MINUTES OF February 8, 2024

MID-WILLAMETTE VALLEY HOMELESS ALLIANCE (MWVHA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ORS 190 ENTITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS JOINT MEETING
Hybrid meeting: MWVCOG Conference Room 100 High St SE, Salem, OR 97301 and via Zoom

MWVHA BOARD
MEMBERS PRESENT
CHAIR: Commissioner Jeremy Gordon, Polk County
VICE CHAIR: Chris Hoy, City of Salem
Alvin Klausen for Commissioner Danielle Bethell, Marion County
Mayor Cathy Clark, City of Keizer
Councilor Shannon Corr, City of Independence
Leilani Slama, Chief Communications and Community Relations Officer, Salem Health
Rhonda Wolf, CEO, United Way of the Mid-Willamette Valley
Christy Perry, former Superintendent representing the Salem-Keizer School District
Dan Clem, Executive Director, Union Gospel Mission
Amber Brady, Subject Matter Expert, for David Zepeda, Subject Matter Expert
Renee Pfeffer, Navigator, Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD)
Josie Silverman-Mendez, Deputy Director, Willamette Health Council
Nicole Utz, Housing Administrator, Salem Housing Authority
Ian Dixon-McDonald, Vice President of Programs, Marion Polk Food Share; Co-Chair, CoC Collaborative Committee
Jimmy Jones, Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency (MWVCAA)
Eric Enderle, Veteran Services Officer, Polk County Veteran Services

MEMBERS ABSENT
Councilor Christopher Lopez, City of Monmouth
Commissioner Danielle Bethell, Marion County
David Zepeda, Subject Matter Expert
Tribal Councilwoman Lisa Leno, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Zaira Flores Marin, PacificSource Community Solutions
Adam Mennig, Director, Academic Development, Chemeketa Community College; Co-Chair, CoC Collaborative Committee
Jason Icenbice, Executive Director, Marion County Housing Authority (MCHA)
Christian Edelblute, Executive Director, West Valley Housing Authority

ORS 190 ENTITY BOARD
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Alvin Klausen for Commissioner Danielle Bethell, Marion County

Mayor Cathy Clark, City of Keizer
Councilor Shannon Corr, City of Independence
Christy Perry, former Superintendent representing the Salem-Keizer School District

MEMBERS ABSENT
Tribal Councilwoman Lisa Leno, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Councilor Christopher Lopez, City of Monmouth
Commissioner Danielle Bethell, Marion County

STAFF AND GUESTS PRESENT
Tricia Frizzell, Salem Health
Jan Calvin, MWVHA Consultant
Linda Hansen, Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments (MWVCOG) Admin Support Coordinator
Elaine Lozier, MWVHA Executive Director
Christine Sommer, MCHA
Dominique Graves, Backbone President
Michael Livingston, Performance and Evaluation Committee
Joy Dickinson, Dickinson Consultants
Cheryl Davis, Dickinson Consultants
Elliott Lapinel, Performance and Evaluation Committee
Councilor Virginia Stapleton, City of Salem
Councilor Julie Hoy, City of Salem
Judy Smith, Home Share OR
Ashley Hamilton, MWVCAA

WELCOME
Chair Gordon called the joint meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. The presence of a quorum for the MWVHA and ORS 190 Board was noted.

CONSENT AGENDA
Chair Gordon mentioned that a letter of support for Easterseals would be voted on after the Consent Agenda and stated that he had received a request to pull item #5 regarding the Youth Homelessness Systems Improvement Grant for a bit more information. He then requested a motion to approve the changes to the Consent Agenda.
MOTION: By Mayor Clark, **SECONDED** by Mayor Hoy, to **APPROVE THE CHANGES TO THE CONSENT AGENDA, AS PRESENTED.**
Discussion: None.
Motion carried.
IN FAVOR: Gordon, Hoy, Clausen, Clark, Corr, Slama, Wolf, Perry, Clem, Brady, Pfeffer, Silverman-Mendez.
OPPOSED: None. **ABSTAINED:** None.

