

Capital Area Coalition on Homelessness
General Membership Zoom Meeting
February 10, 2021
Minutes

Members on Zoom:

1. Jennifer Wintermyer, Tri County Community Action (TCCA);
2. Bryan Davis, George Payne, and Mike Weisberg, CACH;
3. Tabitha Kramer, Educating Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness and Chair of the Public Information and Education Committee;
4. Kay Pickering, Center for Peace and Justice;
5. Aisha Newton, Heather Cotignola-Pickens, Krista Farrah and Darrel Reinford, CCU/HELP Ministries; Angela Parker-Quarles - Fair Housing Council OCR & CCU;
6. Fred Gard, Conrad Siegel;
7. Saundra James-Goodrum, Harrisburg School District;
8. Yolanda Finger - Gaudenzia/DELTA;
9. Greg McCutcheon – CMU;
10. Marla Cattermole, Nick DiFrancesco, and Emily Anderson - Dauphin County Library System;
11. Dr. Chelton Hunter - Middletown Area School District;
12. Kali Tennis- heartshine;
13. Aubrey Stephens, Family Services Coordinator, the Salvation Army;
14. Michelle Laychock- Central Dauphin School District;
15. Susan Cann, Downtown Daily Bread;
16. CC Marshall and Sheila Forrester - Capital Area Head Start;
17. Marilyn Bellesfield and Sarah Swankler - Brethren Housing Association;
18. Dan Reisteter, Cathedral Parish of St. Patrick;
19. Thomas and Lisa Zimmerman - Veterans Outreach of Pennsylvania (VOPA);
20. Stephanie Tighe and Gillian Sumpter – UPMC;
21. Kyla Harvey-Shalom House;
22. Krista Brown-Ly, Jenessa Hunter and Christina Shull - Valley Youth House;
23. Cheryl Brown- Thrive Housing Services;
24. Christina Johnson, Tri-County OIC;
25. Randie Yeager and April Rudick, Dauphin County Human Services;
26. Eric Rothermel, YMCA Center for Healthy Living;
27. Cynthia, Irene (no last names/no agency affiliation);
28. Terricia Radcliff (no agency affiliation)

Welcome and Introductions: Jennifer Wintermyer convened the meeting at 11:15 and welcomed everyone. Thank you for all you are doing to support the work in the community! This is a combined meeting of the General membership and the Emergency Response conference call attendees.

Motion to approve the September 24, 2020 meeting minutes by Tabitha Kramer. Seconded by Kay Pickering. Motion passed to accept meeting minutes without changes.

Deb Ritchey offered to send the September 2020 General membership meeting minutes to anyone requesting them.

Treasurer's Report – Jennifer Wintermyer introduced CACH's new Treasurer, Fred Gard. He told us a little bit about himself including his professional skills and reported that he has been working with Jennifer and Bryan Davis. This has been very helpful. He looks forward to working with members of CACH. Currently he is working on the 2021 CACH budget and it will be made available after its approved. The CACH Coordinating Committee will have the budget at its March 2021 meeting. His goal with the budget is to separate restrictive and non-restrictive funds and have it be transparent. Throughout the absence of a qualified treasurer, Jennifer and other officers reviewed the 2020 fiscal documents provided by staff. Bryan Davis reported that the 2020 Continuum of Care (CoC) application process was different because of COVID. HUD did not require applications and funded CoCs renewals based on their 2019 applications, with some exceptions. CACH receives HUD funding for planning and HMIS activities. He is unsure of what the 2021 CoC application process will be.

