



CoC MEMBER MEETING MEETING MINUTES

April 21, 2022

9:30-11:00am

Facilitator:	Casey Gordon		
Meeting Attendees:	<p>Casey Gordon (Kent ISD), Brian McAllister (MSU Street Medicine), Alyssa Anten (The Salvation Army HAP), Catherine Gage (Disability Advocates), Cecilia Rush (VA), Dan Baker (network180), Dave Gantz (Genesis), Elizabeth Stoddard (Fair Housing Center), Dreyson Byker (Community member), Emily Gibbs (Community Rebuilders), Gustavo Perez (United Way), Audrey Hutchinson (Community Rebuilders), Holly Wilson (Safe Haven), Tom Cottrell (YWCA), Ryan VerWys (ICCF), Mellena Francisco (Community Rebuilders), Mary Dyke (Family Life Center), Bill Stapleton (Community Rebuilders), Gordie Moeller (Double Up Food Bucks), Monique Carter (Arbor Circle), Crystal Kitten (AYA), Melissa Hoezee (Fountain Street Church), Brian Bruce (Dwelling Place), Fran Dalton (Garfield Park Neighborhood Association), Leatha Roberts (The Salvation Army), LoRae Robinson (Covenant House), Tanesha Jordan (Safe Haven), Susan Williams (MCAH), Madison Pauley, Kari Sherman, Hilary Ortiz (HealthNet), Jinnifer Ortquist (MSU), Nancy Ayers (Senior Neighbors), Nicholas Parliament, Marcia Patrick (Senior Neighbors), Monique Jeffries (Community Rebuilders), Patrick Buhay (Community Rebuilders), Bryan Holt (Pine Rest StreetReach), Tammy Britton (City of Grand Rapids), Victoria Arnold (The Salvation Army), Alicia Davis, John Glover (Well House). Shelby Lake (Senior Neighbors), Tracy Mulvany (The Salvation Army ESP), Lindy Perez (The Salvation Army HAP), Marshall Kilgore (Community Rebuilders), Bill Stapleton (Community Rebuilders), Bill Weld-Wallis (Community member), Wanda Couch (Grand Rapids Housing Commission), Jeanie Olach (Exodus Place)</p> <p><u>Staff:</u> Courtney Myers-Keaton, Brianne Robach</p>		
Time Convened:	9:32	Time Adjourned:	10:55

Approval of Minutes		February 24, 2022	
Motion by:	Tom Cottrell	Support from:	Holly Wilson
Discussion			
Amendments	None		
Conclusion	All in favor, motion passes.		
Coalition/CoC Data Overview			
Discussion			
<u>Longitudinal Systems Analysis (LSA)</u>			
<p>The LSA contains system-level data coming out of HMIS (Homeless Management Information System). Data is displayed through Stella, an online platform. Any CoC member can access Stella by creating an account. If there is interest, staff can schedule a time to walk through Stella and its' capabilities.</p> <p>This LSA report encompasses those served in the system in federal fiscal year 2021 (10/1/2020-9/30/2021). It does not include those who contacted Coordinated Entry (CE) and do not enter a program. Data from domestic violence (DV) providers is also not included as providers cannot enter HMIS data to ensure confidentiality.</p>			



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Courtney Myers-Keaton overviewed different data metrics from the report. She noted that the average length of time for those in emergency shelter seems much lower than what is seen in previous reports; staff will ensure data quality errors are not impacting this number. The total number of exits has decreased since 2019, but a higher percent of exits are to permanent destinations. Potential reasons include the housing market and effects of the pandemic. The percent of returns to homelessness decreased in FY2021 which is encouraging. The influx of funding in late 2020 and 2021 which helped keep people in housing may have influenced the decrease in returns.

Data for adult only households is not separated by seniors and non-seniors in this presentation, but this type of data is available through HMIS.

Courtney noted that LSA data is disaggregated by race and ethnicity and overrepresentation of people of color is seen in data sets. Disaggregated data can be shared next meeting along with an update on the Coalition's work to address disparities with the Michigan Racial Equity Strategic Planning process.

Fran Dalton asked if the number served in the report can be compared to the number attempting to access services and the number of returns to the system. Courtney noted that this data is not represented in LSA per HUD guidelines but could be shown in a different format. Staff will follow-up with Daniel and Data Analysis Committee to determine if there is a metric for returns by those who access CE and are not connected to a project.

Ryan VerWys wondered a low length of time homeless may be indicative of trends in the housing market. Courtney noted that given this is substantially different from other data sets and that there have been errors by the HMIS vendor which have resulted in inaccurate metrics in the past, staff will ensure data is accurate prior to exploring the reasoning behind any trends.

