



BARNSTABLE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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MEETING MINUTES

CAPE & ISLANDS REGIONAL NETWORK ON HOMELESSNESS POLICY BOARD MEETING

Monday, September 27th, 2021

9:00am-10:30am

Meeting Held Using Microsoft Teams

Members Present: Leo Blandford, Martha Burzycki, Andy Clyburn, Cassi Danzl, Dara Gannon, Cathy Gibson, Suzie Hauptmann, Jan Kendrick, Jackie Lane, Chris Lawson, Hadley Luddy, Melissa Maguire, Jerico Mele, Ed Murphy, Heidi Nelson, Joe Pacheco, Greg Quilty, Renee Salisbury, Paula Schnepf, Karen Tewhey, Mary Waygan

Members of the Public: Lee Hamilton

Barnstable County Staff: Dan Gray, Martha Taylor

Guests: Vaira Harik

Unable to Attend: Megan Homer, Lysetta Hurge-Putnam, Susan Mazzarella, Edythe Nesmith, David Rose, Krystin St. Onge, Naomi Tavares-Silva, Joe Taylor, May Willner, Erika Woods

Elected Officials: None

Assembly of Delegates: None

County Commissioners: None

1. Welcome and Introductions:

- a. Heidi Nelson, Chair, facilitated the meeting which began at 9:05am. Dan Gray read the following statement: *The meeting will be held through remote participation by the Cape Cod and Islands Regional Network on Homelessness Policy Board, pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 in accordance with applicable law. Members of the public are invited to watch the meeting through Microsoft Teams and when public participation is required by law or allowed by the meeting Chair, persons wishing to participate may do so by accessing the meeting via Microsoft Teams. 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 June 28th and the Special Meeting held July 29th 2021- so moved by Cathy Gibson with a second motion by Jericho Mele.

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.

- b. **Roll call vote**- all in favor, none opposed. Leo Blandford, Ed Murphy and Jackie Lane abstained from the June 28th meeting vote. Leo Blandford, Martha Burzycki, Cassi Danzl, Dara Gannon, Cathy Gibson and Suzie Hauptmann abstained from the July 29th meeting vote.

3. **2021-2022 Winter/Emergency Response Update- Heidi Nelson- Chair**

- a. The Winter/Emergency Response workgroup has been planning for 2021-2022 since the end of the previous season.
- b. The Mass. Dept. of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) issued a Request for Response for use of Emergency Solutions Grant- Coronavirus Round 2 (ESG-CV2) funding. This is the same federal funding stream that funded the motel and overflow response in the 2020-2021 season.
- c. DHCD has encouraged providers to utilize this funding to provide a Winter Response given the loss of beds due to distancing and the high utilization of motel resources in the 2020-2021 season. DHCD is also allowing for the funds to be used during a time frame that is longer than the traditional Winter Response.
- d. Duffy Health Center and Catholic Social Services (CSS) both put in applications for funding; Duffy for their In From the Streets program and CSS for a motel response to account for beds lost to distancing and overflow. Both agencies asked for more funds than in previous seasons to cover staffing, food and other resources.
- e. Approximately two weeks ago, Duffy received an e-mail from DHCD stating that contracts had been approved and on 9/24/21, they were informed that they had been awarded full funding.
- f. The Duffy program will provide 12 motel beds every night throughout the season. The beds will always be available and will not be triggered by ambient temperatures per procedure in previous winters. Duffy has also received additional funding for a full-time case management staff person, food and on-site security. Funding is also available to pay for motels on the Lower, Upper and Outer Cape if individuals in those regions are in need and cannot access the Mid-Cape motels.
- g. Duffy will also be receiving funding through the Eastern Bank Foundation, Cape Cod Foundation, and the United Way to continue the Testing/Isolation/Quarantine motel program.
- h. The Executive Committee has also worked with Sen. Julian Cyr's office to submit a letter to DHCD and the EOHHS Undersecretary in support of ESG-CV2 applications and ongoing funding for Winter response. The letter was signed by the entire Cape and Islands legislative delegation. As part of the effort of informing our legislators to the needs of the Cape and Islands, the Executive Committee has also advocated on behalf of increasing long-term funding for the individual shelter line item in the state budget.