COVID Emergency Response – Bryan Davis said that the pandemic has generated more funds from the federal, state, and local governments as well as from other sources such as the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA). Dauphin County applied on behalf of CACH for COVID activities via the avenue for this flow of much of the monies is the Emergency Solutions Grant and was awarded \$109,000. CACH received Home4Good funds from PHFA = \$76,124 plus from other corporations and agencies. Eligible activities include HMIS, outreach, and COVID-related housing. Bryan reported that CACH and many partners continue to participate in the weekly coordinated calls discussing emerging needs. He hopes others find this call helpful. The priorities have been to ensure the safety of agency staff, their residents, and people living on the street. CACH has conducted weekly outreach on Thursdays at encampments at South Front Street and under the Mulberry Street bridge. Other outreach activities take place at different locations. In addition to the reduced schedule of showers provided by Downtown Daily Bread (DDB), the Harrisburg East YMCA opened its North Front Street site for showers Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Thank you, YMCA. The process of interested people signing up for showers is followed at the YMCA as with DDB. Per CDC's guidance, our local homeless encampments have not been shut down. CACH has prioritized services to these folks. The agencies and churches feeding people have cut back meal provision to ensure safety. They provide bagged, boxed, and takeout food to clients. Slowly some meal providers following safety protocols and serving on site. Bethesda Mission did not participate in this Winter Overnight Shelter (WOS). DDB and CCU stepped up to the plate and expanded their provision for WOS. CCU served men and women and non-binary women. A new WOS is the Gospel Fellowship Church on North 7th Street. CACH monitors, responds, and prepares for:

1. Surge of need for family housing with possible evictions increasing. Dynamics include the high demand for and cost of rental properties. People are being evicted, which among other challenges results in a blemish on their credit.
2. The availability of vaccines and some people's resistance to the vaccine. There is a need for education and the challenge of getting shots in arms.

Randie Yeager reported that Dauphin County and Emergency Management is teaming up with Latino Connection to have a Mobile Vaccine Unit. They applied for grant funds to make this happen. George Payne was contacted by the Pennsylvania Department of Health regarding getting vaccines to homeless people and referred them to Randie. Krista Farah with PSU Hershey Medical set up Zoom education on the vaccines. She will share this with Bryan.

Committee Reports

Faith-based Initiatives – Jennifer Wintermyer said that this committee has not met and will be re-invigorated. The committee will connect with Helen Spence from Systems of Care and the Compassion Action Network.

Prevention and Housing – Gillian Sumpter reported that she took a part of Maria Chianos' chair responsibilities for the Prevention Committee. Mike Weisberg made available a job description for staff person for the Eviction/Prevention Mediation program (see Mike's report below). They identified several agencies working on prevention activities which will be noted on a flow sheet; example: 2-1-1 contacts Help Ministries. The committee is working on data collection for prevention activities. Gillian will lead this project and is looking for help. Both Gillian and Mike discussed the ESG/COVID priority list. At this point, Jennifer Wintermyer encouraged folks to identify a committee and sign up to get involved. Contact Deb Ritchey once you have identified the committee and she will put you in touch with the chair.

Jennifer shared the power point presentation (ppp) provided by Mike. He talked about the expansion of partners to help with the increase in evictions. Our new partners include the Tenant Union. This group got data from the Carnegie Mellon University specific to evictions. He referenced the ppp (available). Evictions have increased but not filings as much. Since September 2020, there have been 1997 filings, effecting 646 people and 350 evictions. Evictions are very serious in Dauphin County compared to local and national statistics. Some of the ppp breaks down that eviction data into census tracts. The committee is concentrating on diversion activities. MidPenn Legal Services and the Dauphin County Bar Association got a grant from Pennsylvania Housing Alliance to form an Eviction/Prevention Mediation program. In this program the landlord and tenant agree to a mediation before the DJ hearing. Case management is a big part of making these efforts successful. Twelve cases were referred to the program, resulting in 11 successfully mediated. Outreach efforts resulted in services to tenants of the Harrisburg Housing Authority. The Eviction/Prevention Mediation group wants to formalize the structure and hire staff to do outreach, case management and other related activities. Mike reviewed the ppp specific to the ranking of needs, vulnerability, and risk factors, and existing HMIS data. Identified areas are:

1. Families with young children
2. Families with children
3. Unaccompanied Youth and
4. Single Adults

The Housing committee conducted a study of housing needs in Dauphin County. The ppp covers rent burden for families and specific space needs. The people we serve do not have enough income to cover affordable housing. Of the numerous results of this study is the need for single bedroom units. Support services are needed for our clients even when placed in housing. In addition to the other objectives of the committee, it is working with Dauphin County to make a transfer to Section 8 for the people housed in the Housing Authority's Shelter + Care (S+C) program. This will make S+C available to other eligible people. The committee makes the same efforts for those men in the Susquehanna Harbor Safe Haven program. This goal of moving the population from successful homeless programs to mainstream vouchers will then free up the homeless supportive housing. Additional challenges include locating an eligible property owned by a landlord willing to accept the voucher. The committee's additional activities include the formation of an Affordable Housing Task Force, respite care, partnerships with landlords, expanding funding and restructuring itself. They meet via Zoom on the third Tuesday of the month at 10 am.

