



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

February 26, 2021
9:30-10:30

Facilitator:	Kendra Avila		
Meeting Attendees:	Casey Gordon, Jenn Boerman, Paige Putans, Kendra Avila, Lindsey DeShetler, Carolyn Allen, Crystal Kitten, Erin Benson, Jacquita Baker, Samantha Westhouse, Becky Diffin, Korey Mills, Tiffany Clarke, Stephanie Myers, Mary Vann, Jodi Swendrowski, Regina Archie, Melissa Ware Staff: Courtney Myers-Keaton, Brianne Robach		
Time Convened:	9:35	Time Adjourned:	10:15

Introductions			
Review of Agenda			
Motion by:	Erin Benson	Support from:	Regina Archie
Discussion	Brianne to put call out for committee members to renew membership so we have an updated roster.		
Amendments	None		
Approval of Minutes		January 22, 2021	
Motion by:	Regina Archie	Support from:	Tiffany Clarke
Discussion			
Amendments	None		
Result	All in favor		
Foster Youth to Independence Voucher Program			
Discussion			
<p>Paige Putans from DHHS attended to give an overview of the Foster Youth to Independence Tenant Protection Voucher program. 25 vouchers available through September 2021 and 25 more vouchers available Oct 2021-Sept 2022. Through this program Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) can request vouchers for up to 36 months for youth (18-24) who were involved with the foster care system and are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. Supportive services are also available, but involvement is optional. They are hoping to partner with agencies in the community to provide supportive services, connect with Paige (putansp@michigan.gov) if you are able to provide supportive services.</p> <p><u>Process:</u> Referrals go to Paige (putansp@michigan.gov), 616-265-0144. HAP is also working through a process to refer eligible youth directly to Paige. Paige determines eligibility of youth and refers to the GRHC. There are two documents to complete when referring over to Paige (attached in email with minutes).</p> <p><u>Eligibility:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age 18-24 - Prior involvement with foster care (may be after age of 14 as this is a federal regulation for different funding streams). Suggest submitting a question to HUD to get definitive response - Homeless or at risk of homelessness - Youth can't receive a voucher if they are in voluntary foster care. 			



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Jenn shared that GRHC has a competitive grant opportunity available for up to 75 additional vouchers for next fiscal year. To submit, they have to identify organizations who are committed to providing supportive services with formal signed agreement and need partners to sign updated MOU in the next 3 weeks.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

Youth Committee Q1 Goals Check-In

Discussion

Last month the group decided on goals for Q1 of revitalize the youth action board. Tiffany overviewed the focus group questions that were developed by a small group. Questions could be answered as part of a focus group conversation, or as individuals. Staff will connect with Kendra and Li to determine how to reach out to past YAB members.

Courtney will be sending information related to best practices to the group mid-week next week.

Stephanie shared the following resource with the group:

<https://www.pathwaysrtc.pdx.edu/pdf/pbStrategicSharingGuide.pdf>

Action items, timelines, and additional information are available in the action planning spreadsheet -

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1lufVri-wBulj6YcDf-1ac7XqvxlA6MO7S6qyL7Mn54/edit?usp=sharing>

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Determine how to connect with previous YAB members	Courtney, Kendra, Li, Brianne	
Share best practice information with the group	Courtney	

Youth Functional Zero List Update

Discussion

As of this morning (2/26), there are 50 unsheltered single youth, 37 unsheltered families, and 18 sheltered youth/families for a total of 105 youth reporting homelessness in Kent County. HAP staff have been going through list and helping youth connect with FYI vouchers if eligible.

Families are connected to CHC assessment. Supportive Solutions Specialists are making direct referral to shelter. Would be helpful to understand why folks are not accessing shelter to troubleshoot and identify methods for outreach. One barrier may be that motels require an ID. Advocate at Family Promise should be able to assist families with this.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Meet re: youth by-name list, data, & potential barriers	Staff at CoC and HAP	

Community Partner Updates

Discussion

CoC Updates:

CERA Funds: rental and utility assistance funds will be available for renters in the community soon. KCCA and Salvation Army are setting up brand new departments and hiring around 20 caseworkers



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each to get the funds out. Eligibility requirements include income restrictions and a COVID-related hardship (self-attestation). There may be other requirements determined by state legislature. Cannot assist someone with section 8 or a subsidy. Once details are finalized, information will be shared widely. Once funds are available, applications can be done through an online portal or on paper.

Strategic Planning for the CoC has stated with Mission Matters as the consultant group. Planning committee looking to ensure it is a comprehensive process. If you have not received a survey to provide input, please let staff know. Hope that the CoC will have a new strategic plan to adopt by the end of June.

Welcome to Crystal! Crystal is the Director of Housing at AYA Youth and is joining the committee as vice chair.