

Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board

CoC Bi-Monthly Meeting

May 25, 2017 10:00AM
Human Services Building
One Smithfield Street, Pittsburgh.

Purpose: The Homeless Advisory Board (HAB) is a public/private partnership formed to assist and recommend to Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh, the City of McKeesport and the Municipality of Penn Hills on public policy, programs, activities, data and all other efforts that will eliminate homelessness and improve the wellbeing of persons and families who are homeless.

HAB Members*

Frank Aggazio, ACHA	Abigail Horn, ACDHS (P)
Meg Balsamico, Penn Hills (P)	Linda Kilderry (P)
Caster Binion, HACP	Anna Kudrov, Pgh Police (P)
Diana Bucco, Buhl	Joe Lagana, HCEF (P)
Jerry Cafardi, DCP (P)	John Lovelace, UPMC (P)
Tom Cummings, URA (P)	Lenny Prewitt, Familylinks (P)
Sean DeYoung, PATF (P)	Richard Ranii, All. Co. Economic Development
Jane Downing, Pittsburgh Foundation (P)	Chris Roach, OSN (P)
Marlon Ferguson, Veterans Place	Amy Snider, ACTION Housing (P)
Pete Giacalone, WPIC (P)	Adrienne Walnoha, CHS (P)
	Bethany Wingerson, Center for Victims (P)

Guest Attendees

Wendy Allman, YWCA	Sarah Mayer, Shift Collaborative
Bridget Coyne, Sisters Place	Keenan Mikell, First Step Recovery Homes
Liz Daniels-Totten, City of Pgh	Mary Parks, Sisters Place
Rob Eamigh, DHS	Tom Pierce
Joe Elliott, DHS	Mary Frances Pilarski, VA
Keith Giles, First Step Recovery	Emil Pyptyk, DHS/OBH
Emily Goodwin, Solider On	Richard Rapp
Renee Grimm, First Step Recovery	Diane Reichenbach, Goodwill SWPA
Andy Halfhill, DHS	Kelly Russell, City of Pgh
Nancy Heastings	Eric Sloss, Shift Collaborative
Rachael Herbert, Solider On	Karen Snair, AVAC
Diane Johnson, DHS	Sally Stadelman, Mayor's Office
Chuck Keenan, DHS	Jerry Stradford, 1 st Step
Lisa Kessler, DHS	Chelsea Stone, VLP
Terri Laver, DHS	Stephanie Villella, Chartiers
Debbi Linhart, Bethlehem Haven	Maria Wallace, DHS
	Leigh White, Pgh Downtown Partnership

* (P) indicates that the HAB member participated in the meeting.

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Minutes

1. Welcome & Review of Meeting Minutes—John Lovelace

- The May 2017 meeting minutes were approved.
- HAB members also reviewed their schedules and confirmed that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, September 26, 2017.

2. Infrastructure Organization Report- Abby Horn

Abby Horn reported that HUD has released the NOFA, with a due date of Sept 28. This year's NOFA has a few new features. The IO will hold a meeting, open to all providers, on August 14 to talk through the changes. Changes include:

- A new category of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), called Dedicated Plus, which broadens the eligibility beyond 100% chronic. We can create reallocated, bonus or existing renewal projects under this category.
- The ability to use reallocated or bonus money for an extension of a project.
- A new project type called Joint Transitional Housing RRH which is a combination of RRH and a short term transitional housing program. We could apply to do this as a bonus project, if there is provider interest.

Abby noted that the CoC needs to adopt an anti-discrimination policy. DHS has an anti-discrimination policy that is in place in all contracts and will share their policy with the HAB for discussion. The HAB could vote on accepting this policy next meeting or via email.

On August 30, the CoC will kick off their initiative to end youth homelessness. Through this initiative, we will engage key stakeholders from other systems and pull together data collected across systems. We are receiving TA from HUD and will provide updates as we move forward.

Several DHS and provider staff attended the National Alliance to End Homelessness conference last week. Attendees learned a lot and had great things to say. Next year, we hope to get more providers to go.

Last week, Abby received a phone call from HUD, informing her that the CoC did not receive UFA status and was falsely awarded due to a computer glitch. Abby will provide more information when she has it.

3. Committee Updates

CoC Planning, Andy Halfhill and Amy Snider

Andy Halfhill explained the score card and system performance measure handout passed out to meeting attendees. He explained that HUD has a goal of homelessness being rare, brief and nonrecurring and identified seven performance measures that indicate how well communities are doing to meet this goal. Andy provided a quick, high-level analysis of how we compare from last year to this year. Notable highlights include: length of time homeless has increased, returns to homelessness slightly increased in terms of percentage overall but decreased in point in time count and employment and income growth increased. Overall, we are doing well and will continue to look at these performance measures each year.