Coordinated Entry System (CES) – Marilyn Bellesfield described the role of the CES. She shared a ppp for this tool (available). HUD requires Continuums of Care to implement a locally designed tool to prioritize the housing of people who are homeless. This CES is the latest version of a coordinated entry. The CES committee reviewed our previous tool called the Coordinated Entry and Access Referral (CEAR) tool. This current version prioritizes the chronically homeless people to be placed in permanent supportive housing as soon as there is an opening. The CES does not increase resources. Another objective is to avoid having a person without housing must re-tell their crisis story numerous times. The process is that when a household is vulnerably housed, they may go to a prevention and/or a diversion response or emergency shelter. From there the household may go into transitional housing, or Rapid Re-housing. Another objective is to reduce the amount of time the household is in those emergency responses. Dauphin County's crisis response will be accessed in different ways: calling or texting 2-1-1 to do pre-screening; or in non-COVID times, people may go to an access site for the pre-screening/assessment. These ways will place the person/persons onto a waiting list at the HELP Ministries office, which manages the CES waiting list. The CES Coordinator does a more in-depth assessment of the household and identify a possible opening. The Committee developed a flyer to educate the community about the CES. It is available for distribution, and we ask that you help with this task. Also feel welcome to join our efforts. We meet the second Thursday of the month. The committee will soon report outcomes. Jennifer Wintermyer thanked the committee and Kelly Gollick from Contact Helpline.

Public Information and Education – Tabitha Kramer reported that she has been chairing this committee for a year. The committee continues to focus on increasing the community awareness about CACH, homelessness and our work. Our social media efforts have increased including updating our website, and materials have been developed for these purposes. Subcommittee were formed to work on these projects. Please like CACH on Face Book. Further activities include another year of participating in the November national campaign called Hunger and Homelessness week. She welcomed everyone's participation. The committee meets the first Monday of the month at noon. Currently, the meetings are via Zoom.

Service Delivery/Data Collection – George Payne told us that under the auspices of this committee, we worked on the 2021 Point In Time survey. A chair is needed for Service Delivery/Data Collection committee.

Planning and Resource Development – Jennifer Wintermyer discussed the new structure that CACH is implementing (handout available). She reported that in 2019 CACH revised its bylaws which resulted in this structural change. This was done with extensive community input. HUD requires the involvement of a general membership which will vote on the new Board members. The new Board will replace the current Coordinating Committee. It will also avoid the conflict of recipients of HUD funding making Continuum of Care decisions. The four founding members of CACH have a place on the Board: Dauphin County, City of Harrisburg, The Foundation for Enhancing Communities and United Way of the Capital Region. A nominating committee consisting of the representatives from the four founding organizations and two general members: Tim Whalen, Crystal Brown. This subcommittee will seek nominees for committee chairs and general member representation on the Board. Jennifer encouraged participation in CACH. Mike Weisberg headed up the membership drive whereby a member agency gets one vote and individuals may be members. Please contact either Mike or Deb Ritchey for more information. This committee is one of several standing committees each of which works on the CACH comprehensive plan also call Home Run. Planning and Resource Development is made up of the chairs from the other standing committees. Please consider joining our efforts both on the Board of Directors or as a member (no fee). The time line for this implementation is June 2021 elections held; July 2021 new Board of Directors in place.

Other business – Someone shared information about Community Conversation meeting and meeting minutes (available). Messiah University will hold a Spring Housing Symposium on April 22, 2021.

Marilyn Bellesfield asked for face masks for residents of Brethren Housing Association. Darrel Reinford responded to her request.

Sheila Forrester told us that Head Start is recruiting for the upcoming school year. She described the program and said there are openings for pregnant women.

Thanks to everyone for your time and hard work.

Next Meeting: The next Zoom General membership meeting of CACH will be determined.

Adjourned 12:30 - p.m. Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Ritchey, Project Manager