



Grand Rapids/Wyoming/Kent County CoC Youth Committee MEETING MINUTES

October 15, 2019

2:00-4:00pm

Facilitator:	Shandra Steininger		
Meeting Attendees:	Finn Marcks, Regina Archie, Li Kaplan, Kendra Avila, Heather Nyenhuis, Julie Crossen, Gabby Guzman, Ashley Pattee, Melissa Ware, Brianna Lipscomb, Erik Means Jr., Melanie Wiersma, Jamin Short, Max Barrigear, Shandra Steininger, Pam Spaeth, Becky Diffin, Sam Pennington, Carolyn Allen, LoRae Robinson, Courtney Myers-Keaton, Brianna Czyzio Robach		
Time Convened:	3:13	Time Adjourned:	4:15

Introductions			
Approval of Agenda			
Motion by:	Max	Second:	Julie
Discussion			
Amendments	Remove workgroup report out		
Conclusion	All in favor by acclamation with no dissent		
Approval of Minutes			
Motion by:	Max	Second:	Brianna
Discussion	There was a conversation at the last meeting around deduplicating the VoYC tally. The group asked Sierra if this were possible. She indicated that it was if certain information was collected – first three letters of first and last name, middle initial, date of birth, and gender. This should be included in the September minutes.		
Amendments			
Conclusion	All in favor by acclamation with no dissent		
Voices of Youth Count			
Discussion	<p>Courtney provided background information regarding the current state of planning for the Voices of Youth Count. As the planning continued, Courtney noted that one portion of the process that could have been more thought out is the delegation of a point person to assign and follow-up on tasks. Courtney indicated that if the group were to go ahead with the count in October as planned, the count would be constrained to only the Grand Rapids area as compared to all of Kent County. The workgroup thinks that it is best to postpone the count to next spring (2020) to help ensure that the count is as successful as it can be.</p> <p>Max voiced disappointment in that the count was not thoroughly planned in time. However, moving to spring would allow the count to be more thought out and reach additional areas. In addition, this would allow the group time to plan a kickoff event. Brianna noted that from her perspective, the best time to do the count would be more in the winter months as from her experience it may be easier to connect with youth. Also, she noted that the same Come and Be Counted sites may not be available for the spring date. She also noted concerns that if the count was postponed until spring, there would be no data to report for 2019, which could harm grants.</p>		



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2:00-4:00pm

There was a question about how the count would interact with the by-name list. The plan was not to add youth to the by-name list but gave youth an opportunity to provide their contact information so that HAP could reach out.

VoYC outreach needs: current shifts are 7 – 11:30 am; 12:30 – 4:30 pm; 5 – 9:30 pm. Ideally, there would be 4 teams per shift. Each team would have a YAB member as a guide, and a team lead as well as a support. There would likely be some teams who would take multiple shifts. This would allow the outreach team as a whole to reach most of Kent County. Dani and Nikki expressed from an outreach standpoint they are in support of postponing. Outreach would be done by outreach workers or those who have experience working with youth with lived experience. There would need to be a way to screen volunteers for outreach. Julie shared that last year, volunteers were from specific agencies. In addition, there was a pathway for those outside of youth-serving organizations (ex.: pack outreach bags, data entry, work deployment sites).

Julie asked what the goal is of the youth count. She indicated that having a clear goal around the count will help have a strategy going forward and will help inform planning. Julie shared that Arbor Circle is willing to help teach the framework that was used last year.

What to do moving forward to ensure that momentum continues:

- Identify roles for:
 - o Outreach team lead delegated
 - o Communication strategy team lead
 - o Count sites strategy lead
 - o Project lead

Kendra recommended smaller subcommittees for each of the major assignments.

Max motioned to postpone the Voices of Youth Count until spring of 2020. Li seconded. Julie indicated that it will be important to identify a lead for the VoYC workgroup. Courtney is willing to be a project lead. Ashley asked whether this structure will be in place for all workgroups. Courtney would not have capacity to lead each workgroup. As this would be inconsistent, would a lead for each workgroup be assigned so it is equitable? Shandra noted that this is such a large project, unique to other workgroups, it is important to have a clear lead. Regina noted that this should not necessarily be a workgroup, but something that all committee members are working towards. Julie wondered if this is a CoC activity, similar to the PIT count. This may require additional conversation outside of the motion. Brianna asked what the original reason that October was chosen, and why we are not aiming for fall next year. Last year, October was decided based on the count day for schools. **All in favor by acclamation with no dissent.** Shandra asked that the group ensure that the support and action is happening so that pieces are in place for a spring 2020 count.