MOTION: By Perry, **SECONDED** by Mayor Clark, to **APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA, AS MODIFIED.**
(1) agenda
(2) 01-11-2024 joint board meeting minutes
(3) accept the resignation of Tawny Zellner (Easterseals) from the HMIS Users Workgroup
(4) Appoint Wyatt Sloan (Easterseals) to the HMIS Users Workgroup
(6) approve letter to HUD regarding YHDP challenges
Discussion: None.
Motion carried.
IN FAVOR: Gordon, Hoy, Clausen, Clark, Corr, Slama, Wolf, Perry, Clem, Brady, Pfeffer, Silverman-Mendez.
OPPOSED: None. **ABSTAINED:** None.
The Easterseals letter of support was displayed and it was commented that they do good work for veterans.
MOTION: By Mayor Joy, **SECONDED** by Councilor Corr, to **APPROVE THE EASTER SEALS LETTER OF SUPPORT, AS PRESENTED.**
Discussion: None.
Motion carried.
IN FAVOR: Gordon, Hoy, Clausen, Clark, Corr, Slama, Wolf, Perry, Clem, Brady, Pfeffer, Silverman-Mendez.
OPPOSED: None. **ABSTAINED:** None.

Lozier shared a PowerPoint with information about the YHSI grant including its purpose, background and opportunities. She stated that she is seeking approval for key concepts, which were developed through the design team.
MOTION: By Perry, **SECONDED** by Clem, to **APPROVE THE KEY CONCEPTS OF THE YHSI GRANT.**
Discussion: None.
Motion carried.
IN FAVOR: Gordon, Hoy, Clausen, Clark, Corr, Slama, Wolf, Perry, Clem, Brady, Pfeffer, Silverman-Mendez.
OPPOSED: None. **ABSTAINED:** None.

ORS 190 ENTITY CONSENT AGENDA
Chair Gordon requested a motion to approve the ORS 190 Entity Consent Agenda.
MOTION: By Mayor Hoy, **SECONDED** by Perry, to **APPROVE THE ORS 190 ENTITY CONSENT AGENDA, AS PRESENTED.**
(1) contract with Carla Munns to support Backbone, the CoC's Youth Action Board
Discussion: None.
Motion carried.
IN FAVOR: Gordon, Hoy, Klausen, Clark, Corr, Perry. **OPPOSED:** None. **ABSTAINED:** None.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Michael Livingston, Performance and Evaluation Committee (P&E) Member and Chair of the CAN-DO Neighborhood Association spoke to the group about focusing on the HUD goals. He feels that

there are deficiencies in the HMIS reporting metrics because the UGM Men's shelter beds aren't part of HMIS, the P&E Committee doesn't receive the information that it needs and would like homeless services to be looked at in a new way.

Amber Brady, Subject Matter Expert, shared the discouragement that displacement brings. She said that less offensive labels are imperative. Chronic displacement is hard and the requirements to overcome the barriers to rent are discouraging and exhausting. This is especially difficult without support, as programs often look back at someone's history, rather than where a person is currently. Collaboration from all is important.

GOVERNOR'S EMERGENCY DECLARATION AND MULTI AGENCY COORDINATION (MAC) GROUP UPDATES

Lozier made three recommendations for the ORS 190 Entity Action to consider:

1. Approval of contract amounts.
2. Approval that contracts be executed according to template.
3. Approval of the draft contract for Long-Term Rental Assistance with Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS).

Chair Gordon expressed a potential conflict of interest, as did Wolf. Vice-Chair Hoy led the conversation. In a prepared statement, Marion County expressed support but also voiced concerns regarding the need to establish performance metrics.

MOTION: By Mayor Clark, **SECONDED** by Councilor Stapleton, to **APPROVE THE PROPOSED CONTRACT AMOUNTS AND THAT CONTRACTS BE EXECUTED ACCORDING TO THE TEMPLATE WITH CHURCH AT THE PARK, CENTER FOR HOPE AND SAFETY, MID-WILLAMETTE VALLEY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY, POLK COUNTY FAMILY AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH, SHELTERING SILVERTON AND UNITED WAY.**

Discussion: None.

Motion carried.

IN FAVOR: Hoy, Klausen, Clark, Corr, Perry.

OPPOSED: None. **ABSTAINED:** Commissioner Gordon, Hoy.

Jimmy Jones provided comments on the process stating late receival of the proposed contract amounts and no opportunity to review and appeal. Lozier stated that this was a difficult decision as there was not enough funding to meet all needs. Preliminary funding amounts were sent out early. Chair Gordon asked if the ORS 190 could ask for more funds. Lozier stated that the state did not have extra funds but rather asked what could be cut.

