

ALLEGHENY COUNTY HOMELESS ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
January 31, 2012, 10:00 AM
Liberty Room

Members

Sue Coyle, Chartiers; Adrienne Walnoha, CHS; Sue Scheuring, City Planning; George Moses, Housing Alliance; Jane Downing, Pittsburgh Foundation; Mary Frances Pilarski, VA; Bill Wolfe, HCEF; Reggie Young, ACDHS-OCS; Cassandra Collinge, ACED

Guests

Liz Daniels-Totten, City Planning; Terri Laver, ACDHS-OCS; Debra Martin, HUD; Cindy Haines, HUD; Mac McMahon, CHS; Trevor Smith, CHS; Chuck Keenan, ACDHS; Mary Parks, Sisters Place; Steve Rorison, Light of Life; Anne Fogoros, United Way/211; Kevin Hanley, United Way/211; Lois Martin, Bethlehem Haven; Rhonda Albert, Women's Center and Shelter; Adrienne Lang, Women's Center and Shelter; Ramona Singleton, AAA; Rob Eamigh, ACDHS-OCS

Welcome

Sue Coyle welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Ms. Coyle asked if anyone had corrections to the minutes that were sent out. No changes were offered and the minutes were approved as presented.

Continuum of Care Status and Schedule

Rob Eamigh provided the following update on the HUD Continuum of Care Program:

- The county has received notice of its Continuum of Care renewal projects funding. All projects that were applied for have received renewal funding.
- The new application had 4 new projects plus an expansion of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Mr. Eamigh explained the new projects in detail and passed out a summary sheet (attached) of them. The county is still waiting to hear from HUD if these projects have been awarded. In previous years, notice of this funding has occurred in April.
- Mr. Eamigh noted that letters of intent for 2012 CoC new projects were due on January 25, 2012, but the county will still accept new letters for another week.
- HMIS training is scheduled for March 6, 2012.
- Documentation training is scheduled for March 27, 2012. This training will focus on documentation needed to verify homelessness and income.
- Mental Health training is scheduled for April 11, April 18, and April 25, 2012. Staff interested in receiving certification must attend all three sessions. Community Care will be conducting the training. Registration material should be out by mid-March. Space for this training is limited to 25 people.
- First Aid/CPR training is scheduled for May 11 and May 21, 2012.

- Kate Holko has joined the staff at the Bureau of Hunger and Housing as a Program Monitor. She will begin to conduct fiscal monitoring visits beginning in April.

New Units under Development from 2010

Mr. Eamigh gave an update of the new projects awarded under the 2010 CoC application and he passed out a list of the seven projects that have just launched along with contact information on those projects.

Employment and Training Work Group Update

Mr. Eamigh gave a brief update of the last meeting of the Employment and Training committee. He noted that the group had not met in while, but that it was going to start to do so now that a new chair had been identified. The committee has agreed to submit an application for transportation funding through the Heritage Foundation.

2012 Point-in-Time

Terri Laver reported on the recently conducted Point-in-time count of homeless individuals and families in Allegheny County, which was done on January 25, 2012. She said that providers and volunteers are in the process of submitting their paperwork and that once the paperwork is in, she can begin to input the data. She hopes that this will be complete by the end of February and that the official report will be released shortly thereafter. Ms. Laver also noted that the Severe Weather Emergency Shelter was open during the count.

CoC Check-up

Ms. Laver presented a power point (attached) on HUD's tool to test local continuums of care on their readiness for the new HEARTH Act implementation, which is called the CoC Check-up. She explained that this is a self administered test that measures a continuum's capacity, performance, and readiness for the HEARTH regulations. The check-up is designed to assist continuums in the development of action plans to guide self-improvement efforts. The check-up asks that six distinct groups complete the survey: CoC leads, HMIS leads, Emergency Solutions Grant leads, Homeless and formerly homeless persons, Providers, and Others interested and involved with the homeless system locally.

Ms. Laver also explained the stages involved in the assessment, which begins with the stakeholder assessment, the Continuum of Care review of that assessment, the Self Assessment and Rating, and ends with the Action Plan to correct identified deficiencies. The self assessment (Stage 1) closes on February 3, 2012. To date, 17 people have completed the self assessment, but Ms. Laver is asking that these individuals continue on in a work group to develop the action plan. She has scheduled a meeting for February 14 at 10:00 AM to discuss the results of the self assessment and to begin the development of the action plan.

HEARTH Work Group

Chuck Keenan gave an update on the work that the HEARTH Committee has been doing to date. He noted that the group began its work by focusing on four specific areas: preparing for HUD's new performance measures, development of a centralized intake system for people who need service through the homeless system, determining how new regulations will impact existing providers, and developing a more efficient homeless prevention and rapid re-housing system. Cassandra Collinge noted that, as a recipient of the Emergency Solutions Grant funding under HEARTH, her office and City Planning are trying to coordinate their efforts with the Continuum of Care. She asked the group to help to identify gaps in current homeless service system and to present ideas that will make the entire system more efficient and effective. Sue Scheuring also noted that HUD is promoting rapid re-housing as a national strategy, but that she is hearing that homeless prevention is more of a priority locally. Mr. Keenan gave a quick run down of the priorities that have been discussed in the HEARTH work group so far, including very short-term rental assistance aimed at homeless prevention, targeting consumers who have actual eviction notices (rather than those who are doubled up) for homeless prevention, and developing a coordinated entry system through the 211 system.

The group had a general discussion of need to look at the entire affordable housing system, not just the homeless providers funded through ESG and the Continuum of Care. The group agreed that the Homeless Advisory Board needs to take a leadership position and needs to look at the big picture to develop a strategic plan that takes the entire system into account. The HAB needs to look beyond individual pots of funding so that it can develop a system that leverages economies of scale to make a substantial impact.

Announcements

None.

Open Discussion

None.

Next Meeting

The next Homeless Advisory Board meeting will be on April 24, 2012 at 10:00 AM Liberty Room, Lower Level, Human Services Building, One Smithfield Street, Pittsburgh.