



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

August 22, 2019
9:30-11:00am

Facilitator:	Casey Gordon		
Meeting Attendees:	Tom Cottrell (YWCA), Amber Troupe (MDHHS), Lauren VanKeulen (3:11), Cheryl Schuch (Family Promise), Casey Gordon (Kent ISD), Laura Oesch (GRHC), Felicia Clay (GRHC), Hattie Tinney (GRHC), Erin Banchoff (City of Grand Rapids), Susan Cervantes (KCCA), Pilar Dunning (Salvation Army), Deanna Rolffs (ICCF), John Wynbeek (Genesis), Karen Tjapkes (Legal Aid), Vera Beech (Community Rebuilders), Jeffrey King (Community Rebuilders), Anna Diaz (Community Rebuilders), Rebecca Long (Dwelling Place), Shannon Bass (Community Member), Gordie Moeller (Double Up Food Bucks), Emily O'Brien (Salvation Army), Dreyson Baker (Community member), Malloury Bouwman (Hope Network), Beverly Ryskamp (network180), Tiffany Clarke (Bethany), Bryan Holt (Pine Rest), Alisha Pennington (MDHHS), Wende Randall (ENTF), Julie Clossen (Arbor Circle), Stephanie Gingerich (LINC UP), Brandon Frierson (VoA), Tammy Yeomans (Kent RICC), Emily Schichtel (HWMUW), Holly Wilson (Safe Haven), Anna Solomon (Safe Haven), Chris Romero (Home Repair Services), Mary Engle (Mel Trotter), Kendra Avila (3:11), Ciarra Adkins (HealthNet), Berniz Terpstra (ICCF), Cathy LaPorte (Salvation Army), Wanda Couch (GRHC), Trenessa Allen (GRHC), Alexandria Nix (GRHC), Pam Spaeth (Covenant House), Shandra Steininger (HQ), Julie Kendrick (Degage), John Bosma (GRPL), Liz Keegan (Fair Housing Center), Elizabeth Stoddard (Fair Housing Center), Courtney Myers-Keaton (CoC), Brianne Czyzio (CoC/ENTF)		
Time Convened:	9:32	Time Adjourned:	10:39

Approval of Minutes		From June 27, 2019	
Motion by:	Tom Cottrell	Support from:	Lauren VanKeulen
Discussion	None		
Amendments	LINC UP development is the Garfield Park Lofts at 100 Burton SE.		
Conclusion	Motion Passed		

CoC Program Competition	
Discussion	
<p>Courtney Myers-Keaton shared the timeline for the CoC Program Competition. Local applications are due tomorrow, August 23. A draft of the COC Application has been posted publicly on our website. Email feedback to Paul LeBlanc (pleblanc@hwmuw.org) by September 19. Steering Council will vote on the Project Priority Listing at their September 20th meeting. The CoC Consolidated Application (CoC Application and Project Priority Listing) will be submitted to HUD on September 25th.</p> <p>Courtney overviewed a few of the changes from last years NOFA. There is a focus on increasing employment among participants. Agencies can show this focus by providing MOUs with their local applications. In addition, CoC may be reaching out for MOUs or evidence of collaboration with employers. There is now some flexibility for the service participation requirements for housing first. For PSH, agencies do not need to entirely prioritize chronic but need to use local data and best</p>	

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practices. There have been scoring changes. Points for system performance, HMIS, and strategic planning decreased; CoC Coordination points increased.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
HUD Equal Access and Fair Housing Discrimination Training	Elizabeth Stoddard, Liz Keegan	

Discussion

Liz Keegan is the Director of Education and Outreach for the Fair Housing Center of West Michigan. She presented a training on fair housing rights and HUD’s Equal Access Rule. Fair housing laws protect from discrimination in housing based on protected classes. Protected classes on the federal level include race, relation, national origin, and more. In the state of Michigan, marital status and age are protected classes. Locally, sexual orientation, gender identity, and source of income are protected in some municipalities. The State of Michigan is looking at source of income as a protected class.

Equal Access Rule

This HUD rule extends protection of base of sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status. This is only in relation to HUD housing. Liz provided examples of instances situations that violate the Equal Access Rule. There is a lot of anecdotal information that shows discrimination, but not much data as the rule is recent. This rule applies to all of HUD’s housing programs.

Trends in Fair Housing:

Increase in discrimination against families with children: For example, units that include one person per bedroom stipulations, targeted advertising towards couples without children, or fee increase per child. Familial status includes grandparents and/or guardians raising children and pregnant women. The Fair Housing Center has a guidebook and online calculator for determining occupancy.

