

CAPE COD & THE ISLANDS REGIONAL NETWORK ON HOMELESSNESS

MEETING SUMMARY

DEPARTMENT/COMMITTEE: Policy Board	DATE: March 23, 2015	TIME: 8:30 AM
RECORDING: Kathie Callahan, Barnstable County Human Services	MEETING PLACE: Harborview Conference Room, Barnstable County Complex	
	NEXT MEETING: May 18, 2015 @ 8:30 AM in the Harborview Conference Room in the County Complex	
PRESENT: Paula Schnepf, Sheila Lyons, Linell Grundman, Heidi Nelson, Lou Eppers, David Willard, Steve Jochim, Diane Casey-Lee, Guests: Elizabeth Wurfbain, Bill Hunt- C&I Veterans Outreach, Danny Garcia – DHCD, Maggie Flanagan Unable to attend: Beth Albert, Janis Carreiro, Gina Hurley		

- **Welcome & Introductions:** Paula Schnepf welcomed the group. Intros made by individuals.
- **Approval of Minutes – January 2015:** **Linell Grundman** motioned, seconded by **David Willard** to accept the January 26, 2015 minutes as written, unanimously approved,
- **Coordinator’s Report – Paula Schnepf:**
 - Paula distributed and reviewed the Veterans Homelessness Dashboard and the Chronic Homelessness Dashboard with statistics provided by Community Solutions. The C&I Continuum of Care applied and was accepted to take part in the Zero 2016 campaign with a focus to bring the number of homeless in these categories to zero. The take down target for homeless veterans is 38 by December 31, 2015 to achieve ZERO. The target of chronic homeless to be housed by December 31, 2016 is 113 to achieve ZERO. These numbers are aggregated using the Point in Time count and several formulas.
 - As of December 2014 Barnstable County Human Services became the collaborative applicant for the Continuum of Care. All renewals for HUD funding were approved for \$1.7 million to this region. Paula will provide assistance with CoC planning activities. Lee Hamilton will provide professional and technical services for CoC planning activities and grant writing for HUD NOFA CoC application.
 - 2015 Point in Time count preliminary report (see below).
 - The HOME Consortium grant will be transferred from the Cape Cod Commission to the County and managed through the Department of Human Services. This funding is allocated for creating new affordable rental housing although some of the funds may be able to be diverted to rental assistance.
- **Governor’s Budget and Legislative Agenda for 2015:** Paula reviewed the highlights of the Governor’s budget including:
 - Advocacy Alert: The State Senate has taken up the pending FY15 supplemental budget which includes desperately needed funds for family homelessness programs (via Senate bill 21). Among many items needing mid-year increases are the Emergency Assistance family shelter and services program and the HomeBASE homelessness diversion and re-housing program for families. If the proposed State increase of \$44.2 million in funding for these programs is approved the account will still be underfunded by \$8 million. Reach out to your State Representative to ask them to support the Senate’s proposed supplemental appropriations of \$51.5 million.

- Early Education & Care: The FY2016 budget proposal of \$544.8 million for programs and services administered by the Dept. of Early Education and Care is virtually the same as current spending, however funding to various programs has either increased or decreased.
 - Mental Health: Proposal funds children's mental health services at same level as in FY15, however FY15 budget had been reduced by over \$7 million. Steve Jochim noted that mental health clinicians are providing ride-along services to police departments. This program, started in Barnstable, has proven to be very successful and thus has expanded to all Cape towns. Steve reported that the Department of Mental Health is in good shape and Taunton Hospital remains open at this time. Highpoint will be expanding services to Middleboro with an 80-bed facility and Acadia will be opening a 120-bed facility in Dartmouth with a focus on substance abuse and mental health issues. Access to health insurance has improved, thus improving the number of clients eligible for these facilities. DMH has seen an increase in the number of housing vouchers to 25 for individuals with both mental and medical illness. \$20 million one-time request to fund substance abuse issues.
 - K-12 Education: Homeless student Transportation would be increased by \$1.0 million to support homeless students who are temporarily living outside the school district they attended before becoming homeless. In addition, the McKinney-Vento Act requires the state and local school districts have staff responsible for homeless student services.
 - Public Health: Other important preventive care or population health programs do not see new investment.
 - Housing: Budget proposal of \$425.9 million for housing programs, \$1.4 million increase from FY2015 spending. Governor also proposes funding a new End Family Homelessness Reserve Account with \$20 million which would be managed by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services. This funding would provide short-term, tailored assistance to help individual families become stable whether they need housing assistance or other services such as child care or job training.
 - Transitional Assistance: FY2016 proposal assumes a continuation of declining caseloads, providing \$229.1 million, 9% less than FY2015 projected spending. The Employment Services Program, the primary education and job training program for TAFDC clients receives \$11.8 million, virtually the same amount as FY2015. Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled and Children (EAEDC) receives \$78.9 million, \$6.5 million decrease from FY2015. Caseworker Salaries and Benefits receives \$70.8 million, \$3.0 million increase from FY2015. Even with this increase the proposal does not project increasing the number of case workers at DTA. FY2016 will see savings to Mass Health as a redetermination process will be undertaken for individuals signed-up for Health Connector this year.
- **Leadership of Network:** The Executive Committee will review the Network's governance document and how the Network is structured. Several members of the Policy Board have or will be retiring and so the membership of the Policy Board will be reviewed with letters sent to current members asking them if they wish to be re-appointed to the Policy Board or designate another individual. New members will be recruited as well. A slate of Policy Board Members will be presented at the September meeting. Executive Committee membership will also be reviewed for updates.
- **Preliminary Report on 2015 Point in Time Count and Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Survey:** Due to inclement weather on January 25th, request was made for a waiver to delay the PIT count, a census of homeless individuals and families on the Cape & Islands, to February 25th – waiver was granted. As the Collaborative Applicant, the Dept. of Human Services and Paula Schnepf coordinated these efforts this year. The process of tabulating the data collected on sheltered and unsheltered individuals is underway as well as the responses from the Unaccompanied Youth Survey, developed by the State and distributed locally with assistance from volunteer youth

ambassadors. Attempt to engage youth through the survey was successful with approximately 350 surveys completed. The data collected via the PIT count will be submitted to HUD by the required date of May 15th. Paula will present the report at a future Network meeting.

- **Update on Coordinated Entry (Assessment) System:** Progress is being made and the system is expected to be up and running by 7/1/15.
- **Update on NOAH Shelter/Day Center:** Successful launch of the Day Center in May 2014. Elizabeth Wurf Bain reported that there is ongoing collaboration with other organizations. HAC has contributed funding towards Day Center operations which is located in HAC's NOAH Shelter. Staffing needs are being addressed. Legislative agenda includes request for \$550,000 in funding in the FY16 state budget for infrastructure of the Day Center. The Day Center S/C Committee is looking at structure and governance and convening an advisory board. Heidi and Elizabeth are looking at all meetings related to homeless services and coordinating services for persons who are homeless in an effort to make sure that meetings are meaningful and efficient.
- **Meeting adjourned:** **Linell Grundman** motioned, seconded by **David Williard** to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 A.M. The next meeting of the Policy Board is scheduled for Monday, May 18, 2015 in the Harborview Conference Room in the County Complex.

Respectfully submitted: Kathie Callahan