Vice-Chair Hoy returned the gavel to Chair Gordon. Lozier shared information about the Long-Term Rental Assistance funds intended to sustain those rehoused during the Emergency Order. OHCS requested the contracts be finalized the next week. The contract presented to the Board is a draft, as the final is with the Department of Justice. Providers need an opportunity for feedback. Lozier asked if anyone would be negatively impacted by a delay in approval and Calvin stated that there are other funds to help clients for the next few months. The Long-Term Rental Assistance team of local experts will begin meeting shortly. The decision was made to postpone the ORS 190 motion and approval.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Joy Dickinson from Dickinson Consulting was introduced. She requested that everyone introduce themselves and share what inspires and challenges them about the Alliance's mission statement. She presented an overview of the strategic planning process.

JURISDICTIONAL/ORGANIZATION UPDATES

Chair Gordon mentioned that Councilor Corr will be stepping down from her seat on the Alliance and ORS 190 Entity boards. She has been a good friend and ally in Polk County.

Utz shared that Sequoia Crossing will have the first six people moving in and that it is fully staffed.

Mayor Clark reported that the Keizer Miracle of Lights provided Marion & Polk Food Share with donations to cover 140,000 meals.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

Zoom chat conversation from February 8 meeting.

Elaine Lozier

26:40

EL

Renee, Shannon, are you able to hear me?

Renee MCSO LEAD Program

27:16

RM

yes i did but now you seem to be muted

Alvin (Marion)

01:09:23

A(

I am here on behalf of Commissioner Bethell

Elaine Lozier

01:11:52

EL

AJ, can you send that statement to me please?

1

Alvin (Marion)

01:12:11

A(

On here? Or by email?

Elaine Lozier

01:12:25

EL

Email please. Thank you!

1

Domonique Daniel

01:32:29

DD

Apologies for my early departure, I have some family things to take care of. Thank you for having me!

1 Reply

Joy Dickinson

01:42:14

JD

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ow4MD-9Zp7IoM4OyfzgQ52wg04gHC3p4/view?usp=sharing

Amber / Uniting Efforts

01:53:42

A/

I'm glad I spoke up earlier because we do have to go… our apologies I hope the voting is finished! Thank you Joy glad to have u!

Judy Smith

02:19:43

JS

I must leave now. Thanks everyone

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no further business, Chair Gordon adjourned the meeting at 5:01 p.m.

Jeremy Gordon, MWVHA Chair & ORS 190 Entity President — Date: 3-14-24

Attested:

Elaine Lozier, MWVHA Executive Director — Date: 3-14-24

MICHAEL LIVINGSTON – 2/8/24 Comments to the Alliance Board

It is encouraging that Elaine and the Board have decided to develop a new strategic plan for the Alliance. The essential first step of that undertaking is a thorough and honest assessment of what's really going on with the entities that make up the CoC. Because the Alliance's Charter states that our CoC "*is organized to carry out the purposes of the * * * (HUD) Continuum of Care program*," that assessment should be focused at the outset on the three core elements of the HUD CoC Program Model.

The FIRST of those core elements is HMIS – the HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM, which is a local information technology system that collects client-level data (age, disability, etc) and tracks the progress, or lack of progress, of homeless individuals involved with homeless services programs in the CoC. HUD's System Performance Measures are based on trends in that aggregate data. And, the aggregate data also can be used to provide even more targeted reports – *e.g.*, (a) the number of new individuals who entered the CoC's homeless programs last month, (b) how many of those are chronically homeless, (c) how many homeless individuals were placed in transitional or permanent housing last month, and (d) how many of those were chronically homeless.

The Board *could* be getting those reports now, but it isn't, because of profound deficiencies in our HMIS system, which include the following:

> UGM's Men's Mission has 200+ shelter beds and, for the last four years, that program has obdurately refused to participate in HMIS, and UGM's Executive Director is an Alliance Board member.
>
> The Alliance's Performance & Evaluation Committee is required by the Charter to: (a) review and monitor our region's CoC-funded and ESG-funded projects and (b) review and assess the overall performance of

our homeless services delivery system and make recommendations for system improvement to the Board. The P&E Committee has struggled for 4 years – *i.e.*, since it was first established – to get the data and reports we need to do that work, and those struggles have been exacerbated by the lack of support from and frequent resistance by the Alliance's own consultants. At the P&E Committee's meeting on Tuesday of this week, we adopted a recommendation, which if carried out, will finally resolve that problem and enable us to do our work. We expect the assistance of Elaine and the Board in that effort.

Users see HMIS as a clunky burden & they do not understand it or see the benefits of it. That's primarily the result of both poor training and the absence of and lack of experience with the valuable focused reporting that can be derived from HMIS, but isn't being done.

