



**BARNSTABLE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

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MEETING MINUTES

CAPE & ISLANDS REGIONAL NETWORK ON HOMELESSNESS POLICY BOARD MEETING

Monday, March 22nd, 2021

9:00am-10:30am

Meeting Held Using Microsoft Teams

Members Present: Beth Albert, Leo Blandford, Martha Burzycki, Andy Clyburn, Cassi Danzl, Cathy Gibson, Suzie Hauptmann, Lysetta Hurge-Putnam, Jan Kendrick, Jackie Lane, Chris Lawson, Hadley Luddy, Susan Mazzarella, Eddie Murphy, Heidi Nelson, Edythe Nesmith, Greg Quilty, Dr. Arlene Rodriguez, Paula Schnepf, Karen Tewhey, Mary Waygan

New Members Present: Dara Gannon, Melissa Maguire, Jerico Mele, David Rose, Renee Salisbury

Members of the Public: None

Barnstable County Staff: Dan Gray, Martha Taylor

Guests: None

Unable to Attend: Megan Homer, Joe Taylor, Naomi Tavares-Silva, May Willner, Erika Woods

Elected Officials: None

Assembly of Delegates: None

County Commissioners: None

1. Welcome and Introductions:

- a. Cathy Gibson, Chair, facilitated the meeting which began at 9:05am. Dan Gray read the following statement: *The meeting will be held through remote participation pursuant to Massachusetts Governor Charles D. Baker's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law on March 12, 2020. The public will be allowed to view the meeting; but no public comment will be taken. This meeting will be recorded.*
- b. Dan completed a roll call of attendees.

2. Approval of Minutes:

- a. Chair asked for motion to approve meeting minutes from January 25th, 2021- so moved by Beth Albert with a second motion by Mary Waygan.
- b. **Roll call vote-** all in favor, none opposed.

3. 2021-2022 Slate of Nominees for the Regional Network on Homelessness Policy Board, Executive Committee and Leadership- Dan Gray, Barnstable County Dept. of Human Services

Creating a Healthy Connected Cape Cod

The Mission of the Department of Human Services is to plan, develop, and implement programs which enhance the overall delivery of human services in Barnstable County and promote the health and social well-being of County residents through regional efforts that improve coordination of services.

- a. Slate of Nominees- New Members (Handout #1)
- b. Executive Committee Nomination- Suzie Hauptmann, Falmouth Human Services
- c. Leadership Roles- Heidi Nelson, Duffy Health Center- Chair and Hadley Luddy, Homeless Prevention Council- Vice Chair
- d. Chair asked for a motion to approve the slate of Nominees for the 2021-2022 Policy Board, Executive Committee and Leadership- so moved by Cassi Danzl with a second motion by Edye Nesmith.
- e. **Roll call vote**- all in favor, none opposed

4. **Annual Priorities-** *Beth Albert, Barnstable County Dept. of Human*

- a. During the Annual Meeting, the Policy Board reviews progress on priority areas from the previous year and sets priorities for the network to guide efforts.
- b. The 2020 Regional Network on Homelessness Annual meeting was postponed from March until June because of the pandemic.
- c. The Executive Committee reviewed the priorities and asked to utilize the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data to quantify progress in order to “move the needle”. HMIS data quality was also a cross cutting theme across all the priorities.
- d. 2020-2021 Priorities and Updates:
 - i. Youth Homelessness- Goal: Enter 80% of new Youth and Young Adult (YYA) intakes into HMIS for period 7/1/20-6/30/21. Progress: The Barnstable County Dept. of Human Services (BCDHS) used HMIS funds to hire a consultant to build out YYA projects in HMIS to collect HUD Required Universal Data Elements. Set up is complete for Martha’s Vineyard Community Services and HAC, CHAMP, Nantucket, and HPC are in progress. BCDHS is committed to continue working on this goal.
 - ii. Data Quality- Goal: HMIS contributing agencies will enter 70% of participant Annual Assessments and 85% of participant Exit Assessments completely, accurately, and on time by June 30, 2021. Progress: HMIS Data from 7/1/2020 through 3/11/2021 indicates an Annual Assessment Completion rate of 54% and Exit Assessments were completed 76% of the time. Data quality is an area the region needs to continue to work on.
 - iii. Elder Homelessness- Goal: Continuum of Care (CoC) partner agencies will refer 10 homeless elders (aged 60+) to housing through Coordinated Entry (CES) by June 30, 2021. Progress: As of 3-11-2021, 12 homeless elders have been referred to housing through Coordinated Entry, exceeding the goal by 2. Nine more individuals have been assessed and placed on the prioritized by-name list for housing referrals.
 - iv. Employment and Income Growth- Goal: Increase employment and income for homeless persons in CoC funded programs. Progress: System Performance Measure (a HUD required annual report) indicate that in FY20, 14% of “system stayers” had an increase in total income (including non-employment cash benefits) compared to 29% of “stayers” in FY19. “System Leavers” had a 17% increase in total income (including non-employment cash benefits) compared to 50% in FY19.
 - v. Island Engagement- Goal: Continue to improve engagement with Martha’s Vineyard and Nantucket. Progress: The Islands have continued to have representation on the Policy Board and have received targeted funding for YYA homelessness. Staff from Harbor Homes act as an access point to Coordinated Entry and are supplying the CoC with Winter Response data. Both Islands have participated in the Point In Time and Housing Inventory Counts.
 - vi. Winter Response- Goal: Coordinate efforts for Emergency Response to COVID and Winter Response given the guidance on de-population. Progress: Demonstrated

