an on-going basis. The committee is in the process of developing a framework that can be used to evaluate the system as is. It will incorporate consumer feedback, review of policies and procedures, workflow analysis, partner feedback, and checking compliance with federal and state requirements. This workgroup is open to anyone who has feedback and wants to help with the process.</p> <p>A question was asked regarding the Cloudburst evaluation and its role and implications in the upcoming internal evaluation of the Coordinated Entry System. The Cloudburst report was primarily</p>		



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an evaluation of the system’s compliance with its own policies and procedures rather than an evaluation of what the system does. Many of the conclusions are inaccurate for the community’s current state and do not necessarily apply. Policies and procedures should reflect how the system has changed to reflect the community’s need rather than the system changing to match potentially outdated policies and procedures.

Youth Committee

The committee applied for this year’s YHDP round with Arbor Circle as the lead agency. They recently elected the following officers: Shandra Steininger from HQ as chair, Kendra Avila from 3:11 as vice chair, and Tahbu Aizer from the Youth Action Board as secretary. This would allow the community to build out a coordinated community plan to end youth homelessness. They have developed 5 workgroups under the USICH framework: Coordinated Entry Planning, HMIS & Data Evaluation, Discharge Planning, Voices of Youth Count Planning, and Housing First & Resource Capacity. Workgroups are open to anyone who is interested in providing input around any of these topics. Youth Committee meets on the fourth Friday of every month at United Way. Workgroups will meet from 9-10am.

Anyone who is interested in learning more or joining any of the CoC’s committees should reach out to the chair of that committee or to CoC staff.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

Proposed Noncitizen Rule	Nancy Haynes, Fair Housing Center
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Discussion

Mixed-status families are those families who have someone who is ineligible for public assistance in the household. The proposed rule would deny benefits to all members of mixed-status households. The rule would also require those over 62 to show documentation. This would have a disparate impact on households based on national origin. If the rule goes into place, families will be asked to choose between splitting up or moving out. The proposed rule has been published and is open for public comment. Before the rule can be implemented, the agency has to respond to each unique comment. The deadline for this comment period is July 9th. If the rule is finalized, it would effectively evict 25,000 families. This applies to a large list of voucher programs. This could have ripple effects through a variety of programs in our community and across the country. With this rule, HUD’s goal is to help citizens get off the waiting list. From HUD data, this will not be the case. Instead, it will increase costs which will lead to the decrease in quantity and quality of housing. Currently, assistance is pro-rated for families who have ineligible members. This will increase administrative burden for public housing agencies, as well as private landlords. They will be required to collect documentation for all current and future residents and create policies for determining eligibility and eviction process. The proposed rule can be viewed and comments can be submitted here: <https://www.regulations.gov/docket?D=HUD-2019-0044> Resources and templates can be found at: www.keep-families-together.org. Comments can be submitted through this site as well. Questions can be directed to the Fair Housing Center or CoC staff.



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Other rules that will be soon be open to comment:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Equal Access Rule: This would allow shelters to discriminate based on LGBTQ+ status. – Rollback of the Disparate Impact Rule: this clarifies if policy has a disparate impact on a certain group and there is data to support this, then the rule can be struck down. This could lead to unintentional discrimination. 		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
VAWA: Emergency Transfer Plan		
Discussion		
<p>The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) applies to protects victims of domestic, dating, stalking, human trafficking, and sexual assault. VAWA Requirements apply to the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), the CoC Program, as well as other public housing programs. This aims to let residents know that protections exist, and they have the right to an emergency transfer. These forms were distributed and are effective May 1. As a CoC, we must create a community emergency transfer plan by September 9. Providers must show compliance with HUD regulations. The CoC is looking at developing MOUs with domestic violence service providers to help ensure that anyone is able to access resources if needed.</p>		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
ESG Eligible Changes		
Discussion		
<p>There have been changes that were made to eligible expenses under ESG. Changes include allowing for the cost of childcare, job training, education services, and public transportation. Additional changes allow for moving costs, rental applications, and security deposits as eligible ESG expenses.</p>		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
MSHDA HCV Requirements		
Discussion		
<p>Each month, MSHDA (Michigan State Housing Development Authority) releases data on the number of households on the Homeless Preference List (HPL), the number of households added, and the number of households pulled. In Kent County, 97 households were added to the HPL in May. Currently, there are 403 households on the HPL. This data aligns with the low rate of vouchers used in Kent County.</p>		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Agency Highlights		
Discussion		
<p>KConnect: Wende Randall presented that, the KConnect process is happening in tandem with work in the community. They are focusing on affordable and stable housing across the community. Wende shared that in the past 5 months, there has been a lot of data collection and information sharing. The Design team has been looking though data from a variety of sources. Content experts have assisted in gathering information from the community. Context experts are those with lived experience who are helping share their experiences so they can inform the process. This information was brought</p>		



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together, and progress and next steps shared at a large convening. This group unanimously agreed that safe and stable housing is a basic right for everyone in our community. Over the next few months, the scout and research team will be presenting options and ideas to the design team. Following that, the design team will be presenting a framework for homelessness and affordable housing solutions in the community. Steering Council has decided to let this process inform the strategic planning process and goals. If you are interested in being involved with this process, connect with Wende.

Julie Clossen from Arbor Circle shared that she was invited to a mapping meeting and that she had concerns following that meeting. She voiced that the meeting was spent on the homeless sector, not on the entire housing sector and based on updates from other meetings it seems that the homelessness system is the primary focus. She also voiced concerns that the group was not using HMIS data and that not everyone was at the table for this discussion. She encouraged CoC staff to make sure the KConnect process is connecting with the CoC as a whole and all service providers.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

Announcements/Updates

Discussion

LINC UP – there will be information coming out soon for the Garfield park Lofts development at 100 Burton SE. A waitlist will be opened at the end of July. The units will be leasing in October. Information will be shared in the next few weeks.

Grand Rapids Homes for All is hosting a City Commission Candidate Forum on Affordable Housing on July 11, from 6-8 at Grand Rapids Public Library’s Main Branch.

Heart of West Michigan United Way – the RFP process for their next funding cycle will open September 1. Please visit their website for more information. Housing will be one of their focus areas for this cycle.

Volunteers of America – They are a SSVF grant provider and recently moved their location. Their new address is 2944 Fuller NE, Suite 101.

Kent County Community Action – they are conducting a Community Needs Assessment. Please complete the provider survey and share the client survey with your participants.

Goodwill – they are finishing up the year with a grant for returning citizens. They are starting a new grant for anyone who has been justice-involved in the past 6 months and are looking for referrals. Please reach out to Goodwill if you have anyone who may be interested in this program.

The NOFA for the CoC Program Competition has not yet been released. When it becomes available, CoC staff will send out an email around what the process will look like. Everyone is encouraged to submit proposals, even if your agency has not submitted a proposal in the past.

Adjournment

Motion by:	Dreyson Byker	Support from:	Elizabeth Stoddard
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