



STEERING COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

August 20, 2021

8:30-10:30

Facilitator:	Karen Tjapkes		
Meeting Attendees:	<u>Steering members present:</u> Tom Cottrell, Erin Banchoff, Victoria Sluga, Karen Tjapkes, Dreyson Byker, Victoria Arnold, Cheryl Schuch, Hattie Tinney, Lauren VanKeulen, Casey Gordon, Rebecca Rynbrandt, Adrienne Goodstal <u>Steering members absent with notification:</u> Elizabeth Stoddard, Scott Orr, Susan Cervantes, Alonda Trammell <u>Steering members absent without notification:</u> none <u>Community Members:</u> Wende Randall (ENTF), Greg Mustric (Woda Cooper), Jeffrey King (Community Rebuilders), Tammy Britton (City of Grand Rapids) <u>Staff:</u> Courtney Myers-Keaton, Brianne Robach		
Time Convened:	8:32AM	Time Adjourned:	10:32AM

Approval of Agenda			
Motion by:	Tom Cottrell	Support from:	Erin Banchoff
Discussion	none		
Amendments			
Conclusion	All in favor, motion passes.		
Approval of Minutes		July 16, 2021	
Motion by:	Casey Gordon	Support from:	Tom Cottrell
Discussion	Tom thanked Brianne for detailed and thorough minutes.		
Amendments			
Conclusion	All in favor, motion passes.		
Public Comment on Any Agenda Item			
Discussion			
None			
Approval of Consent Agenda			
Motion by:	Dreyson Byker	Support from:	Adrienne Goodstal
Discussion	none		
Amendments			
Conclusion	All in favor, motion passes.		
Petitions and Communications			
Discussion			
None			
LIHTC Presentation: Woda Cooper			
Discussion	<p>Greg Mustric from Woda Cooper attended this morning to present on their Stockbridge Landing project and ask the Steering Council to approve a Letter of Support. Woda Cooper applied for this PSH project with 58 LIHTC units including 21 PSH units in MSHDA's last round. The project was not funded, but they will be re-submitting in this round. The development is proposed for 2 buildings at 585 and 601 Stocking Ave. NW which is the site of an existing funeral home that they plan to demolish. PSH units would be targeted to the top 10% of those on the prioritization list for households experiencing chronic homelessness.</p>		



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Tom asked if there is a sense for why the project was not accepted in the last round. Greg noted that the last round was very competitive. Since then, Woda Cooper has adjusted the proposal to reflect areas in the new QAP and are evaluating strategic partnerships to increase the score this round. Greg feels the project will be competitive this round. **Rebecca Rynbrandt moved to support a letter of support for Woda Cooper's application. Tom second. All in favor, motion passes.** Karen will sign the letter after it is provided.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

City ESG-CV: Community Rebuilders Overview of Activities	Jeffrey King
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Discussion

Jeffrey King from Community Rebuilders (CR) attended to share a brief overview of Community Rebuilders' activities through City of Grand Rapids ESG-CV funds. CR is using these funds for geographically targeted outreach focusing on unsheltered homelessness within the City of Grand Rapids. Their partners include the GR HOT team, Family Promise, Hope Network, Arbor Circle, The Salvation Army, and Mel Trotter Ministries.

There are two project components, short- to medium- term rental assistance and emergency housing. The funding term ends July 31, 2022. Through July 31 of this year, 59 households (HH) received rental assistance out of the 75 HH planned for the full funding term with an average time to move-in of 56 days, below their goal of 75 days. On the emergency housing side, 30 of the 77 planned HH have enrolled with an average length of stay is 65 days, below their goal of 75 days. All exits have been to a housing resource or to family and friends. Jeffrey noted that they have spent or obligated majority of the emergency housing funds (both scattered site and hotel). CR has master-leased units to provide non-congregate shelter and is partnering with the Family Promise (FP) team to provide emergency motel rooms for families or individuals when these bridge housing units are not available. In motels, FP staff provide essential services and HH remain connected to solutions specialists.