coordination across region in response to COVID-19 including: Duffy's isolation & quarantine motel program funded by CCHC; expanded ESG funded IFTS motel response; ESG-2 CSS motel response; Harbor Homes shelter and Belonging to Each Other data collection; frequent emergency planning meetings; food delivery; and the Drop-In at EOHHS (collaboration with DMH, EOHHS, HAC, Duffy and Vinfen). The region can be very proud of the collective efforts in this area.

- vii. Capacity to Respond to Funding Opportunities- Funding was successfully secured for the shower and meals programs (CDBG), ESG-CV Rd.1 and 2, YYA Host Homes and flex funding.
- e. 2021 Priorities- Executive Committee Recommendations:
 - i. Coordination of Case Management to improve transitions of individuals from sheltered and unsheltered homelessness into housing by decreasing the time between referral and leasing a unit.
 - ii. Creation of a Short-Term Subcommittee to Measure Success/Identify Areas for Improvement convened by Beth Albert and Alisa Magnotta. Several of the priorities from 2020-2021 included improved data quality and this subcommittee will select common metrics to track outcomes and demonstrate successes. One goal will be to get an accurate count of those experiencing homelessness in the region.
 - iii. Planning for the 2021-2022 Winter Shelter Response. 2020-2021 resources added because of the pandemic may not be available, so the Emergency Planning Subcommittee will continue to meet to explore solutions.
- f. Chair asked for a motion to approve the recommended Regional Network Priorities for 2021-2022- so moved by Edye Nesmith with a second motion by Dr. Arlene Rodriguez.
- g. **Roll call vote**- all in favor, none opposed

5. **Updated Coordinated Entry Written Standards of Prioritization**- *Dan Gray, Barnstable County Dept. of Human Services*

- a. As part of the HUD Notice of Funding Availability in 2019, HAC was awarded a Permanent Supportive Housing program specifically for Youth and Young Adults (YYA) age 24 and younger. The EOHHS funded grant partners had provided services to a large number of homeless YYA and it was anticipated that many YYA would need additional housing resources. As the HAC program launched many of the YYA did not meet the HUD definition of "chronically homeless" or "literally homeless" because they often have unstable housing, such as couch surfing. In order to capture this group in need of housing, a recommendation was made by the Executive Committee to the Coordinated Entry Steering Committee to add a 9th priority to the Written Standards of Prioritization.
- b. A handout was distributed that included the 9th priority- Individuals and families identified by state or local entities as priority populations due to homelessness or being at risk of homelessness and having severe service needs. The handout also included the HUD and EOHHS definitions of "At-Risk".
- c. Chair asked for a motion to approve adding a 9th priority to the Written Standards of Prioritization in the Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures- so moved by Lysetta Hurge-Putnam with a second motion from Beth Albert.
- d. **Roll call vote**- all in favor, none opposed

6. **CoC and HMIS Program Manager Updates**- *Martha Taylor and Dan Gray, Barnstable County Dept. of Human Services*

