Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance

CoC Collaborative Committee

Wednesday, January 20, 2021 * 10:00-11:30 a.m.

MINUTES

1. **Welcome and Introductions**
   Chair Ian Dixon-McDonald welcomed the group and requested attendees type name and affiliation (organization) in the chat box and provide an email address to be added to the mailing list. Attendance is noted at the end of this document.

2. **Consent Agenda**
   Robin Winkle made a motion to approve the consent agenda which only included the 12/16/20 meeting minutes. Josh Erickson seconded the motion. No discussion or abstention was expressed. Motion approved unanimously.

3. **THE SYSTEM PLAYERS: Marion-Polk Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)**
   Elaine Lozier and other partners engaged in developing the five-year CHIP, discussed how the CHIP development process includes several workgroups focused on each of the three regional areas: housing, behavioral health supports, and substance abuse. Committee members were extended an invitation to attend workgroup meetings if interested in providing feedback or additional participation in the planning process. Housing and homelessness-related strategies will be brought back to the committee for input once developed.

4. **EMERGING ISSUES: Access to Services – Identifying Barriers**
   The Collaborative Committee's October meeting participant survey raised the question of identifying barriers to client services, and ultimately addressing those barriers. The committee discussed a variety of barriers faced within our community. DeDe Hazzard provided an example of a barrier identified by clients at UGM Simonka House. DeDe shared a client experience that identified the instability of stable housing when a client scored one point 'too low' on the risk stratification scale and became ineligible for services, requiring her to leave stable housing and attempt to live on less than $800/mo. in Social Security Income (SSI). The client in this circumstance had been successfully case managed for more than 10 years. DeDe shared another story of a client who experienced homelessness for more than 12 years, living on $338/mo. in SSI income, who became housed only when her daughter and grandson became homeless and their collective income increased, obtaining a voucher for housing for six months.

   The group discussed various experiences and systemic issues facing clients and agencies throughout the continuum of housing and homeless services. Housing vouchers were discussed:
   - Applications for housing vouchers are arduous and complex to understand and complete for clients
     - Recovery Outreach Community Center (ROCC) identified their ability to assist any individual with applications for free, employing peer specialists who can help clients navigate the system
   - Vouchers don't match the cost of rent in the region and aren't sufficient for many clients to cover the cost of rent, making clients unable to afford rent even with a voucher

    - Salem Housing Authority pushed for increases in voucher amounts, noting 2021 housing vouchers have increased significantly, between $100-$300 per voucher, but remain a full year behind in response to market rent
    - Salem Housing Authority noted housing vouchers will now be based on zip code and not region which will assist with matching vouchers to rent
- A local apartment owner/landlord expressed her thoughts that increasing the amount of housing vouchers doesn't make it easier on apartment owners to rent to the general homeless population, especially with concerns of legislation preventing landlords from being able to evict tenants if needed.
    - Salem Housing Authority clarified that the eviction moratorium only protects against being evicted for inability to pay; it does not prohibit evictions for problem behaviors.

Many agencies have taken actions to reduce the impact of and prevent barriers related to those discussed:

- Sean Bossen: How do we not divide and segregate when the need is so diverse
- Robin Winkle: We are working hard to educate landlords about the services we provide to tenants, but having a difficult time getting past the criminal histories of people we are trying to get housed.
- Breanna Harig: To add to Robin, lack of 'good' rental history is also a big struggle to obtain housing.
- Michael Livingston: What the CoC (The Alliance) should do is to focus on building the CoC that's contemplated by the HUD CoC Program model.
- Jamie Gatewood: http://fhco.org/index.php/learning-resources/guides check out our guide called Moving Forward with a Past, a fair housing re-entry guide. FHCO provides training on this for groups of renters and for advocates.

5. **PIT Count Update-** Sara Webb provided an update on the Point-In-Time Count starting January 26. Teams will be counting all week that week. Please use the volunteer link to sign up. Teams are low in numbers this year, so volunteers are still needed.

6. **CoC Summit-** The CoC Summit will take place on February 11 and will be a joint meeting of the CoC Collaborative Committee and Board of Directors. Invitations for the Summit will be distributed to all Collaborative Committee and board members, but the meeting is open to anyone interested in attending.