Victoria Sluga asked how the project is linking with current by-name list (BNL) and HMIS. Jeffrey indicated that the project is using Community Housing Connect (CHC) as a portal and list have been shared with HAP staff once releases are signed so they can remove folks from Housing Priority List and/or sign up them up for the HCV list. Prioritization occurs through the CHC screening which identifies COVID-19 risk factors and those staying outside. When an area is identified for this project in partnership with the City, CR assesses the area to determine the appropriate capacity and resources needed and identifies additional resources if needed.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

ENTF Relationship Recommendation

Discussion

Courtney noted that the CoC relationship with the Essential Needs Task Force (ENTF) been a topic of conversation for the past few years with differing perceptions. The relationship was discussed in



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strategic planning conversations and recently with the ENTF Governance Committee. Courtney and Wende are recommending that the CoC should not remain the housing subcommittee of ENTF for a few reasons. First, ENTF has its own governance structure which can be confusing with the CoC's individual governance structure. In addition, the budgets of both were previously often combined, but staff have worked diligently to separate the budget and to reduce Wende's time spent with the CoC. Courtney indicated that both entities bring value to one another and will remain strong partners. ENTF is working on cross-sectoral issues that directly impact those experiencing homelessness and this change will allow them to focus on housing issues broader than homeless response system. Courtney and Wende anticipate sharing a communication outlining the recommended change soon.

Wende indicated that this recommendation is in line with ENTF and the CoC's recent strategic planning processes. She feels that this change will allow ENTF to look at areas of essential need and determine their role in housing and is an opportunity to formalize staff participation in ENTF and the CoC in a different way. ENTF has a MOU between its governing organizations that is signed annually and is currently out for signature with current state identified. Once a formal clarification has occurred, they will determine if there is a need for restructuring the ENTF MOU. Tom asked if the CoC would have a governing seat within a new MOU. No, the relationship would be one where the CoC would be seen as a lead convening partner in the housing space.

Cheryl indicated her support for this change, especially given the different structures and the HSA which may bring more resources and complicate roles as it comes into play. Rebecca asked if parallel work is needed with CoC's MOU agreement with HWMUW. This MOU does not call out ENTF, but instead allows for the HWMUW President/CEO to determine supervision for CoC staff. Executive recently noted that HWMUW is responsible for serving as the back-up role in the case of CoC staff vacancies. Cheryl asked that in conversations around HWMUW MOU, Executive discuss staff burden with requirements for incoming amounts and types of funding to ensure sufficient capacity and resources. Karen noted that staffing and capacity are part of the strategic plan conversations. Casey voiced support for this clarification of roles and relationships and indicated the importance of updating community partners with this change. She also agreed with Cheryl on the importance of reviewing staffing to support grant writing and management.

Courtney asked the group whether the communication should be framed as a recommendation or a clarification. Karen indicated that since this is not undoing contractual relationship it may not need to be approved but feels it would be useful and transparent for Steering to review and endorse staff communication. The CoC Governance Charter does not name the CoC as ENTF's housing committee, but states that both entities are aligned in their work. Rebecca supported an affirming vote by the membership as there has been confusion over the years around the relationship. Erin suggested that a vote would be more appropriate at Steering, followed by an update to the full membership. This will be included on the October full membership agenda, in the interim, Executive and Steering can review and endorse the change.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Include ENTF Relationship on October membership agenda	CoC staff and chair	