- a. The Annual Point in Time and Housing Inventory Count was completed on January 26th, 2021. This is a snapshot of both sheltered and unsheltered homelessness. “Sheltered” homelessness includes those in a standing emergency shelter, in a hotel room paid for by an agency or in transitional housing. A handout was distributed with the data collected in comparison to the previous year. Procedures for this year’s count was adjusted due to the pandemic in order to minimize the direct contact between homeless individuals and those completing the surveys. Of note in the data:
 - i. There was a decrease of 22 persons in those who were unsheltered. Barnstable County had a decrease of 16 persons and Dukes County decreased by 6 persons.
 - ii. There was an increase of 20 individuals in shelter. The correlation between the change in the number of sheltered and unsheltered individuals can be attributed to the increase in motel resources. The surveys indicate that in 2021 more individuals were in hotels paid for by Harbor Homes, Duffy, BTEO and CSS.
 - iii. There was also a decrease of 16 families experiencing sheltered homelessness on the night of the count.
 - iv. There was a 7 person increase in those in Transitional Housing (TH). Harbor Homes TH and BTEO TH were added this year.
- b. The EOHHS Unaccompanied Youth and Young Adult Homelessness Grant was amended to add \$130,000 in response of the needs of young people during the pandemic, bringing the total annual funding to \$490,000. Additional resources and services that will be added include “HomeBASE” like funding to HAC for helping YYA transition into housing and stabilize, hiring a consultant to plan for a Host Homes program in the Lower Cape in collaboration with HPC and staffing and flex funds to Champ Homes. These dollars also will be funding YYA projects in a new HMIS database.
- c. During a recent meeting with the statewide CoC it was announced that procurement for the Emergency Solutions Grant has been put off until March 2022. This negatively impacts the region because the calculation for funding coming to the Cape and Islands is not commensurate to the needs of the region. Efforts were underway to engage with elected officials to explore the calculation for funding, which will continue with the hope that change can be made for 2022.
- d. In Fall of 2020, BCDHS was informed that the HMIS platform used by the CoC, which had been provided for free through DHCD, would no longer be available for use as of 12/31/21. BCDHS has been in process of procuring its own HMIS platform. An RFP was released on December 15th and BCDHS received 5 vendor proposals by February 1st. The technical proposal for the 5 vendors were reviewed, and 3 vendors were informed they would not be selected based on their start up and/or annual costs exceeding the available funding. The remaining 2 vendors, Wellsky and Caseworthy, were invited to provide demonstrations, which were completed on 3/16. Final evaluation scores are being compiled and the selection will be announced soon.

7. Partner Updates

- a. Greg Quilty announced that the Dennis Veterans Home is open. Three veterans have moved in and there are 2 available rooms for any veterans in need.
- b. Karen Tewhey announced that Harbor Homes has taken over as the umbrella organization for all homeless prevention initiatives on Martha’s Vineyard. They are buying a second facility on a large property which can house 5 individuals and 1 family and will also have space for administrative offices. They hope to have a full time Caseworker funded by Dukes County in the coming year. Additionally, the emergency hotel response on the Vineyard, funded by CDBG, demonstrated the need for additional resources.

- c. Dara Gannon announced that the Cape Cod Foundation will be hosting a virtual information session on March 25th. The Foundation's grant programs have been closed for the past year and information on re-launch can be found at <https://www.capecodfoundation.org/current-grants/>. The information sessions will be recorded for those who cannot attend.
- d. Leo Blandford announced that Outer Cape Health and HAC have been working on a pilot project to provide rental support in the Outer Cape catchment area. Participants have either medical or mental health needs and fall within specific income guidelines. Data is being collected on the effectiveness that housing supports have on medical treatment and results will be shared in the fall.
- e. Based on a question posed by Heidi Nelson, Cassi Danzl and Jan Kendrick noted the added resources available because of the pandemic has resulted in less families accessing the Family Shelter system. Cassi stated that numbers in the Family system are down across the state.

8. Adjournment

- a. A motion to adjourn was made by Beth Albert with a second motion by Hadley Luddy.
- b. **Roll Call Vote**- all in favor, none opposed.

Respectfully submitted by: Dan Gray, Barnstable County Dept. of Human Services