

## CAPE & ISLANDS REGIONAL NETWORK ON HOMELESSNESS

<b>DEPARTMENT/COMMITTEE:</b> Policy Board	<b>DATE:</b> March 28, 2016	<b>TIME:</b> 8:30 AM
<b>RECORDING:</b> Kathie Callahan, Barnstable County Human Services	<b>MEETING PLACE:</b> Harborview Conference Room, Barnstable County Complex	
	<b>NEXT MEETING:</b> May 23, 2016 @ 8:30 AM in the Harborview Conference Room in the County Complex	
<p><b>PRESENT:</b> Paula Schnepf, Beth Albert, Sheila Lyons, Heidi Nelson, David Willard, Edye Nesmith, Robert McGillveary, Brenda Swain, Tom Lacy, Maggi Flanagan, Jay Coburn, Mark Ells, Beth Hardy-Wade, Lysetta Hurge Putnam, Gina Hurley, Steve Jochim, Anne Colwell, Greg Quilty, Cindi Maule, Georganna Reed, Ann Marie Peters, Anthony Schiavo, Kara Blake, Jill Brookshire, Tara Wallace</p> <p><b>Guests:</b> C&amp;I Delegation: Representatives Sarah Peake, Tim Whelan, Brian Mannal, Seth Rolbein- Senior Advisory to Senator Wolf, Kathy Palmer – Legislative Aide for Rep. David Vieira, Owen Fletcher – Legislative Aide for Rep. Brian Mannal, Lorre Jo Joyce – Legislative Liaison for Rep. Tim Madden, Lee Hamilton, Michelle Springer, Elizabeth Wurfain, Karen Tewhey- Martha’s Vineyard, Michael Sweeney, Heidi Hartnett, Denene Shimkus, Sid Davidson, Patty Watson, Dean Rosenthal, Martha’s Vineyard via conference call</p> <p><b>Unable to attend:</b> Linell Grundman, Patti Machado</p>		

- **Welcome & Introductions:** Paula Schnepf welcomed the group and thanked the C&I State Delegation and their staff for attending today’s meeting.
  
- **Approval of Minutes – January 25, 2016:** Deferred.
  
- **Coordinator’s Report – Paula Schnepf:** Deferred.
  
- **Discussion with Cape & Islands State Delegation:** Budget and Policy Priorities
  - Beth Albert gave a **historical overview of the Cape & Islands Regional Network on Homelessness**, a broad public-private partnership of agencies, governmental bodies, civic and business organizations and other community stakeholders committed to identifying and implementing creative solutions to preventing and ending homelessness on Cape Cod, Martha’s Vineyard, and Nantucket. The C&I Regional Network was created in 2009 as one of ten Regional Networks in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to receive funding from the Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness (ICHH). Although funding from the state is currently not available to support Network activities, the C&I Regional Network remains committed to foster collaborations among its partner organizations to address the causes of homelessness.

The C&I Regional Network, convened by Barnstable County, continues to be the entity that is identified as the region’s HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) and is eligible to apply for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) CoC McKinney-Vento funds for homelessness services and programs. Barnstable County Department of Human Services has taken over as the collaborative applicant (lead agency) for the CoC and in that capacity oversees the writing of the HUD CoC grant application and the annual Point in Time count.

- Paula Schnepf reported on the **Housing Court expansion** efforts over the past several years. Governor Baker's FY2017 budget proposal appropriates \$1 million in new funding to support housing court expansion. Under current law the court has 5 divisions and does not have jurisdiction to hear cases from Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket counties or portions of Norfolk, Suffolk and Middlesex counties. The C&I Regional Network and Judge Nickerson are strong supporters of these efforts to provide specialized tenant & landlord resources, mediation, and professional services in Barnstable County. Rep. Chris Walsh delivered a letter signed by 48 other representatives to the House Ways and Means Committee asking its members to include the \$1 million in their version of the budget. The Cape Delegation is encouraged to support these efforts.
- The C&I Regional Network has endorsed the **Mass Coalition for the Homeless FY2017 Budget Priorities**: Working to Prevent and End Homelessness by Increasing Funding for Housing and Protecting Safety Net Programs. Priorities include: 1) Adequately fund and protect emergency services programs for families and individuals experiencing homelessness and support key line item provisions; 2) Increase funding for housing programs serving extremely low-income individuals; 3) Address the needs of unaccompanied youth and young adults who are experiencing homelessness by increasing funding to \$4 million for housing/wraparound support services in EOHHS line item 4000-0007; 4) Adequately fund and protect key support programs for low-income families and individuals; and 5) Continue to fund the transportation of children and youth experiencing homelessness to decrease the costs to cities and towns – ESE line item 7035-0008.

