

Capital Area Coalition on Homelessness
General Membership Meeting
February 12, 2015
Minutes

Members Present: Bryan Davis and George Payne, The Harrisburg Redevelopment Authority; Tim Whelan, United Way of the Capital Region; Angela Wise, YWCA of Greater Harrisburg; Crystal Baxter, Brethren Housing Assn; Rumulus Brown, City of Harrisburg; Elaine Strokoff, Downtown Daily Bread; Denise Britton, Shalom House; Rosalyn Deida and Cedric Bowling, Harrisburg Housing Authority; Aubrey Stephens, Salvation Army; Kay Pickering, Harrisburg Center for Peace and Justice; Sheila Forrester, Capital Head Start, Keystone Human Services; B.J. Snader-Berry, and Kaamilah Williams, Veterans Administration; Sylvia White, Frances Robinson, Interfaith Family Shelter; Jennifer Kuntch, The Foundation for Enhancing Communities; Chuck Wingate, Bethesda Mission; Natasha Woods, Community Action Commission; Kristen Hoffa, Berks County Intermediate Unit; and Trish Lacey, Capital Area Intermediate Unit.

Welcome and Introductions: Bryan Davis convened the meeting, read the Code of Conduct, and welcomed everyone. We all introduced ourselves.

Approval of the Minutes: Motion made by Chuck Wingate to accept the minutes of the December 11, 2014 meeting without revisions. Seconded by Tim Whelan. Motion to accept the minutes passed.

Presentation - Kristen Hoffa from Region 2 of the Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU) introduced herself. She told us that the CAIU has eight regions of school districts. The Pennsylvania Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) group, of which Kristen works for, has these goals: 1) monitor school districts for compliance to McKinney Vento, which requires districts to provide transportation of homeless students to their school of origin, among other requirements; 2) to advocate for families experiencing homelessness; and 3) to increase awareness about homelessness. She expressed interest in working with CACH to further our similar goals.

Committee Reports:

Blueprint Implementation Team (BIT): Tim Whelan distributed the 2014 Annual Report (attached). The report was sent to the local public officials and posted on the CACH website (www.cachpa.org) with our Consolidated Plan. The committee continues work on the development of a day room. Proposals for funding have been submitted. There is no identified opening date. Bryan Davis asked what is the function of the day center. The goal here is to address the gap in services to chronically homeless people. Tim responded that the proposed function is to be a safe place for people to receive hospitality, case management and services Monday through Friday, 8 am to 5 pm. Chuck Wingate said the focal point will be services including receiving mail and having a place a person may be reached. We further discussed that the day center may have

a Project Homeless Connect-like model. We then discussed what to call this center. Tim said that after the case managers involved in a subcommittee of the Service Delivery committee asked for a website private forum, it was developed. It is not being used. Contact Deb Ritchey to be signed up. The next BIT committee meeting is March 11, 2015 at the offices of the United Way. All are welcome.

Community Conversations: Denise Britton reported that this committee celebrated its first year anniversary and reviewed its process. CACH sends out the committee's meeting minutes. This group wants to get at the root cause of homelessness. Its vision statement is to answer what our community looks like minus homelessness and poverty. They are recognizing our community's gap in services for unaccompanied youth and working with the Harrisburg School District. The committee will provide mentoring and training on Compassionate Listening and Trauma Informed Care. In 2015, the group will conduct outreach to churches and develop a website. The next meeting is March 19, 2015 at the Penbrook Church of God, 2733 Canby Street.

Ad Hoc committee on emergency response: Bryan Davis reported that the Mayor's office works closely with CACH to issue alerts for extremely cold weather. Chuck Wingate told us that though the Bethesda Mission is to be the overflow for the Susquehanna Harbor WOO, in fact men stay at the Mission because of the meal provision. They are trying to arrange for showers, meet these men's medical needs, and provide an address to receive mail. It does test for substance abuse but there are no turn-aways. The Mission is challenged to review its philosophical approach. A question was asked about volunteer opportunities at the Bethesda Mission. Yes, there are in addition to learning its policies and procedures. Chuck is concerned about meeting the needs of homelessness in 2016. Bryan asked that partners use CACH's social media to get the word out about services.

Project Homeless Connect – Angela Wise told us that the 2015 Project Homeless Connect (PHC) Planning group continues to work on identifying a location for this year. Some of these efforts include talking with Farm Show staff about the possibility of renting the north side of the complex, called the Weis Center. Fundraising continues.

Homeless Prevention Committee – Deb Ritchey reported that this committee submitted a proposal to the Harrisburg Rotary to fund a case manager. This case manager will work with people facing eviction.

Housing Committee – Bryan Davis told us that this committee is working on understanding how to develop housing. Developers are meeting with members of the committee. This month three proposals will be submitted to the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency for affordable housing in Dauphin county.