4. **Regional Housing Stabilization Resources**

- a. There has been an influx of funds for housing stabilization and homelessness prevention available through federal regulations in response to the pandemic and the eviction moratorium. The Executive Committee was briefed on these resources over the summer and wanted the entire Policy Board to be updated on the available resources and the criteria for households accessing funding.
- b. Resources available throughout the region- *Cassi Danzl, Housing Assistance Corporation*
 - i. There have been resources made available to those who are impacted by COVID, but the language regarding "impacted" is very flexible. Examples of eligible households include those who have had a household member diagnosed with COVID, those who have been laid off due to COVID, those who have had increases in utility bills due to the

household being home more often and increased food costs due to changes in economic conditions, etc.

- ii. Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)
 - 1. COVID impacted rental households under 80% AMI or on government entitlements (Mass Health, DTA, housing subsidy, etc.)
 - 2. Can provide up to 18 months of rental assistance going forward from March 13, 2020. Benefit limit is based on household's rent amount
 - 3. Can also provide up to \$2500 in assistance for utilities (electric and gas) if the household is in arrears
- iii. Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT)
 - 1. Rental and Homeowner households under 50% AMI (60% if fleeing DV)/MassHealth/DTA
 - 2. Variety of eligible costs
 - 3. Up to \$10,000 until 12/31/21, \$7,000 starting 1/1/2022
- iv. Emergency Rental and Mortgage Assistance (ERMA)
 - 1. COVID impacted households between 50-80% AMI
 - 2. Rent and Mortgage Only
 - 3. \$10,000 limit, one-time benefit
 - 4. Ends 12/31/21
- v. Workforce Housing Relief Fund
 - 1. COVID impacted households under 100% AMI
 - 2. Rent and Mortgage
 - 3. Benefit level varies by town, county (Town Funds, HOME funds)
- vi. Subsidized Housing Emergency Rental Assistance (SHERA)
 - 1. ERAP funds administered directly by DHCD to Housing Authorities and Affordable Developments for rental arrears
- vii. Homeowner Assistance Fund
 - 1. Potential new resource could be coming soon
 - 2. Mortgage Assistance for COVID impacted homeowners from the American Rescue Plan
 - 3. 150% AMI
 - 4. Should launch in November or December
- viii. Since March 2020 HAC has administered more than \$4.8M in housing supports. In a typical year prior to the pandemic, they provided approximately \$300-350K. HAC has also surpassed more than \$1M in funds since July 1, 2021.
- c. Lower and Outer Cape- *Hadley Luddy*
 - i. There are additional funds for the Lower/Outer Cape region that can supplement resources administered through HAC.
 - ii. HPC administers funds and facilitates Case Management in collaboration with towns in the region:
 - 1. Eastham- Case Management in partnership with the Harwich Ecumenical Council for Housing to provide rental assistance for Eastham residents
 - 2. Wellfleet and Provincetown- HPC provides Case Management and administers rental assistance funding for up to 80% AMI
 - 3. Truro and Wellfleet- For households impacted by COVID, the Lower Cape Emergency Rental Assistance provided a variety of short-term solutions to address the needs of the community