John Lovelace asked when we will see 2017 data. Andy said that we are few months away from the HUD fiscal year. We will see 2017 data this time next year.

John Lovelace asked if any of the changes in data that Andy presented were statistically significant. Andy said that the changes were not statistically significant. HUD is asking us to

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show increases and decreases, and we are doing well.

Linda Kilderry noted that RRH is not in several of the performance measure categories. She asked if it will be added in the future. Andy said that these are the performance measures identified by HUD, and he thinks that as RRH becomes more important to HUD, that it will be reflected in the measures.

Jane Downing asked if Andy thought that the increase in the length of stay is due to the tightening of rental housing market. Andy said that he would open that question up to comment from others. He has not specifically looked at the cause of the increase.

Communication and Planning, Sean DeYoung

Sean DeYoung noted that the Committee reserved space at this weekend's Open Streets Pittsburgh event in the Strip District. The committee continues to work with artists to help people tell their stories. They had several comic panels on display in the spring. Chris continues to develop the One Day Away website and swivel platform, which is a Q&A site where individuals in the community can go with questions. The committee continues to work with Storyburgh and the theatre to engage with people around homelessness.

John Lovelace asked if we are getting much media coverage. Sean said that we are not but are working on ways to attract more media attention.

HOCC, Chris Roach

Chris Roach reported that the HOCC continues to work on building a presence at transitional camps, notably by ensuring that the camps have water buffalos and port-a-potties. They are also building their collaboration with law enforcement and ending chronic homelessness. The working group meetings with law enforcements have been taken off the HOCC agenda. The HOCC is considering adding other initiatives and groups to the agenda that focus on women, neighborhoods outside of Pittsburgh, judicial systems and serial inebriation. The next HOCC meeting is August 2 and 9 AM and the Ending Chornic Homelssness group will meet at 10 AM on the first Tuesday of the month. The Judicial and Inebriation group meet the first Wednesday of the month at 10 AM. The HOCC meets the third Wendesday of every month. Chris noted that the HOCC has been working with the Education Committee and other subcommittees.

4. "Asking for Change" Campaign- Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership

Staff from Shift Collaborative presented their Panhandling Awareness campaign to the HAB. The group's primary goal is to launch a public awareness campaign aimed at changing the behavior of passers-by. Secondary goals include generating donations to the Downtwon Ministerium and connecting people to resources. The goal is for passer-bys to provide assistance or, at the least, kindness to people who are panhandling. The group will use nouns words like: neighbor, dignity, story and sign; verbs like: ignore, recognize, give, survie; and adjectives like: valuable, brave, diverse and complex in their campaign. They want the public to have "responsible compassion," which they define as acknowledging the person who is panhandling with a smile or greeting, giving a hand-up vs. a handout and getting involved with the campaign as a volunteer or advocate. They shared several brand logos with the HAB that they intend to place around the city.

John Lovelace asked if the group has launched the campaign. The group said that they have not yet launched the campaign and are still working on it.

John Lovelace asked if the group has a target date for launching the campaign. The group

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said their target date is early fall- late August. They also noted that their campaign could extend beyond downtown.

Abby Horn noted that they could include the campaign on the HAB website. The group noted they want to expand to other websites as well.

5. Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness, Howard Burchman of Housing Innovations

Howard Burchmann began the presentation by noting the team that worked on building the plan. The team included himself, Suzanne Wagner and Lauren Pareti. Prior to this work, the team worked at CUCS and Burchman Terrio, consulting for over twenty years. Their expertise is in systems planning and needs assessments, homeless system and CoC support and transformation, creating coordinated entry/access systems, developing, operating and evaluating housing and service programs, implementing evidence-based and promising practices and staff training.

The team engaged a variety of stakeholders to build the plan, including 100 members of 11 housing/homelessness related committees, 133 town hall participants, staff at the Mayor's Office, Bureau of Police, Department of Public works, Department of Planning and 38 survey respondents.

