

**Morris County Continuum of Care (CoC) Executive Committee**  
**March 27, 2014**  
**Meeting Notes**

**Present:**

**Members:** Jeffrey Bashe, HSAC; Joan Bruseo, OTA; Joseph Gallow, Consumer Advocate; Jodi Miciak, United Way; Patrice Picard, Cornerstone Family; Frank Pinto, Morris County Dept. Human Services; David Scott, Market Street Mission and Bill Byrnes, F.M. Kirby Foundation.

**Ex-Officio Members:** Betsey Hall, Homeless Solutions; Lou Schwarcz, Mental Health Association, Patty Sly, JBWS and Mike Armstrong, Community Hope.

**Guests:** Laurie Litt, NJAS; Joann Bjornson, Family Promise, MC; Taiisa Kelly and Katelyn Cunningham, Monarch.

**Staff:** Laurie Becker and Shelia Carter, Morris County Human Services

**Absent:** Member/Chairperson, Rebekka Zydel, Child & Family Resources

1. In Rebekka Zydel's absence, Vice-Chair Jodi Miciak opened the meeting with welcomes and introductions. Members approved the February 27 meeting notes with one abstention from Bill Byrnes.
  
2. Status of HUD CoC Priorities
  - a. Coordinated Assessment—Joann Bjornson is heading up the CoC subcommittee that is working on this project and gave a report on status: The subcommittee is working on a tool that can serve as a common "face sheet" for agency assessment documents. This strategy recognizes the reality that each agency has its own assessment requirements while gathering common case information that will assist with service provision and referral needs. To best get this project done, the subcommittee will development the assessment template that will "inform" what the process is for coordinated utilization.

Goal: To pilot the first coordinated assessment by June 2014 with a skeleton draft of related policies and procedures.

Discussion points:

- Level of information shared; what are the current client identifiers;
- Creation of a common assessment tool can take years to work out the kinks; the first draft will be considered a "testing tool".
- The next CoC funding application is due sometime in spring 2015; this is the absolute deadline completion and submission of the coordinated assessment tool.

Next steps: CoC subcommittee will meet on April 8 to work on assessment document; Joann will bring the document to the next Executive Committee meeting for approval.

- b. Performance Standards—Jodi reported on behalf of the CoC Committee. The (former) CEAS, now CoC, has been working to draft standards since last summer. The current task of all CoC providers is to review internal data on service provision related to agency performance measures. The CoC will review this collective data and consider it when drafting CoC standards.

Discussion points:

- What programs are included? Veterans/Safe Haven/emergency shelter, etc?
- How to factor in length of stay when program elements and requirements vary?
- Balance the importance of reporting successful outcomes, what services are actually needed locally with what is expected from HUD.

Next steps:

- Measure current working performance standards to HUD standards, look for consistencies and focus on where we can improve as a system.
- The CoC will make a progress report on this project at the next Executive Committee meeting.

- c. Policies and Procedures

Taiisa Kelly, Monarch, provided guidance on what HUD expects CoC's to include in policies and procedures.

- By-laws are a good start but need more detail.
- What is funding process?
- Planning process?
- CoC application process?

Discussion points:

- Every service provider that receives funding must have policies and procedures in place. Why reinvent the wheel?
- Why not use State standards?

Next steps:

- Form an ad hoc committee to review current RFP, other relevant information to potentially incorporate into CoC policy and procedures.
- Jodi, Jeff Bashe and Bill Byrnes will work on this project and report back at next meeting.

3. Homeless Plan

The Plan was updated in a few areas, including NJ Aids Services and JBWS data. The only remaining information to be added is DV emergency shelter data.

Discussion points:

- Patty Sly suggested that key elements are missing such as: the language barrier to serving Latinos and the challenges of finding affordable housing due to the uniqueness of Morris County. She also cited a problem with the wording on page 28 specific to “restructuring the shelter system to

better serve women and children"... The committee agreed that the wording will be changed to "increase access to the shelter system ...

- Funding advocacy missing.
- Overall, the plan does not capture the positive side of service provision and documented growth and successes.

Next steps:

- If possible, add introduction tailored to the uniqueness of the Morris County community (Lou S and Patty S)
- Add CoC agency list
- Add Executive Committee names and affiliations
- Add DV stats per above
- Review document for typos (Patty Sly)

Given HUD's requirement that the plan be submitted during the current CoC application process, all agreed to submit the plan with the above edits as soon as possible.

The Executive Committee unanimously voted to accept the Homeless Plan with above revisions, understanding that it is a working document subject to revisions over time to better align with the Morris County CoC.

4. CoC application process

Taiisa reported projected timelines:

- Notification on the 2013 CoC applications, April/May 2014.
- 2014 CoC application out, June/July

5. Systems advocacy on homeless services—All agreed that it is important to include successes in planning documents on an ongoing basis.

6. Other Business: Frank Pinto reported on the March 26<sup>th</sup> Freeholder meeting, saying that several members of the public spoke out against some of the budgeted items in the Human Services budget. He encouraged ongoing attendance by providers, board members, seniors, other human service advocates to remind the Freeholders of the critical need for these services.

Next steps:

Executive committee members are on board to continue the "community benefit organizations" initiative and will encourage attendance per Frank's request.

**Next meeting: May 22, 3 p.m.**

Agenda items:

- Updates on Coordinated Assessment, Performance Standards, Policies and Procedures
- Revisiting non-voting Executive Committee membership per the by laws.
- Systems advocacy and funding coordination