



Monmouth County Homeless System Collaborative

Executive Committee

January 15, 2019

Minutes

Attendees:

Kathy Weir	Laurie Duhovny	Christine Aumack	Joan Mandel
Maura Comer	Paul McEvily	Stan Rosenthal	Anna Diaz White
Steve Horvath	Kim Cole	Darcy Dobens	Wendy DePedro
Jeffrey Schwartz	Kasey Congero	Kellie Donovan	Taiisa Kelly

- I. There were 2 changes to December meeting minutes: new Freeholder Liaison is Susan Kiley. Discharge planning update to reflect returns from psychiatric emergency services is much higher. Minutes approved with the changes.
- II. There were two requests for letter of support for the SSVF program funding: Soldier On & Community Hope. Both letters of request approved unanimously.
- III. Reports
 - a. HUD Update – With the government shutdown, there is not much happening with HUD. The shutdown will impact CoC projects with contracts ending in the next two months. Monmouth County has two projects that end in February. The County is considering maintaining the program by paying from County funds and recouping the expenses once the contracts are funded. Navicore provided information about mortgage companies programs being put into place to assist government workers that are not able to cover their mortgages due to the shutdown.
 - b. Centralized Intake – December traffic lower than normal but expected for that time of year. DSS is seeing many requests from SSI families from outside of Monmouth County. New state legislation has expanded Emergency Assistance eligibility. Persons who have used up their lifetime limit but are eligible in every other way and fit into 1 of 4 categories can reapply for EA. Anyone who is determined chronically unemployable, over 60, disabled or a caretaker has access to unlimited Emergency Assistance with recertification taking place every 6 months. DSS is still awaiting further written instructions on implementation of the expansion from DFD. The EA expansion may help move more people from the prioritization list to housing. This may be an opportunity for Mental Health Association and DSS to coordinate how to identify and place EA eligible household and adjust the targeting of the CoC vouchers. DSS is working with Mental Health Association to improve the referral process. DSS is working to complete the backlog in HMIS data entry and is exploring the creation of a shorter HMIS intake form and increasing the number of HMIS licenses the agency has.
 - c. Housing Navigator Agency – 93% of persons on the list are waiting for housing. Some of the barriers to housing include housing cost, criminal background, numerous evictions, bad credit, pending financial benefits and pets. For October and November there were 272 referrals. Of those referrals, 141 were assessed and 11 were successfully housed. There is a critical need to identify more affordable housing opportunities.
 - d. Sub-committees – Subcommittee chairs met to discuss their annual action plans based on the community strategic plan and HUD application. Committee focus for 2019 is attached.

There was also discussion of developing an ad-hoc committee of shelters in the community to create written standards and referral procedures for emergency shelters and crisis response programs.

- i. Discharge Planning – The County administrator has initiated conversations with hospital executives. The committee would like an update on those conversations and assistance with connecting to higher level staff to strengthen implementation of discharge planning conversations.
- ii. PIT/PHC – The count is taking place on 1/23/19. Agencies will sort donations at the warehouse on Thursday 1/17/19. There was a donation of 1000 blessing bags with toiletries and socks that will go to the sites and outreach teams. There was also a donation of 750 pairs of socks. The PIT training is Friday 1/18. The Project homeless connect sites are JSRM, Pilgrim Baptist Church, Agape Christian Center and St. Marks. The committee is still looking for one or two Creole speakers for the sites.
- iii. Veteran's Ad Hoc – Tina Mikes is putting together information for Jeff Schwartz to take to Freeholder Burry so she can sponsor the application for ending veterans homelessness
- iv. Data Committee – the county will submit an application for the HMIS expansion NOFA. Funding will cover additional staff for data entry. The county will work on Freeholder resolution to allow the application to move forward.

IV. Old Business

- a. Executive committee annual action plan – items for the executive committee action plan will be sent via email for review and approval before the next meeting.
- b. Code Blue Updates – The current process is County OEM makes code blue declarations and notifies the sites and any others on the notification list. The three official code blue sites are Pilgrim Baptist Church in Red Bank, Trinity Church in Asbury Park and the County Adult Shelter. Anyone interested in joining the code blue mailing list should contact Mike Oppegard. During the day people are sent to DSS where they will be assessed for placement regardless of eligibility. After hours people are directed to the appropriate site based on their location. Each site has their own rules regarding entry and eligibility. OEM is tracking the number of people accessing the official code blue sites for each night of an alert. It will be important to identify ways of connecting Mental Health Association HNA staff to the warming centers to get people on the prioritization list. Kathy will send code blue alerts to the full CoC when she receives them from OEM.
- c. 2019 Calendar is attached.

V. New Business/Discussion

- a. Homeless Trust Fund – There is a meeting taking place in the next few weeks with the county administrator and freeholders to go over the trust fund. The HTF is on the table again with the change in Freeholder composition and increased discussion of the trust fund and code blue at the state legislative level.
- b. The NJ Department of Community Affairs is opening their wait list for the Housing Choice Voucher program on February 4th
- c. There has been an issue with tax credit developers and delays in project openings. RPM has a project that is due to open and they have not been upfront with tenants who have signed leases about when they will be able to move in. This has caused some tenants to lose their housing as they gave notice to their current landlords and the new unit is not yet available. The exec committee would like to speak with all tax credit developers to

discuss their process and put them on alert of HSC expectations. The next exec meeting will feature a conversation with tax credit developers.

- d. Women's Hospitality Network opened their doors December 3rd. Through December served 15 women. So far for January they have served a average of 10/11 women per night. Since opening 3 women have secured permanent housing.
- e. There seems to be an increase in single women in need of shelter. Many of these women are working or have work histories and are not interested in going to the shelter or interacting with DSS as they don't see themselves as part of that homeless population. As a result they are sleeping in their cars but have been coming to service agencies recently because of the cold temperatures. The committee needs to explore ways of engaging these women and integrating them into services provided through the Housing Navigation Program.
- f. Soldier On provided an update on their projects. A new 70-unit (2 buildings) permanent housing project for male veterans in Tinton Falls is moving forward. The project has all township approvals and is finalizing funding and securing HUD-VASH project based vouchers. There is no homeless requirement for the project but will create new affordable housing units. The agency has also signed contracts with HMFA and will begin entering data in HMIS this year. Since 2012 the rapid rehousing part of the SSVF program has served 226 vets in 108 households and the prevention part of SSVF has served 218 vets in 138 households.

Next Meeting: **March 19, 2019 - 9am – 11am**

Monmouth County AG Building, First floor conference room – 4000 Kozloski Road, Freehold, NJ