

Morris County Continuum of Care (CoC) Executive Committee Meeting
November 30, 2017
MCDHS – 1 Medical Drive, Morris Plains

Meeting began at 10:05 a.m.

Voting Members Present:

Mike Armstrong, Community Hope; Jeffrey Bashe, Community Rep.; Terry Connolly, Community Soup Kitchen; Joe Gallo, Market Street Mission; Russ Hall, Housing Alliance of MC; Nancy Magee, Community Foundation of NJ; Jodi Miciak, United Way of NNJ and David Scott, Market Street Mission.

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Niamh Barker, Family Promise; Joann Bjornson, Family Promise; Janice Kaniewski, NJ211 and Meagan Quinn, MC Office of Temporary Assistance.

Voting Members Absent:

Kesha Moore, Drew University; Gwen Rippey, Atlantic Health and Rebekka Zydel, Child & Family Resources.

Ex-Officio Members Absent:

Rose Brown, MHA of Essex & Morris; Patty Sly, JBWS; Dan McGuire, Homeless Solutions.

Staff and Consultants Present:

Shelia Carter, Patricia Mocariski, Morris County Human Services and Jay Everett, Monarch Housing.

1. Welcome and Introductions

All were welcomed and introductions were made.

2. Approval of Sept. 28 minutes

Mr. Bashe asked for the approval of the August 10 minutes. Mr. Hall made a motion to approve the Sept. 28 minutes and Ms. Magee seconded the motion. All were in favor with no opposition and no abstention.

3. Updates on Current Items

2018 EC Membership Update/Vote & Needs Analysis Plan – Mr. Bashe

All current members have agreed to stay on. Mr. Bashe spoke to Sheriff Gannon and it looks like they may get someone from his office to serve on the CAS and the EC. Also discussed getting representation from Legal Services, Workforce Development Board, schools and/or the board of education. Ms. Patty Sly mentioned she would be leaving JBWS and Mr Bashe suggested we hold an ex-officio spot for her replacement.

Discussion about getting further information from Bridging the Gap group. They are doing their own PIT survey in November. Their survey brings in the youth component.

(Note: I do not remember this. What was the context?)

PIT Plan Update/Approval - Ms. Carter

The work group created an addendum to the questionnaire regarding those that come to Morris from out of county. The PIT subcommittee will have an email conversation and phone call about potential additional questions. The committee agreed that questions about LGBT status and youth homelessness be added. There was discussion about the one day versus the seven-day PIT survey. Ms. Bjornson stated that it makes sense to do the seven-day survey if it would increase the accuracy of the count. An accurate count is important for analysis and planning purposes.

Mr. Everett stated that if the numbers go up HUD would dock us. It will hurt us even if we explain. It would be better if we had a lower count. HUD could take away money if we have a higher count. HUD does ask about methodology and it is possible that we will get points for increasing the accuracy of the count. Mr. Everett and Mr. Bashe feel it would be good to try a seven-day count. Mr. Bashe asked who was in favor of doing the seven-day count this year. Six were in favor and two members were against the seven-day count, so the seven-day survey would be done.

Ms. Carter handed out materials. Some agencies may not use the paper survey and can get the information from HMIS. Other agencies must do paper surveys that are not in HMIS. The addendum will be in the form of paper surveys for all. It can't be put in HMIS.

Question about whether the police stations are included in the count. This will be checked out. If the police are to be included, there needs to be a code on the second page or their responses can't go into the general street count.

Ms. Miciak said someone suggested talking to the building departments in town. They are aware of empty houses and houses for sale that may be used by homeless. Perhaps MHA outreach can call the police and building departments. Ms. Bjornson said that maybe next year the committee could look further at the gaps. The Soup Kitchen should be added to the paper survey and leave the rest as is.

Code Blue Process Update - Mr. Bashe

At a meeting a few weeks ago, there was discussion about Morris County not having a Code Blue plan. Morristown and Dover reached the number of homeless that mandates the county have a plan. Ms. Becker talked to Mr. Jeff Paul, Emergency Management. At the next meeting, Ms. Carpinteri will give an update. Thanks to those that attended the meeting. Many good ideas came out of the meeting.

Project Homeless Connect – Mr. Bashe

Mr. Bashe said that MHA coordinates this event. The agency turnout was great but this year the client turnout seemed low. There is a need to figure out the value of this event and whether it warrants all the effort entailed. Perhaps we should look at soup kitchens, shelters and such that help folks on a daily basis.

DCA'S Housing First Consortium – Mr. Bashe

There are 48 out of 50 vouchers allocated and 20 out of 22 housed. DCA responsiveness is still an issue, but hoping to be able to address this with the new administration. Ms. Sheila Oliver is HUD's new housing partner as well as the Lieutenant Governor. Hoping to meet with her at some point to discuss things.

Coordinated Assessment – Review/Approve Start-Up Approach and Plan – Ms. Bjornson

Minutes from the Dec. meeting were distributed. They are hoping to go live with the Coordinated Assessment in the fall but there is a lot more they need to know. The biggest delay is getting the assessment tool into HMIS. They are working on this, however, it is more work than they expected.

There are many people on the waiting list (about 100). In January 2018, the Coordinated Entry system will be in place starting with NJ211. The tool is finalized. A copy will be emailed to all.

Mr. Bashe stated that a NJ211 representative needs to go to the Data Quality meetings. OTA cleaned up some of the data entered by NJ211. NJ211 needs to do a little better with data. They should attend the Data Quality meetings to help them understand how to make the data more accurate. NJ211 has agreed to start attending meetings.