Point-In-Time (PIT) Count

This year's count occurred on the night of Wednesday, February 23rd. Though the count typically happens in January, the community received a waiver to move to February due to a COVID surge. Courtney noted that the data presented today is still draft format as final data quality checks are occurring. This year's total number of individuals experiencing homelessness was a larger than expected increase. However, the unsheltered count is decreasing which is good news.

Since 2021, there was an increase in single adults and a decrease in family households. Courtney thinks this may be due to additional resources available for families in 2021 due to COVID and noted that it will be important to confirm whether this decrease is substantiated. The number of singles in 2021 was lower than expected leading to larger percent increase this year, but this may be due to folks not staying in congregate shelters in 2021 due to the pandemic.

Data from the PIT Count will be brought to Data Analysis Committee for discussion and to determine strategies and next steps as a community.

**Planning for Community Resources Post-CERA
(COVID Emergency Rental Assistance)**



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Discussion

Gustavo Perez has been managing the CERA (COVID Emergency Rental Assistance) Program for the past year and a half. He shared that as of the beginning of April, over 6,800 applications had been approved. There was a decline in approval rates and the amount of assistance distributed due to new guidelines around the cut-off date for arrears. Since guidelines have been updated, numbers are trending back up and the team is working with partners to connect with households and provide as much assistance as possible. They are working to spend down funds within required timelines and anticipate that all CERA funds will be expended by the end of August.

Several members asked questions about the funds and their guidelines. Responses:

- The intent of these funds is to support those who were impacted by COVID-19.
- If a household is denied funding, they are referred to additional resources for support.
- Funds may be able to pay off past balances for households that have moved on a case-by-case basis.
- Undocumented individuals can receive CERA assistance.
- The current processing time is around 45 days; the team is hoping to get back to 30 days.
- If a tenant has a court summons, they should contact 1-877-ERA-KENT or kent.rent@usc.salvationarmy.org and the team will prioritize cases as feasible.
- Those with an eviction notice and pending CERA funds are encouraged to reach out to Legal Aid who can representation at hearings.
- When a landlord receives funding for past rent, they must give tenant 30 days before processing an eviction for any past due rent.
- Funds go through Heart of West Michigan United Way as the fiduciary

A survey was recently developed to gauge the impact CERA and further needs of households. Gustavo reviewed response data. The survey will be adjusted slightly and data collection will continue. Once results are finalized, they plan to share with partners to develop next steps.

Courtney asked the group to discuss next steps and the community's role for when CERA ends in August. Members discussed immediate and mid-term solutions as well as strategies for community impact in breakout groups. Suggestions include financial literacy programs, employment resources, connecting with faith communities who may have benevolent funds, data on the status of current resources, a strong referral infrastructure, inclusive communication, the ability to identify and strategize around gaps, and mitigating barriers to access. Community conversation and strategizing around this topic will continue.

Update: CoC Program Competition and YHDP

Discussion

Courtney shared that CoC Program Competition awards were released announced. All renewal projects were funded, but the community did not receive bonus funding which is disappointing. A small group will review the application and discuss strategies for strengthen future applications to put our community in a better position to receive bonus funding.



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The YHDP (Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project) application is currently in progress. Youth providers and staff have been working to develop a strong application for this submission.			
Community Partner Announcements and Updates			
Discussion			
<p>Elizabeth Stoddard shared that the Fair Housing Center of West Michigan is hosting their annual workshop series on Thursday, April 28th at 8:30-12:45. They have exciting line up with 4 workshops and a poetry reading. Scholarship seats are available, contact Liz Keegan at lkeegan@fhcwm.org. More info at http://www.fhcwm.org/lws.</p> <p>Wende Randall shared that Legal Aid and local organizations are hosting a Clean Slate Expungement, Job, and Resource Fair on Saturday May 7th. She shared a flyer and noted that pre-registration is required. The expungement fair is 9:00-4:00 and job fair is 10:00-2:00.</p> <p>Mary Dyke shared that Family Life Center has 2 spots open in their residency for pregnant women who are 18 or older and do not have other children in their care. This is not an emergency shelter space. The application is available on their website - www.familylifecenterhome.org.</p> <p>Gordie Moeller shared that Double Up Food Bucks (DUFb) materials are available as well as a flyer with the 20 places that DUFb runs year-round in Kent County. Contact Gordie at gordimoeller@comcast.net if you would like posters or flyers for your organization.</p> <p>Susan William shared that MCAH (Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness) is hosting a HUD training around the Equal Access Rule on April 25th. Also, they still have AmeriCorps volunteers they are looking to place. There will be an information webinar this afternoon (4/21) at 1:00. The application can be found at: https://mihomeless.org/index.php/2022/04/05/ameri-corps-request-for-proposals/</p>			
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Motion by:	Tom Cottrell	Support from:	Molly Perez