

**Morris County Continuum of Care (CoC) Executive Committee Meeting
September 22, 2016
Meeting Notes**

Meeting began at 10:02 a.m.

Voting Members Present:

Jeffrey Bashe, Community Rep.; Joan Bruseo, Morris County Office of Temporary Assistance; Jennifer Carpinteri, Morris County Human Services; Luisa Fieno, Community Hope; Joseph Gallo, Market Street Mission; Russ Hall, Housing Alliance of MC; Nancy Magee, Community Foundation of NJ; Jodi Miciak, United Way of NNJ (phoned in); David Scott, Market Street Mission; Lou Schwarcz, Mental Health Assoc. of MC; and Rebekka Zydel, Child & Family Resources, Inc.

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Joanne Bjornson, Family Promise of MC; Patty Sly, JBWS.

Staff and Consultant: Shelia Carter, Patricia Mocarski, Morris County Human Services; Taissa Kelly, Charles Franchino, Monarch Housing.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Jeff Bashe, Chair, opened the meeting with welcomes and introductions.

2. Approval of July 28, 2016 Minutes –

Mr. Bashe asked for the approval of the July minutes. One change to the minutes was requested by Ms. Patty Sly. Mr. Dan McGuire should be moved from Voting Members to the Ex-Officio Members at the top of Page 1. Mr. Russ Hall made a motion to approve the July 28 minutes with the noted change. Ms. Rebecca Zydel seconded the motion. All were in favor with five abstentions and no opposition. Motion was carried.

Mr. Bashe requested that each person reporting at future meetings provide a brief written summary either in advance for pre-distribution or at the meeting. This will make it easier for transcription of the minutes.

3. 2016 Committee/Sub-Committee Reports:

Community Assistance Services (CAS) – Luisa Fieno

The committee reviewed and endorsed the infrastructure changes that were endorsed at the last EC meeting. CAS meetings will be held bimonthly, on the same month as Executive Committee meetings, instead of monthly. The CAS role is to act as liaison between the EC, the community and subcommittees. Most of the work will be done in the subcommittees. The CAS reports to the EC. The CAS requested more direction and oversight from the EC. Updates were given by subcommittees. There may be need for additional subcommittees to focus on veterans and youth and families.

Mr. Bashe stated that the meeting was good and all the subcommittees are doing well.

Coordinated Assessment – Joann Bjornson

The CoC application submitted by 211 includes a grant request for the coordinated assessment services. The subcommittee is testing a process for collaboratively reviewing available Morris vouchers and prioritizing all individuals in the Morris area who need housing. In addition to the newly won housing first vouchers (50), there are other vouchers available. The biggest barrier continues to be the high cost of apartments.

Mr. Bashe asked when we might see a project plan on paper. Ms. Bjornson said she can prepare a brief report and try to lay out the time frame. This group is meeting once a month at Family Promise. 211 is working toward training staff for when funding becomes available.

Some discussion ensued about the possibility of expanding the State's comprehensive Medicaid waiver to include supportive housing options beyond services to individuals with serious mental illness. Ms. Kelly stated that if they expanded the waiver it probably would be to serve other populations not only those with a mental health diagnosis. Ms. Zydel stated she attended a state HSAC meeting recently where there was discussion about Medicaid paying for some housing and services. DMHAS has contracted to providers for some housing and services for individuals with mental illness but the state is transitioning most of the contracted services to fee for service reimbursement through Medicaid.

Ms. Bjornson said that Bridgeway has expanded its services through Medicaid. Agencies may still be able to bill services through Medicaid and services must be Medicaid eligible. There is a lot of bureaucracy involved. Mr. Bashe asked Ms. Zydel and Ms. Carter to consolidate what they heard about the State waiver at the State HSAC meeting and send it out. Ms. Carter stated that she thinks the committee mentioned there are some state and federal funds that may potentially make it possible to broaden access. Mr. Schwarcz stated that clinical services may be reimbursable under Medicaid but not housing.

Ms. Bjornson asked if there could be a funded county position if the committee could get a grant for a housing locator. Mr. Bashe said he thinks this is appropriate for Russ Hall's committee to look into and asked Mr. Hall to take that on.

Ms. Miciak stated that HUD's fair market rates are out and have been announced. The fair market rate for Morris County is lower. She has drafted a letter to submit. Mr. Bashe asked Ms. Miciak to send the letter to Mr. Bashe and he will forward it to the committee for comments.

HMIS Data Quality – Jenni Briggs

The Data Quality Training will be on Oct. 12 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. This information was emailed and fliers were distributed. The site administrator and anyone involved with data should come to this training. Each agency should send someone especially to the morning session.