4. Chatham and Harwich- Each town has their own rental assistance programs that are not tied to the pandemic. These funds are available to residents and town employees, as well as any family with a child in the Monomoy school district. Interested households can contact Tracy at the Chatham/Harwich Housing Authority for information
 5. Brewster- HAC administers these funds which have similar eligibility requirements as the other Lower/Outer Cape towns
- iii. Upper Cape- *Suzie Hauptmann*
 1. Similar to the Lower/Outer Cape resources, funds available on the Upper Cape are a supplement to the regional resources provided by HAC. Falmouth Human Services is a town funded department, and they work closely with HAC, Belonging to Each Other and the Falmouth Service Center to administer resources specifically for Falmouth residents
 2. The Town of Falmouth was awarded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds in conjunction with the Service Center to provide social services resources including basic needs like food security. There are also other financial assistance resources available that are accessed prior to referral to HAC
 3. The Falmouth Housing Corporation will have 10 affordable units available through a lottery. Applications are being accepted through October 29th with a lottery planned for November
 - d. The Town of Yarmouth has had a rental assistance program administered through Hands of Hope prior to COVID. This program remains available for those who's needs are not met through the HAC programs. Yarmouth Gardens is still accepting applications for their lottery through October 29th for 40 attainable units (1, 2 and 3 bedroom). Information can be found at www.yarmouthgardensma.com. Applications can be completed on-line and paper copies are also available at the site- 498 Rt. 28, West Yarmouth and the Yarmouth Town Hall.
 - e. The Vineyard offers rental assistance in all towns on the island. The flexibility offered by the new federal programs has been critical on the Vineyard because very few residents are in year-round leases.
 - f. The Barnstable Affordable Housing Trust provided \$300K in rental assistance at the beginning of the pandemic, which is being processed by HAC. There are still funds available through this fund as most eligible households have used other resources.
5. **CoC and HMIS Program Manager Updates-** *Martha Taylor and Dan Gray, Barnstable County Dept. of Human Services*
 - a. The US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) was released in August. This is the annual competition for federal homelessness funding that brings over \$2M into the region through the Continuum of Care.
 - i. There was no 2020 competition due to COVID
 - ii. The Collaborative Application is due on November 16th
 - iii. The local processes and timelines are similar to past years, including holding information sessions, accepting Letters of Intent for new projects and review and ranking of new and renewal projects per HUD protocols on timing detailed in the NOFO
 - iv. There are funds available through reallocation due to the closing of the Falmouth Housing Authority's Cape Regional Housing Initiative
 - v. After new and renewal projects are required to complete applications online by October 13th. Once projects are entered the Review and Ranking committee will prioritize the projects in either "Tier 1" or "Tier 2", which could have impacted funding in previous

- competitions. However, for this year's applications, all renewal projects and most of the new projects will be placed in Tier 1 as HUD has made additional funding available
- vi. There are again Bonus Funds available which are awarded based on the score of the Collaborative Application
 - vii. Additional information, including the local Request for Proposal, can be found here: <https://www.bchumanservices.net/initiatives/continuum-of-care/>
 - viii. Changes to the 2021 NOFO were reviewed
- b. In response to the HUD guidance on including those with lived experience and ensuring that an equity lens is used as part of the local competition, the Executive Committee has approved an increase to the membership of the Review and Ranking committee from 3 to 5 members. One of the new members will have lived experience and Lee Hamilton is working with local transitional housing programs to identify candidates.
 - c. HUD regulations state that the CoC is the final approver of the Priority Ranking of new and renewal projects in the CoC competition. As such, the Regional Network Policy Board, as the governance entity of the CoC, would need to vote on the final submission. However, due to timing concerns and conflict of interest of Policy Board members also being applicants, the Policy Board has delegated authority to the Review and Ranking committee to be the decision-making body on behalf of the CoC during past competitions. In order to formalize this arrangement for the 2021 submission, a vote can be taken to approve the Review and Ranking committee to submit the final Priority Ranking to HUD:
 - i. Hadley Luddy moved to vote on the Review and Ranking committee as the decision maker of project prioritization with a second from Cassi Danzl
 - ii. All in favor, none opposed
 - d. The Dept. of Human Services has released an RFP for a consultant to develop a Coordinated Plan to address Youth Homelessness and explore whether the CoC is positioned to apply for a HUD Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) grant. YHDP would bring additional dollars into the region and would potentially pay for initiatives already underway, such as the Host Homes project. Consultants are required to provide a response by September 30th
 - e. The region has moved forward on securing the Emergency Housing Vouchers discussed at the special meeting in July. The Dept. of Human Services signed an MOU with DHCD and HAC has agreed to provide the pre-housing support services. The region received 15 vouchers and the Executive Committee decided to prioritize families in the shelter system. 8 families have already submitted application to DHCD.
 - f. The Dept. of Human Services has been in process of transitioning the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which had traditionally been provided through DHCD, to a new vendor, Wellsky. System Administrator training is currently being conducted and data is being migrated to the new live site. Training for end users is planned for November and December.

6. Partner Updates

- a. The Canal House, a sober living program on the Lower/Outer Cape, has 6 openings (2 women and 4 men). Interested agencies can contact the CDP.

7. Adjournment

- a. A motion to adjourn was made by Suzie Hauptmann with a second motion by Leo Blandford.
- b. **Roll Call Vote**- all in favor, none opposed.