Ms. Janice Kaniewski stated that NJ211 has two grants from the continuum. They have licenses with HMIS under OTA. However, HUD wants them to get their own license for HMIS. They will have to know how to enter information correctly. The Data Quality meetings will help them. Mr. Bashe stated that it will be a slow roll out and is an intricate process. The subcommittee did a lot of work to make this happen. There were monthly meetings, more recently semi-monthly meetings, other meetings and phone calls. Much time was spent on this and there are still unresolved issues. Mr. Everett has been a big help.

Mr. Armstrong will talk to Ms. Bjornson about Community Hope's Hotline. He has questions for Mr. Everett and/or Ms. Bjornson. Ms. Miciak is writing up the policies and procedures. The MOUs are almost done. Further discussion ensued.

4. Work Item – 2018 System Performance Monitoring & Strategic Plan Update – Mr. Bashe/Ms. Miciak

EC Goal – Set Clearer Priorities for 2018 application cycle; Set Basis for Update of 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness – General Planning Approach and Timetable Discussion

Mr. Bashe stated during the first half of the year the committee will work on how to update our strategic plans. The county has a 10 Year to End Homelessness Plan. Monarch wrote it. It is really a wish list. There is also a 5 Year Consolidated Plan. HUD requires the county do both of these. Mr. Bashe want us to review and update the 10 year plan based on the improved data we now have in HMIS and based on our improved understanding of our service needs. More discussion to follow at next EC meeting.

Mr. Bashe asked if the CoC is effectively coordinating with HUD's ESG grant stream as mandated by HUD. Mr. Everett stated the CoC is doing what is needed for HUD regarding coordination with Community Development (ESG). All ESG grants are monitored and administered by the same county officials. ESG grants must be managed through government entities. Mr. Bashe will discuss this further with the County.

Role of CAS/DQSC and the EC

Making CAS an effective body is a critical goal for the CoC. Mr. Bashe stated that Ms. Niamh Barker and Ms. Allison Delcalzo will co-chair this committee. Attendance has been improving and more senior staff is attending. The CAS should be a clearinghouse for new ideas and new thoughts related to monitoring and improving services for the homeless. This will be a key body in overall system performance monitoring. Ms. Miciak stated having good quality information is helpful, and CAS will analyze HMIS and other data and identify problems and recommendations to bring to the EC.

5. Committee/Sub-Committee Reports - CAS

Ms. Barker said there was a presentation from Single Stop at the CAS meeting. Single Stop is a nonprofit organization that visits Our Promise and the Soup Kitchen and does benefits screening. From January until now, they have screened 227 clients and vastly increased access to benefits and available funding. All need to spread the word and make Single Stop available to more folks.

Permanent Housing –

Mr. Russ Hall stated the Permanent Housing Subcommittee is focused on starting a countywide landlord recognition program. They are partnering with the county DHS, but progress has been slow. Hoping to get something underway in 2018, and we see this as part of an affordable housing push to be part of the Morris County Strategic Plan. The landlord survey at Drew is moving ahead a little slower than anticipated.

Ms. Bjornson stated that they focused on realtors and property managers since they are the gatekeepers for landlords. The subcommittee is talking about hosting a training and breakfast for them. Ms. Carpinteri offered the space for this training. Mr. Hall said the next step is for the subcommittee to meet with the Director of Human Services and brainstorm on landlord support.

Mr. Bjornson stated that some board members were at the public forum meeting last night and spoke about the Strategic Plan for the County. They discussed poverty, debt, lack of

housing and high cost of living. They talked about strengths and weaknesses in our county. There were Freeholders there and they are listening and hearing what we are saying.

HMIS Data Quality

Mr. Bashe stated the Data Quality group is finalizing their policies and procedures. The Executive Committee will have to approve. The Data Quality group has done a great job and will continue to spend time on data quality and performance data. Meetings will be approximately every other month beginning early 2018. Ms. Bjornson stated she goes to the HMIS Advisory Committee meetings and our Data Quality group is the model for the state. Many communities don't have the Coordinated Entry yet.

Ms. Niamh Barker stated that there will be periodic reviews of HMIS data at both the CAS and EC. The data should drive the CAS agenda and lead to that group doing the major brainstorming on the areas of weakness. Mr. Bashe stated the EC should have formal reviews at least two times a year. There needs to be plan to update the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness. Also, need a clear set of priorities to send out to the agencies before the 2018 CoC application process begins. This includes the approach to THP and Safe Haven. The committee must be sure the Morris County Strategic Plan team hears the CoC voice.

Veterans Homelessness Network – Mr. Armstrong

They continue to meet. Mr. Bashe would like to see them a more formal part of the overall program.

Bridging the Gap Network – Youth Homelessness – Ms. Miciak

Ms. Miciak stated they are looking at assessing homeless from 18-24 years old. Zufall meet with Dr. Bishop and they are working on this. They are making progress and working on specific considerations for young adults for the Coordinated Entry. Ms. Bjornson stated if a person is a youth or a senior they have extra vulnerability and are put higher on the housing list.

Other

Mr. Bashe stated the committee will have to do on site project performance monitoring from February to April. Mr. Everett will put together a plan for onsite program reviews to be presented at the January EC meeting. Anyone interested in participating in site reviews should email Mr. Bashe. There are 17 agencies and 12 programs that need to be monitored. Only voting members can attend the onsite program reviews.

Mr. Everett asked Mr. Armstrong if Community Hope needs a letter of support for SSVP housing. Mr. Armstrong stated that Ms. Stivers is working on the sample letter of support for SSVP housing. Mr. Bashe asked for the committee's approval to send a support letter for Community Hope for SSVP housing. All were in favor.

Adjournment –

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.