Reasonable Accommodation/Modification: this should be an interactive process in which the tenant should be able to inform the landlord what would best suit their needs. Landlords and housing providers need to know that they must take action if a tenant raises a request for modification (doorknob change, balance bars, etc.) or accommodation (support animals, live-in aides are the main two). Fair Housing laws do not limit the type of service animals that are allowed, and animals would not need to fall under unit regulations. Individuals may be asked to substantiate. These decisions come down to what is reasonable for landlords. Three things are considered – undue financial and administrative burden, fundamental alterations.

Discrimination based on criminal background: HUD released a separate set of guidance around this issue in 2016. This included powerful data. About 1/3 of adults in the US have a criminal record of some sort. It also acknowledged that there is racial bias in the criminal justice system. HUD guidance states that policies should focus on what is reasonable for resident safety and property. Also, they should not be blanket statements, should look at convictions not arrests, should take into account the nature and severity of the offense and time that has passed. The statute of limitations is short for residents to raise concerns. However, similar behaviors often continue to occur. Even if something is



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past the statute of limitations, it can be reported and investigated to determine whether it is continuing to occur.

Wende Randall asked how the proposed rule about changing eligibility for those without citizenship living in the household will impact fair housing. Liz noted that they have seen an uptick in discrimination based on national origin since 2017. They will need community partners who have clients experiencing this to reach out and to support the families. This is also an advocacy opportunity. Wende also asked is there an opportunity to educate landlords on what the law does and does not do? Yes, this is a great opportunity to partner.

Cathy Laporte asked if there is any work being done with the City of Grand Rapids Rental Fee Ordinance specific to the enforcement process. Liz explained that they only work with fair housing issues but have been doing education throughout the community around the ordinance. They are interested in seeing the results of an evaluation of the ordinance as a Rental Fee Ordinance is something that a lot of communities are interested in possibly enacting. In additions, the new Human Relations ordinance would expand protections throughout the City of Grand Rapids.

Liz encouraged anyone who has concerns that someone they know may be experiencing housing discrimination to reach out to the Fair Housing Center. All reporting can be anonymous, either via phone or email.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
MSHDA HCV Requirements		
Discussion		
Courtney Myers-Keaton shared that in July of 2019, 112 names were added to the Homeless Preference Waiting List for Kent County. The brings the number on the list up to 412. No names were pulled from the list in July, which has been consistent over the past few months. For more information, you can contact Robin Acton (robin@hcv.comcastbiz.net) or Sandra Burky (Sandy@hcv.comcastbiz.net) from Community Housing Advocates.		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Committee Updates		
Discussion		
The Youth Action Board and Youth Committee are working on planning this year's Voices of Youth Count. The count is an effort, similar to the PIT count, to count the number of youth ages 10-24 experiencing housing instability on one day in Kent County. This year's count will be Thursday, October 24 th . The planning team is in the process of identifying Come and Be Counted Sites, which are sites throughout the community where youth will be able to take a survey and have the opportunity to access resources. They are also going to be recruiting volunteers to help man the sites on that date.		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Announcements		

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HWMUW will be releasing their RFP on September 1. Please go to www.hwmuw.org or connect with Emily Schichtel (eschichtel@hwmuw.org) with questions.

Unhoused Heart – Artist and Kent County Community Member Dreyson Byker introduced the Unhoused Heart fundraising campaign and invited local CoC members looking for a simple, new, and creative fundraising source to contact him about partnering. The campaign centers on an ArtPrize 10 design that encourages us to start conversations, invest in community, and explore our capacity for compassion. He shared his website www.unhousedheart.com and email address dreybyker@gmail.com and plans to launch the campaign September 4, 2019.

HQ – has been seeing fewer and fewer minor youth dropping into the center. They will be hosting a community conversation at HQ to determine whether others in the community are seeing this trend and to collaborate around ideas to make services available to minor youth. Reach out to Shandra if you are interested in being part of the conversation.

DUFB – Double Up Food Bucks is a program that matches Bridge Card sales, up to \$20 each day, at participating farmers markets and purchases Michigan grown fruits and vegetables. More information is available at www.westmichiganfarmmarkets.org. Please share this information with your participants.

Degage – Women for Degage is hosting an event at the LaGrave Church parking lot tonight. The goal is increasing the number of Women for Degage. There will be music and food trucks, please consider attending.

LINC UP – is partnering with is L.E.T.S. for a Stop the Violence Walk from LINC UP to Baxter Community Center on Saturday, August 24th, at 8:30am. Please take a flyer and share this event with your participants who live in the SE area.

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