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MSHDA ESG 2021-2022 Application		
Discussion		
<p>The CoC allocated around \$129,000 of these funds for emergency shelter (ES) to Family Promise (FP) with the intent to use funds for motel spaces given the ongoing pandemic. Courtney shared that she received communication from MSHDA that motel costs are not an allowable use of funds. However, this is not stated in the NOFA, which instead states that shelter operations can include “maintenance, rent, repair, security, fuel, equipment, insurance, and utilities. These funds cannot be used for construction or rehabilitation of shelters”. Nicole Beagle from MSHDA has indicated that motels were only allowable for funding last year due to pandemic. Courtney noted that the pandemic is ongoing and requested a meeting with MSHDA staff but is concerned as she has not received a response. MSHDA has indicated that our CoC could reallocate ESG-CV funds to FP for motels. Courtney noted that this would be an administrative burden as all funds are coming from ESG, have the same end date, motels are allowable under HUD guidance, and the pandemic is ongoing. ESG-CV funds have waivers which expand allowable activities, so reallocating to ESG 21-22 funds may place undue burden on staff across agencies and negatively impact current ESG-CV recipients.</p> <p>Cheryl voiced concern that this is not the first instance where our community has had a lack of communication from MSHDA leadership and lack of understanding around the community’s plan. She would like to strengthen communication with MSHDA leadership so they understand the plans made at the community level. Cheryl and Adrienne are part of a state-wide emergency shelter group and feel that our community is one of the top communities with a comprehensive plan for family shelter. They feel it is important to make sure we are sharing this strength with MSHDA. Members suggested that Executive Committee discuss communication concerns.</p> <p>Cheryl also noted that she has heard that motel shelter was funded for other CoCs. Members agreed that it would be helpful to have a list of other Michigan CoCs who have used ESG funds for motels. While HUD guidance states that motels are an allowable usage and has expanded due to the pandemic, MSHDA has stipulated that using funds for motels is not allowable. Erin stated that a standardized approach at the state level is not uncommon, so energy may be better spent elsewhere. Courtney feels that if the CoC does not receive clear communication from MSHDA, staff can shoulder the administrative burden, and then engage with MSHDA to ensure that this situation does not happen again. Cheryl indicated that the timing is not ideal because of the potential possibility of drawing down family shelter in a short amount of time, prior to October 1.</p>		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Family Shelter Status		
Discussion		
<p>Courtney shared that families will not be able to return to Mel Trotter (MTM) as early as was thought. Once the community away shifts from motels, we will be back down to 40 shelter units for families. In past few years, the community has recognized the need for 80-85 units of family shelter. She suggested convening a meeting to strategically discuss how to address the need for increased family shelter space, so families are not turned away without a safe space which is traumatic for families and</p>		



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impacts brain development. Lauren agreed and noted that this is also traumatic for youth. She suggested broadening the conversation to for both families and youth as the populations often work well together. She noted that even one night of a youth (ages 14-24) staying outside increases their vulnerability to other situations and rates of chronic homelessness.

Courtney also wants to address the use of HOME funds in the American Rescue Plan (ARP) with City of Grand Rapids and Kent County as acquisition is allowable under these funds. Erin shared that HUD has not yet issued guidance for the HOME ARP program, though it expected this fall. She indicated it would be helpful for there to be collaboration around what kind of shelter space is needed/desired.

Cheryl stressed that this should be a community conversation and should include determining which mainstream funds can be used to support families and youth, especially as FP is currently seeing a high number of families in shelter. Courtney noted that there appears to be interest from family foundations in this space. She noted that the meeting with key partners, would include involvement from philanthropy and system leadership as is about developing a plan and identifying what funding is needed to meet already identified needs. (Lauren left the meeting)

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Convene a meeting with key partners to plan for family and youth shelter needs	CoC staff	

Emergency Housing Voucher Update

Discussion

Courtney shared that the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) has issued 38 vouchers out their 42. 65 referrals were made and only 3 have leased up thus far. MSHDA pulled 71 names from the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) List and 38 of their 58 vouchers have been issued with 8 households leased up. There was conversation around concerns that household were not submitting applications, but this seems to have ramped up. Some of the names on MSHDA's HCV list were difficult to reach, but partners have been reaching out through community partners.

These vouchers were originally prioritized for those experiencing chronic homelessness. GRHC criteria recently expanded to families within criteria recommended by the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH): child(ren) under 6 and 2 or more returns to homelessness in the past 2 years. Staff are not sure which subpopulations received these referrals; this data can be shared out to the full membership when available.

At this point, the challenge is getting households into leases. The eviction moratorium and landlords are leaving the business is leading to low vacancy rates across the board. Hattie noted that GRHC is struggling with the gap between Fair Market Rent (FMR) and private market rates which are 15-25% higher than FMR. GRHC staff are also finding it difficult to connect with households and have been doing outreach at encampments to make connections.