Need funding for emergency assistance and to provide services to assist chronically homeless and individuals with disabilities from shelters into permanent supportive housing. Rent caps are at 10 year old levels – need updates. Need increase in AHVP vouchers for non-elderly disabled. HOMEBASE program needs to work better as often there is a need to relocate individuals off Cape as funding is not available here for case management and stabilization. Need to change HUD's definition of "homeless".

- **Rental Housing Availability**: Paula Schnepf discussed the shortage of affordable housing on the Cape & Islands and need to create new affordable housing units and keep people here on the Cape. Dean Rosenthal spoke of the challenges on Martha's Vineyard to keep year round residents and seasonal workers in housing due to the high costs of housing on the islands. General discussion around saving rentals and creating new affordable year-round rental opportunities. Individuals who receive rental subsidies are finding it more and more difficult to find affordable year-round rentals and are at risk of losing their subsidy if they cannot find housing within the allotted 180 day time frame. Rep. Tim Whelan spoke of open space preservation vs. building affordable housing especially on the lower/outer Cape. Rep. Sarah Peake spoke of the unused properties on the lower/outer Cape that may be able to be cleaned up and made usable. Commissioner Sheila Lyons noted that the properties within the National Seashore that are used to house AmeriCorps members are in need of updating as well. Brenda Swain noted the need for affordable housing across ALL of Cape Cod to house year-round residents and seasonal workers on a year-round basis.

Michelle Springer reported that Accessory Apartment by-laws need to be reviewed and revised in each town. An Accessory Unit is one that is part of a private dwelling and the town usually has funding to help rehab these units. A deed restriction and rent limit helps to keep the units affordable. Jay Coburn reported that the Town of Truro is reviewing proposed changes to its Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) by-law. Changes being considered are to allow ADUs by right; requiring that ADUs be occupied year round; to offer a property tax exemption to the portion of the property that is rented to individuals below 80% AMI. Towns need more resources to develop affordable housing. A potential source of revenue would be to close the loophole on the rooms tax. Currently, towns collect a 4% or 6% tax on hotels, motels and B&Bs. However, many families rent houses and condos for their vacations rather than motels. Short term renters of homes and condos do not pay the rooms tax, depriving the State and Towns of a significant amount of revenue. The State Delegation was encouraged to continue to push for a change to the State's rooms tax to allow taxation of short term rentals. There needs to be more municipal movement on a town

government level regarding property tax credits. Towns could look at purchasing smaller houses, rehabbing them to be used as affordable housing. Issues with substance abuse are hindering some individuals ability to obtain/stay in housing.

○ **Local Initiatives:**

- **Rural Housing Commission:** Regional Network continues to support these efforts.
- **Transitional Living Center:** Elizabeth Wurf Bain reported on the efforts to relocate the NOAH Shelter and the many criteria that a new location needs to meet. The efforts to develop a new location for a Transitional Living Center have met with resistance from town governments and residents. One of the goals for the new site is to include more rehabilitative services and provide additional case management, general services and resources. There is a parcel of County-owned land that is being considered at the intersection of Phinney's Lane and Rt. 132. The Committee working on the relocation would like to see more support of these efforts including funding from the County Commissioners and Cape Delegation.
- **Martha's Vineyard:** Karen Tewhey reported that there is no affordable housing on M.V. and no detox services. There is a new shelter, Hospitality Home, but services are limited and clients are being sent off island to receive needed services. Many of the M.V. workers live off Cape and commute via the ferry. The Council of Churches has a strong presence on M.V. and has been helpful filling some of the gaps. Dean Rosenthal is hoping that the earmark in the State budget that sustains Karen Tewhey's work will be renewed.

Attendees were asked to **call** Cape Delegation members with comments, questions or requests **vs. email** because of the overwhelming number of emails they receive. A call would bring attention to the request. Seth Rolbein asked that the Regional Network put together a list of priorities they wish to be considered or supported and forward to Cape Delegation members.

➤ **Continuum of Care:**

- **Preliminary Point in Time (PIT) numbers:** Analysis of the data collected from the 2016 Annual Point In Time count is being finalized. Preliminary analysis shows a spike of 31 people that were counted as homeless on January 27-28, 2016 as compared to 2015. Final report will be released shortly.
- **2015 HUD Grant Award:** HUD announced the CoC awards and the C&I region was awarded \$1.6 million to support 12 renewal programs. Second round of awards will be announced soon which included requests for 2 new projects in our region.
- **State MRVP's for the Chronically Homeless:**

➤ **Partner Updates:**

- Mark Ells: Barnstable Town Council has created two new committees to address the issues of homelessness and substance abuse.
- Regional Policy Plan is being developed by the Cape Cod Commission that outlines a coherent set of planning policies and objectives to guide development on Cape Cod and to protect its resources.

➤ **Meeting adjourned** at 10:10 AM. The next meeting of the Policy Board is scheduled for Monday, May 23, 2016 at 8:30 AM in the Harborview Conference Room in the County Complex.

Respectfully submitted: Kathie Callahan