The SECOND of the core elements of the HUD model is COORDINATED ENTRY AND ASSESSMENT – That's a system that uses a comprehensive, standardized assessment tool to prioritize the homeless individuals who are most in need of assistance and then, based on the assessment results, refers them in a timely manner from a "central waiting list" – or housing priority list – for housing and other services. In other words, the most vulnerable move to the head of the line.

Currently, the Alliance's coordinated entry system is dysfunctional because of increasing inefficiencies in the assessment and referral process and the fact that the housing priority list has become unwieldy. Last spring, Community Action's Data System Administrator discovered that the two individuals responsible for administering the coordinated entry program had arbitrarily and in violation of Alliance policy "exited" – *i.e.,* removed – hundreds of CE clients from the priority list for housing, apparently in a short-sighted effort to make the list manageable. Although Alliance staff were made aware of these errors when they were

discovered, there has yet been *no* meaningful inquiry identifying the system failures that resulted in those actions.

The THIRD of the core elements of the HUD model, in plain language, is that we look at homeless services in a new way – What is unique about the CoC Program (and will be particularly challenging for the Alliance) is that HUD expects a community participating in the CoC Program to think of its homeless services delivery system as a "continuum of care," rather than an array of individual homeless assistance programs that operate independently from one another. And that continuum includes all public and private programs, regardless whether the programs apply for HUD CoC funding.

The FIRST and SECOND of the CORE elements that I've discussed (HMIS & CE) are the primary vehicles for establishing this new way of looking at how homeless services providers see and do their work. The dysfunctions I've described in those elements are, in large part, responsible for our failure to establish this THIRD one. In addition, the Alliance has adopted policies and procedures which *could* serve to achieve this goal, but they are *not* being implemented. So, we remain a region of silos when it comes to our homeless services delivery system.

CONCLUSION: HUD's CoC Program is more than just another funding stream. It is a model for organizing our homeless services delivery system, which, if followed, will provide greater benefit to us than any funding we might receive.

Feeling discouraged, is far too often a feeling when displacement has become the state of affairs for an individual. The amount of it grows the same as time continues. There is no bounds when mental health is a factor for discouraged people. Displacement is a discouragement when your the individual surviving in it. There is no effective measure in place to reverse this affect it has on people for both displaced and those who are sustained.

Developing a recognition system can defeat daily discouragement that any person may feel regardless of mental health status however for those suffering from displacement are also suffering mental health inadequacies. Thus choosing different wording to describe the work that is being done, is crucial to defeating the current stigma that opposes all the work being done. Less offensive labels are imperative to the change we need to see all around the board. People cannot see the individual who is needing help when they a re grouped as a homeless person. Homelessness is an offensive way to state as someone's current status. Even for those that have become sustained with lived experience in it.

As subject matter experts, who are in the midst of seeking housing while living out of a motel after being forced to move from the place, that has always been a home since I was born and with barriers to keep sustainment a discouragement, being apart of this alliance has meant the world to us and our situation. It has given us the ability to keep moving forward vs giving in to the adjustment of chronic displacement. We would have no voice and we would have no avenues. When it comes to us seeking any assistance, it's difficult to meet certain requirements such as being enrolled in certain programs or not having any domestic violence or children involved. However, we believe this is bigger than just needing it. This is about how we're providing the assistance and who is bringing the efforts to receive it.

Our personal efforts over the past 3 years towards the direction of doing what is appropriate and what is necessary to reduce our current barriers has received no recognition towards what we are striving for. I believe if it were, we would stand a better chance of someone such as a landlord, property management agency, realtor, lender or employer, giving us the opportunity to sustain ourselves with our own means to do so. It's very defeating when applying for housing, paying the fee's and providing great references to be denied through a papered lens while ignoring the references provided to learn about the individual presently. Why would we want to pay a fee and our references not even be contacted knowing via paper review will automatically result in a denial.

The requirements to overcome the barriers can be lengthy in time and exhausting especially without the support. Thus, building a network of references is one of the benefits to participating in the alliance anytime we have the opportunity. Even though, it can be tough to follow or keep up due to all of the moving parts within the Allliance, our perspective is quite genuine yet very raw considering what it will take to convince, express, share and encourage others to discover, desire, and reach wellness through improving mental health, forming supportive teams, recognition of efforts from all moving parts, inclusion of anyone striving towards sustainment including business's and mandating the participation from corporation's, attorneys, providers, physicians, housing developers, treatment facilities and behavioral care providers.

Of course, it takes our government in the legislature to make some adequate changes to the policies surrounding what a captialist system has encroached on certain people. The collaboration and commitment needs to come from all sides of the spectrum here and that involves all aspects that affect our wellness.