Some discussion occurred on the part-time data quality position. This position should require approximately 10 hours a week. The Data Quality Subcommittee will continue to

meet monthly at least for the next year in order to get the SOPs in order. Allison Delcalzo is doing a great job with this committee.

Permanent Housing – Russ Hall

The committee will have its first meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 28 at 1:00 p.m. at MC Affordable Housing. There is a good representation but the committee is open to new members. Mr. Hall will provide written reports and updates.

Mr. Hall went over discussion points for the meeting:

What is the basic purpose(s) of PHSC?

- To facilitate cooperating/coordination among housing/service providers?
- Maximize the effectiveness of existing resources – HCVs, case workers, housing?
- Expand the inventory of available resources?
- Reduce/eliminate chronic homelessness (PIT)?

How will we do it?

- Maintain current resource inventory?
- Work to ensure existing HCV's are fully employed?
- Become an integral part of the coordinated assessment process?
- Act as a communication hub for Morris housing/service providers?

Mr. Hall stated that it's important to keep an inventory of vouchers, who has them and what is available. Mr. Hall is working with Ms. Roberta Strater to get a list of Affordable Housing. Ms. Bruseo stated that there are a lot of families in danger of becoming homeless. Ms. Kelly stated that for HUD programs as long as someone's name is on a lease (even if it's only temporary) they are not considered homeless. Discussion ensued about this.

Ms. Bruseo said they need to decide how to coordinate all with the Coordinated Assessment Committee. Due to fair market rates being so low it is difficult to find apartments. Need to find more landlords willing to take vouchers. It would be good to make a list of landlords willing to take vouchers.

Mr. Hall stated that he thinks a separate list should be made of those in danger of becoming homeless. Ms. Bruseo said that after people leave TRA they often have to start over. There is a lot of difficulty keeping people housed. Mr. Bashe suggested that an OTA person attend PHSC meetings.

2016 CoC EC Nominating Committee – Jeff Bashe

There are currently 16 members on the EC. There are 12 voting members and 4 non-voting members. 9 voting members and 2 non-voting members are the minimum requirement. So far no one has resigned and all appear willing to continue to serve. Some will be ending their 3 year term and have to be re-elected. All non-voting members have to be re-elected as well.

There are some gaps in representation, such as law enforcement. The group discussed the benefits/drawbacks of adding members without drawing conclusions.

The normal procedure would be to elect and vote on a nominating committee. Ms. Zydel stated since there are no vacancies, there is no opportunity right now for new members. She suggested that there be a consensus to continue with current membership. There are other ways to pull people in, for example, through subcommittees. Then there would not be the need for a nominating committee.

Ms. Sly said we discussed staggering people's terms. Ms. Zydel suggested that perhaps some members up for renewal can have a 1 or 2 year term to help the staggering process.

Mr. Bashe stated then it looks like there is no need for a nominating committee. Ms. Zydel suggested that Mr. Bashe come up with a plan for the November meeting and tell folks how many years they will be renewed for. She also suggested that each member be required to chair or serve on one subcommittee.

4. 2016 Priorities and Updates:

2016 CoC Application Status and Schedule – Taissa Kelly

The CoC application was submitted to HUD on September 14. Hope to get a response by December. Ms. Kelly reported that if HUD waits until after the New Year then it will significantly delay execution of contracts.

Ms. Kelly put together a scoring estimate for this year. There are no extra points available. She estimates that the Morris score will be about the same as last year, with 136 points total. She went over the charts and the areas that need the most improvement.

- System Performance – need to set standards, evaluations and come up with strategies. Need to review performance and what needs to be done to improve it.
- Performance & Strategic Planning – need strategies to address the needs of the population. Need to implement strategies and adopt HUD priorities and policies.

Ms. Kelly reported that it should be easy for us to improve the Project Rank and Review area to get full points. The application now includes more items and our scoring tool doesn't reflect all of these items. We need to include more things in the scoring process to get full points. Perhaps we should work on this process now so next time it will be ready for release.

Ms. Zydel stated that when this process first began there was a lot of concern over transparency. The scoring process must occur in a short timeframe and there has been handholding with those applying to help them understand the process. She asked if there is a better way of being transparent and engaging folks without providing an unfair advantage to anyone?

Ms. Sly stated that there are a lot of RFPs that include the scoring tool. Mr. Hall said it was clear that some people followed instructions better than others. Ms. Bjornson stated she thinks more information sharing would be helpful. Ms. Briggs said she thinks an educational forum beforehand would be good. Perhaps this can be done at the CAS meeting.