Public Information and Education – Deb Ritchey reported that this committee is working with the planning committee for 2015 Highmark Walk for Healthy Community. Bryan Davis said that we are looking for sponsors for the event.

Service Delivery/Data Collection – Crystal Baxter reported that Frank Magel from Dauphin County Human Services is looking for topics for PATH trainings. Topics the committee suggested were a repeat of motivational interviewing and how to defuse a volatile situation. The committee continues to focus on planning the implementation of a coordinated assessment. She discussed the benefits of such an assessment and the various models. George Payne will survey partners to determine how referrals, waiting lists and service provision is conducted. We discussed why we would implement a coordinated assessment. George reminded us that the Point In Time (PIT) surveys are due to him by February 13. A report must be submitted to HUD by April 15. He talked about the importance of getting school districts to complete surveys. Kristen Hoffa will meet with George about this goal.

CCIMS – Deb Ritchey reported that one small agency Family dropped out of using Bowman Service Point. The plan is to develop HMIS goals this year; e.g. formalized policies and procedures. George Payne is talking with Bowman about incorporating aggregate numbers into the database.

Service Gaps, New Opportunities, and Announcements:

Angela Wise announced that the YWCA's Safe Haven for women has three vacancies. Eligible women must be chronically homeless with mental health concerns.

Chuck Wingate reported that Bethesda Mission is working with the city on expansion of its shelter program. The Winter Overnight Outreach (WOO) is housing 40 to 50 men. It was reported that the YWCA's WOO is serving an average of 15 women and women with children. General emergency shelter population is up by 20% at the Bethesda Mission. They are serving an average of 130 men this year. The agency realizes that 10 days of shelter is not enough and they want to expand emergency services to 30 days. Chuck is also exploring the acquisition of the Hamilton School building on North 6th Street. Meal participation increased to 200 to 300 people at Bethesda Mission. Because of the cold weather coming, staff at Bethesda Mission will increase food provision. There is a waiting list of 19 women for the Mission's Women's shelter. They are also looking to expansion of that shelter to include emergency shelter. A question was asked about homeless unaccompanied youth, 16 to 18 years old. There is no data for Dauphin county though efforts are being made to collect data for this need. The YWCA serves young men with their families and in school. The Bethesda Mission has a Youth Center and is now operating the Teen Challenge program.

Chuck told us that reporters from the Patriot News are doing research about the closing of the Harrisburg State Hospital and its impact on homelessness. Several CACH partners have been contacted by reporters. Elaine Strokoff was one that was approached and asked what should our response be. In addition to the above-noted

expansion, Chuck said that the Mission is looking to provide units for men leaving prison. The agency is also working with community members to provide “sober” houses for men and women going through Alcoholic Anonymous. Bryan Davis said that Dauphin County was part of that closing and said that our community has several products that serve those moving through the system. A discussion took place about the role of mental illness in homelessness. One fact was shared from John Wetzel, Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections: in 1972, there were 27 State hospitals and six prisons; in 2014, there are six State hospitals and 27 prisons. Sheila Forrester reminded us that Keystone Family Services is a resource for referrals to group homes.

Kay Pickering distributed the 2015 “Where to go for help” booklets.

Elaine Strokoff told us about a March 28th fundraiser for Downtown Daily Bread (see handout). The fundraiser has the University of Pennsylvania’s Glee club and should be a lot of fun.

In Ruth Stoff’s absence, Deb Ritchey announced Beacon Clinic for Health and Hope will open for service beginning March 3, 2015. Hours will be Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3 to 7 pm. A certified nurse practitioner and physician will be available. Visit the clinic’s website for more information: www.BeaconclinitPA.org. The clinic is a faith-based primary healthcare clinic free to uninsured and under-served adults 18 year and older.

In addition, in Liz Caralyus’s absence, Deb reported that the Volunteers of America (VOA) purchased scattered housing on Lexington Street in Harrisburg. Harrisburg Young Professionals are cleaning out the properties and VOA expected to house a veteran family by March 1st. VOA will purchase additional housing in Dauphin, Lancaster and York counties.

Frances Robinson announced that Hilary Hoover leaves Interfaith Family Shelter as of February 20th, 2015.

Rumulus Brown told us that City of Harrisburg is holding public meeting and workshops for accessing Community Development, Emergency Solutions and HOME funds. The public meetings will also discuss the City’s consolidated plan. Visit the city’s website and see the Patriot News for details on these meetings: <http://harrisburgpa.gov>.

Sheila Forrester reported that the Capital Head Start, Keystone Human Services’ enrollment is opened.

Next Meeting: The next General Membership meeting of CACH will be **April 9, 2015** beginning at 10 AM at Christ Lutheran Church, 124 South 13th Street, Harrisburg

Adjourned 11:45. Respectfully submitted, Deborah Ritchey, CCIMS Project Manager