What does VoYC look like as a CoC project? Staff would be responsible for ensuring things that are happening. In addition, there would be broader engagement across the CoC. Julie noted that VoYC could be compared to PIT, in terms of the CoC planning the event, holding the data, etc. Shandra voiced concerns that this as a CoC project, they committee may lose some buy-in. She noted that



Grand Rapids/Wyoming/Kent County CoC Youth Committee MEETING MINUTES

October 15, 2019

2:00-4:00pm

VoYC has been on the agenda at each Youth Committee meeting. Her hope is that with clear leadership, the committee can take this on.

Regina noted that if the full committee were to tackle VoYC for the spring, with support from YAB, VoYC should not be just a workgroup. She noted that putting responsibility on YAB may be setting YAB up for failure. Pam suggested that each Youth Committee organization could commit 1 individual from each agency could work on VoYC to help move it forward. Courtney encouraged that a separate planning group that meets outside of Youth Committee at a time that is reasonable for YAB members.

Julie voiced concerns that VoYC does not require systems change and strategy at a macro level, whereas other workgroups may need this coordination. She indicated that the CoC Coordinator should be looking at strategy for moving the workgroups and committee forward instead of event-based coordination. Shandra noted that Courtney's role in planning would work on creating infrastructure for a bridge between YAB and YC. Then, in the future, this structure will be in place.

Courtney wondered if the framework that Arbor Circle used last year could be shared with whoever is taking the lead. Julie shared that if the framework is in place, then it would be easy to divide up the work. She noted that Arbor Circle would be happy to go through the framework for VoYC going forward with the hope that someone will be able to pick this up next year.

Li moves that YAB meet separately to decide what support they can provide VoYC moving forward with support of co-facilitators. Max seconds. Julie noted that whatever decision structure comes back to YC for a vote at the next meeting with specific recommendations brought forward. **All in favor by acclamation with no dissent.**

At the beginning of the summer, YAB members decided that one important function of the count would be to raise awareness and reduce stigma around youth homelessness. Brianna suggested that, in the absence of a count, there is an event to raise awareness around resources available for youth. There are some funds available that could be used towards an awareness event. Shandra shared that there is collaboration between HQ and Arbor Circle around outreach to minors. This may connect into this work. **Kendra moves to have a youth homelessness awareness event during Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. Planning will be delegated to Youth Action Board. Max seconded.** Finn suggested connections with community partners are reused to save time and effort into planning the event. Courtney noted that the money that was set aside for participant gift cards could be used towards the planning. Other than this, would need commitments from organizations to cover specific expenses. Julie voiced concerns that there is not a scope for the event which may lead to difficulty in planning. YAB members will plan a November event for awareness around youth homelessness. If there are specific asks, they will be sent out to Youth Committee. Brianna asked if YAB can consider this before voting.

Additional topics outside of VoYC:

How do we ensure that we are reaching out to youth on the by-name list. Courtney wondered if there is something that YC can do to rally behind connecting with youth on the by-name list. Melissa noted



Grand Rapids/Wyoming/Kent County CoC Youth Committee MEETING MINUTES

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that the resource capacity workgroup was focused on this. Sam shared that as of now there are 132 youth on the by-name list, most are experiencing category 1 literal homelessness. She shared that there are not enough resources to pull youth off the list. Julie shared that last year, there was a lot of feedback around reporting the number of youth experiencing housing instability as some populations were excluded (schools, northern Kent County, suburbs). She noted that the goal was to go to local foundations with an ask, as well as to local organizations that provide housing resources with the ask to provide resources specifically to youth if they had additional funds. Julie indicated that a large number of youth on the byname will indicate a need in the community. Ashley indicated that another issue is that agencies not participating in CE means that these agencies do not take referrals. Max indicated that it would be important to tell youth, up front, that receiving a resource will take a long time and is not a guarantee.

Regina suggested that perhaps Youth Committee meetings could be triage-type meetings to look what resources are available to draw names off the by-name list, whether or not they are available through CE. For example, what could TH mean for youth on the by-name list? It is not permanent housing, but how would it look for youth? This is a conversation that can feed into workgroup structure. Courtney indicated that the workgroup structure is new, it may be important to have conversations around whether they are spread too thin and whether workgroup work is being brought back to the committee.

Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Decide what support they can give VoYC moving forward		YAB and facilitators	
Bring proposed structure back to Youth Committee		YAB and facilitators	November 22
Adjournment			
Motion by:	Max	Second:	Kendra
Conclusion	All in favor by acclamation with no dissent		