Ms. Kelly stated that there could be a community forum to discuss HUD priorities and local priorities. There could be a public meeting and a technical assistance session. Mr. Bashe

stated he is not excited about a public meeting. Perhaps the CAS can be used to get the information out. Ms. Zydel said that there seems to be a need for more transparency as agencies applying may not understand the importance of filling out applications correctly. A Technical Assistance session provided in advance could help clarify HUD requirements. No timing was specified.

Mr. Bashe said a work group should look at the scoring tool, the local application, our priority statements, etc. Ms. Zydel offered to chair this group. Ms. Zydel will send an email out to organize a meeting during the first week in November. Ms. Sly, Mr. Schwarcz, Ms. Carter expressed interested in participating in this group.

Mr. Schwarcz said he thinks the committee needs to look at how we are assessing our performance as currently CoC documented performance doesn't reflect all accomplishments. Ms. Miciak stated she thinks the next steps to be worked on are performance strategies and measures. This will require a new sub-committee.

5. Other Business/Systems advocacy

Project Homeless Connect – Laurie Becker/Lou Schwarcz

Mr. Schwarcz stated that Project Homeless connect will be held at St. Peters Church on December 1. This year it will be a challenge since December 1 is also World AIDS Day. Ms. Lisa Falcone has left MHA and the new Director of Homeless Outreach will be Danielle Pera. She has already been working for MHA for five years. Ms. Brown is filing in the interim until Oct. 1 when Ms. Pera will start her new position. There have been some other staffing changes but the hope is that MHA will soon be back to a full staff.

Mr. Schwarcz said the he would like to encourage all to participate in this event. Last year there was weak participation. This year the county has agreed to help, but help is also needed from many others. Ms. Sly suggested that MHA and NJAS talk in regard to their schedules for the day. Ms. Bjornson said help is needed to set up and break down. Mr. Gallow said the Market Street Mission offered to help. Ms. Carpinteri said she will see if the shelter kids can help. Ms. Carpinteri will write an invitation to the providers.

Housing First Consortium Update – Mr. Schwarcz

The Consortium applied to the Department of Consumer Affairs for housing vouchers for the chronically homeless. They were awarded 50 vouchers to share between the five agencies. This is how they tentatively divided the vouchers up:

- MHAMC – 15 Vouchers
- Family Promise – 15 Vouchers
- NJAS – 8 Vouchers
- Homeless Solutions – 2 Vouchers
- Community Hope – 2 Vouchers

This leaves 8 remaining vouchers to be used as needed. The challenge is where to find a one bedroom for \$1,000. Consortium providers are meeting regularly to roll out this project.

Mr. Bashe suggested keeping in touch with Mr. Hall's group to work on new landlord identification. Ms. Sly stated that there needs to be some give and take to house the people that are most vulnerable. She isn't sure she likes the idea of allocating a specific number of vouchers to each agency. Mr. Schwarcz said that no one is tied to these numbers. The numbers will be based on the needs of the clients.

Freeholder Communications –

Mr. Bashe asked what outreach has been done to the Freeholders to get support. Mr. Bashe affordable housing quota. If they can, they prefer not develop new units and use existing housing. Towns have to provide affordable housing so now it might be easier. The CoC could work with the Housing Alliance on this. Mr. Bashe said perhaps they can have a strategy session and work to get on the Freeholder calendar.

Other –

Mr. Hall stated that the Interfaith Food Pantry has approved a strategic partnership with food pantries around the county. The IFP now has a delivery van to bring food to the outer areas of Morris County, areas where there is high need. The CoC EC agreed that Budd Lake, Mt. Olive, Netcong and Butler are the most needed places for food delivery. In those areas transportation is difficult.

Ms. Bjornson mentioned the current status of the CHAMPS program at Ruth Davis Drive, Parsippany. This has been a 12-year collaborative of Comprehensive Behavioral Health (CBHC) and Community Hope, funded by the State and with the housing provided by the County on property near Greystone Hospital. There are eight houses with five residents in each house and an additional house used for day services. Ms. Carpinteri stated that at CBHC's initiation, the partnership with Community Hope was dissolved as of August 1. This action was a violation of the County lease. The CHAMPS program will be relocated when CBHC finds appropriate housing for the individuals served.

Ms. Carpinteri stated the county has sent out Request for Conceptual Letters of Interest to local non-profit agencies regarding the potential availability of the 9 homes. The goal of the county is to continue to offer these homes to individuals served by the local continuum of human services. Letters of Interest are due by Oct. 14. Once letters are received, the Chairs of each Freeholder Appointed advisory committee will review and provide recommendations to the Department Director. Letters of interest can be for separate application or for a joint application.

Adjournment –

Motion to close the meeting was made by Ms. Nancy Magee and seconded by Mr. Russ Hall. Meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.