Key components of the plan include:

- A.) Creating a Year-Round Shelter** that is low-barrier and focused on rapidly returning individuals to housing. Case Management at the shelter will be targeted to those with intensive needs and support plans to self-resolve. The CoC must determine the approach to expand case management (either by funding individual shelters or centralizing case management at DHS or one or several non-profits) and assess the utilization of shelters not using the low-barrier approach.
- B.) Establishing a Centralized Rental Housing Locator (Navigator)** that expands navigator support by assisting individuals with accessing the documents they need to access housing, building relationships with landlords to expand access to units and developing a risk mitigation fund. The Housing Locator will expand housing support and address barriers related to transportation, landlord negotiation, preliminary housing quality standards and educational disruptions. A Centralized Rental Housing Locator would provide support to all households entering RRH, extend support to people experiencing homelessness who have a Housing Choice Voucher and centralize supports provided by DHS or through city-wide or regional contracts. Within Coordinated Entry, the CoC will use a Continuous Quality Improvement approach to target the most intensive resources to the people with highest vulnerability and greatest need. Further, the Locator will provide housing stabilization and eviction prevention services post-housing to assist in accessing needed resources and meeting lease obligations.
- C.) Increasing Supply & Access to Affordable Housing** by establishing additional set-asides/preferences in affordable housing developments, including set-asides in projects developed through the Affordable Housing Task Force Initiative. The CoC will also establish a flexible housing assistance fund to address low-cost housing barriers (i.e furniture, security/utility deposits, application fees) and administer jointly with housing navigation services. The plan includes increasing engagement and collaboration among homelessness service providers and the affordable housing sector as well as exploring expanded collaboration with Public Housing Authorities, especially McKeesport, to finance PSH.

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D.) Increasing and Expanding Outreach Resources by expanding street outreach to cover all areas in the county with significant populations of people experiencing homelessness and ensuring repeated and persisted engagement attempts to keep people off of the streets, out of encampments and in low-barrier shelter or housing. Strategies included in the plan to do this include coordinating outreach services funded through different sources, using HMIS and coordinated entry to improve coordination, coordinating with other systems to prevent discharges to homelessness and using data to identify the highest cost users of multiple systems and prioritize for PSH as well as households at risk of homelessness.

E.) Developing Partnerships to Implement Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) by building on existing partnerships to pilot new programs to meet ESSA responsibilities with an initial focus on transportation coordination. The CoC will ensure that homeless liaisons in the educational system understand the process to access homeless services and school liaisons in the homeless system understand the process to access services in the educational system. To accomplish this goal, the CoC will establish a plan to ensure data reliability and participation by all 43 school districts in the data warehouse and identify students at greatest risk for literal homelessness, prioritize them through Coordinated Entry for prevention services and provide case management and time limited rental assistance to support housing stability.

The communication strategy for the plan includes:

- Disseminating information about the homeless service system and how to access the system
- Informing the public on progress in implementing the plan and seeking ongoing input
- Exploring opportunities to remove stigma associated with homelessness

Howard then asked if anyone had questions.

John Lovelace thanked everyone who participated in the development of the plan.

A member of the CoC asked if they could have a copy of the presentation. John said that we will put a copy of the presentation on the website.

Tom Cummings thanked Jane Downing for her leadership and work.

John Lovelace asked the HAB to vote on the plan. The HAB unanimously voted in favor.

Jane Downing noted that we have hard copies of the plan and are going to post the plan and presentation on the DHS website. She received an incredible amount of detailed suggestions in each facet of the recommendations. She will send out that list to each of the committees. We are not done with the plan- now it is time to implement. She thanked everyone for their work on helping to shape the plan.

John Lovelace said that as we complete the NOFA, we need to think about how the plan fits into it. The plan will change, but this is the framework.

6. Public Comment

Sister Linda said that the ad hoc providers group recommends that providers elect the people who sit on the HAB, so that the provider representatives have a responsibility to listen to what the providers are saying. It would make providers feel more comfortable to have a representative on the board that they select.

John Lovelace said that a bi-law review will happen in the fall. This group has recommended this before, and it has not been forgotten.

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Chris Roach said that the summer Point in Time count is going on this week. They are using the same form used in January so that they collect the same data. They are collecting from 20 different neighborhoods, with 20 leaders out in the field.

Terri Laver encouraged providers to input data into HMIS or get the paper forms to Terri by the date requested.

John Lovelace closed the meeting by noting that the HAB has made remarkable improvement from when he started on the board. There is much change in momentum and conversation, including a sense of movement. He commended all of the members of the HAB and meeting attendees.

Next CoC Meeting

Tuesday, September 26, 2017—10:00 AM to
12:00 PM

Human Services Building
One Smithfield Street, Pittsburgh