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Erin asked whether there are conversations around using these vouchers for HH in RRH who would be better suited for PSH. The community is using Move Up vouchers to move some folks out of PSH. If providers are unable to fill referrals, staff have discussed using EHV's for current RRH families.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

Strategic Plan

Discussion

The final draft of the narrative strategic plan report has been shared with the planning committee members for review. Implementation has begun and is being guided by an implementation team.

Courtney overviewed progress on the Q3 areas of focus:

- Communicating ENTF partnership is on track
- Designing advisory council may be slightly behind, but DL has stepped into take the lead
- Data Analyst funding: Courtney has been in conversation with foundations and has identified this need, she is hopeful they will recognize this need
- Initiative and timeline to reach functional zero: the Family Functional Zero group and Built for Zero (BFZ) cohort are meeting regularly. An intern is starting in the next few weeks who will be helping coordinate BFZ work. For youth, an update will be shared at Youth Committee next week. The hope is to be selected as a YHDP community when announced this Fall
- Begin evaluation of CE model: a workgroup is meeting to discuss how to go from a centralized to decentralized model. Members are ensuring all are on the same page of understanding and have discussed how technology comes into play. The group has discussed the possibility that different populations will have different flow through the system. A final recommendation will be brought to CE Committee and then to Steering. Courtney anticipates there will be a presentation on how families flow through the system at the next Steering meeting.
- Implement quarterly data report: Lee is taking the lead and conversations have started
- Developing and communicating plan for 2021 CoC annual report: The goal is to publicly release this report in late winter/spring. All data will be disaggregated where possible.

The implementation planning team meets every other week to track progress on quarterly rocks. ITM membership can change each month depending on the goals of each quarter, with consistent leadership from Executive and staff.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

QSOBAA Process

Discussion

Courtney shared that this topic came up a few years ago, but an actual process for this sharing agreement was not developed. At that point, Steering conversation determined that this was staff function and relied on Daniel as HMIS Administrator. The QSOBAA will be going out for signature soon. For this round, Courtney outlined a process where new partners who want to be added are first brought to the Coordinated Entry (CE) Committee to ensure they align with CoC values/beliefs and that their participation with HMIS makes sense.



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To finalize this process, agencies would need an understanding and documented process for how agencies are added to the QSOBAA. Courtney will ask Daniel to document the process he uses and include her recommendation to add CE committee in the process. Conversation around who would approve or deny agencies. Erin noted that transparent and consistent criteria for adding agencies should be included given that committee membership changes over time. Data Quality Committee previously discussed new partners, but now this team meets only on occasion and focuses on the technical aspects of HMIS. Cheryl noted that neither the HMIS Users nor Data Quality group is high functioning given the shift of the administrator out of community and asked that this is considered in funding/staffing conversations. Members feel that the CE committee is a great place to start to determine if an agency should be on the QSOBAA and then the HMIS groups can be a space to talk through the logistics of entering HMIS information and data quality.

Suggestion that a small group of CE Committee members develop draft process. Courtney cautioned that the QSOBAA needs to be signed by end of September, so a quick resolution is important. Courtney will keep Steering Council informed of the process but will not need a vote on the final process.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Convene small group to discuss QSOBAA process	CoC staff	
Other Matters from Steering Council members		
Discussion		
Tom noted that the CoC Program Competition NOFA was posted and asked about next steps. The Timeline has not been created, will be released publicly in the next week. The application is due to HUD by November 16 th .		
Karen shared that the CDC moratorium on evictions had expired at end of July. There is now a new CDC moratorium for nonpayment of rent based on transmission levels. Kent County entered the moratorium criteria as of August 9 th . Tenants can contact Legal Aid of MI Legal Help to determine if they are covered. Legal Aid has postings on social media around coverage. A county must be out of higher transmission levels for 14 consecutive days to lose moratorium coverage.		
Public Comment on Any Item		
Discussion		
None		
Adjourn		
Motion by:	Erin Banchoff	Support from: Tom Cottrell