   Ian asked the group whether the Collaborative Committee should meet in February during its regularly scheduled meeting. Of those who responded, all expressed the desire to not have two meetings in February and cancel the regularly scheduled Collaborative meeting to attend the Summit. The next Collaborative Committee meeting will be March 17.

7. **THE BIG PICTURE: Year in Review**
   Ian noted the tumultuous year that was 2020, where significant happenings in housing/homelessness occurred on the state and local level. Jan broke the group into breakout rooms for small group discussion:
   - **System Development** – *what structures have been put in place to create/enhance the system?*
   - **Practice Improvements** – *what have we gotten better at doing?*
   - **Client Benefits/Outcomes** – *how have clients benefitted in the past year?*
   - **Capacity-Building** – *what new skills, resources, partnerships have been developed?*

   Group notes are attached.

8. MWVHA Board, Committee, Subcommittee Highlights

- Ashley Hamilton announced that HMIS Users agreements will be distributed to agencies soon. Please sign them and return to Amy Hatfield (who will be sending them out).

9. Organizational Updates & Announcements

- CoC Summit – February 11, 3:00-5:30 p.m. Please attend the CoC Summit and share the invitation with your networks. Jan screen shared the agenda for the summit. Invites will go out today or tomorrow.
- Josh Erickson from Church at the Park announced a new, low-barrier, 24/7 managed campground is opening at the fairgrounds pavilion on February 1 and will be open through March at a minimum.

10. Next Meeting & Agenda Topics

March 17 ☘ 10:00-11:30 a.m.

- PIT Count Debrief
- CoC Summit Debrief
- New ESG-funded Programs
- Equity Survey Results

Items sent with 1/20/21 Agenda:

- 12/16/20 Minutes
- Committee Highlights
- ESG-CV2 Grant Application Summary

Attachments:
Attendance
Breakout Group Notes

Agency	Contact	Attended 1/20/21	# Agencies	# ind
Capital Plaza Resident Services	Tiffany Ottis	1	1	
Catholic Community Services	Josh Graves	1	1	
Catholic Community Services	Nichole Dickey	1		
Catholic Community Services/ISN	Jacqueline Gould	1	1	
Center for Hope and Safety	Tara Stephen	1	1	
Church at the Park	Josh Erickson	1	1	
Church at the Park	Noelle Gore	1		
Easterseals	Breanna Harig	1	1	
Fair Housing Council of Oregon	Jamie Gatewood	1	1	
Family Promise	TJ Putman	1	1	
Marion & Polk Early Learning Hub	Marjorie Lowe	1	1	
Marion Co Sheriff's Office, LEAD	Lisa Miller	1	1	
Marion-Polk Food Share	Ian Dixon-McDonald	1	1	
MWVCAA, ARCHES	Ashley Hamilton	1	1	
MWVCAA, ARCHES	Glenn Muna	1		
MWVCAA, ARCHES	Kaela Lombardi	1		
MWVCAA, ARCHES	Sara Webb	1		
MWV Homeless Alliance	Jan Calvin	1	1	
MWV Homeless Alliance	Carla Munns	1		
MWV Homeless Alliance, PSU Intern	Denae Overman	1		
NW Human Services	Kristin Kuenz-Barber	1	1	
Oxford House International (OHI)	Sean Bossen	1	1	
PacificSource	Elaine Lozier	1	1	
PacificSource	Christine Lewis	1		
Polk Co Community Corrections	Jodi Merritt	1	1	
Recovery Outreach Community Center	Christina Korkow	1	1	
Salem Housing Authority	Nicole Utz	1	1	
Salem Housing Authority	Jack Elliott Vermeer	1		
Salem Leadership Foundation	Robert Garcia	1	1	
Shangri-La	Robin Winkle	1	1	
Silverton Sheltering Services	Hilary Dumitrescu	1	1	
Silverton Sheltering Services	Sarah White	1		
UGM of Salem, Simonka Place	DeDe Hazzard	1	1	
unaffiliated	Betty Charnholm	1		1
		34	**23**	**1**

Collaborative Committee Breakout Room Discussions 1/20/21

Meeting participants were asked to answer the following questions about the CoC's first year:

- System Development – *what structures have been put in place to create/enhance the system?*
- Practice Improvements – *what have we gotten better at doing?*
- Client Benefits/Outcomes – *how have clients benefitted in the past year?*
- Capacity-Building – *what new skills, resources, partnerships have been developed?*

Collective Notes

1. ***System Development - What structures have been put in place to create/enhance the system?***
    - CoC and various committees
    - Temporary emergency measures (like CARES act funding, eviction moratorium)
    - Safe parking
    - Women's shelter on State Street in Salem
    - Future managed camps
    - HMIS
    - COVID has challenged agencies with all the restrictions, but it allowed us to take a look at what we have in place and make adjustments so we can continue to serve our community.
    - We are now able to attend meetings virtually rather than having to drive from one place to another.
    - Continuing Basecamp for collaborative and community efforts
    - Technology has made it a lot more accessible for low-income families who cannot drive to their appointments.
    - Partnership between Salem Health and Salem Housing Authority has allowed post-hospitalization care and care plan adherence has really improved.
    - MWVCAA utilizing motels/hotels to house individuals for COVID and warming.
    - Suggestion: have a paragraph outlining what this group is for/meant to do so folks coming into the system and joining have an idea of what they are participating in and resources available.
2. ***Practice Improvements - What have we gotten better at doing?***
    - More awareness of homelessness and housing issues than previous years
    -
    - Through Coordinated Entry, staff able to problem solve/resource share to meet individual needs.
    - COVID and wildfires have helped identify how difficult it was for individuals to access resources. We were challenged to figure out how we can get these resources out to those that were affected.
    - We need more system changes to make things more accessible.
    - The waiver from HUD has been very helpful. Hopefully, the waiver will continue so we can continue to provide the assistance that are needed.
    - With the events happening nationwide, such as BLM movement, we've seen an important shift on how we communicate our services to clients - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion; We do our best to recognize diversity in every project that we have and do.
    - The partnerships have been instrumental in responding to the needs of the homeless.
    - The community and its communication have been streamlined. Basecamp has helped have a space to communicate collectively. Community is not so fragmented.

3. ***Client Benefits/Outcomes – how have clients benefitted in the past year?***
    - We were able to serve more clients through virtual meetings.
    - Better working relationships have been fostered with landlords. Landlords are now working with us and we have exposed them to more services that we offer and how we can continue to partner with them.
    - We've been able to promote positive relationships and safeguarding the available resources.
    - We've seen an increase of Fair Housing education with landlords.
    - CARES $ allowed hoteling to be available for individuals until they were able to get into housing. While at the hotel, received better nutrition, services etc.
    - More families housed.
    - More individuals learning how to take care of things themselves that they would normally lean on staff to do. Good growing/learning process
    - The increased partnerships have resulted in preventing returns to homelessness or moving into homelessness due to systemic relationships between agencies, leading to better response and prevention.
    - Partnerships have assisted families via case managers connected throughout the system, which helps landlords and the family to keep them housed and supported.
    - Who has benefited? Families, Veterans, families and individuals displaced by wildfires.

4. ***Capacity-Building – what new skills, resources, partnerships have been developed?***
    - We have seen more collaboration happening between agencies. We are working together to make our services available to our clients.
    - Agencies are working together for the common goal.
    - Redwood Crossings established and opened.
    - Sequoia Crossings in the works
    - Fischer Road establishment opened, offering case management services- highly utilized.
    - Sharing resources among partners: CCS leased a home to Family Promise to house a home; CCS leased a building to CAA to establish a shelter for Veterans.
    - New funding opportunity in community through Willamette Health Council and PacificSource in offering community benefit grants.

In addition, one group focused on "Most Significant Accomplishments" and noted the following:

- Organizational development of the CoC – created foundation, all the administrative work to get the CoC founded and off the ground. Structure of the CoC and Committees in place.
- Core of the CoC – CE/HMIS Committee, Performance and Evaluation Committee. Great work in both committees over the year.
- Expansion of the use of HMIS among service providers.
- Made more connections with partners and other service providers - Collaborative Committee and elsewhere.
- Fair Housing Council providing information for partners and landlords.