

CoC Governing Board Meeting Minutes
April 24, 2020
Approved: May 28, 2020

Call to Order:

The CoC Governing Board Meeting was held on April 24, 2020 via Zoom. It began at 10:01am and was facilitated by Chair, Kathryn Firmin-Sellers with Branden Lewis and Erin Nixon taking minutes.

Attendees:

Board Members in attendance: Stacy Lowry, Warren Wooten, Kathryn Firmin-Sellers, Tchernavia Montgomery, Dennis LaCaria, Deronda Metz, Stephen McQueen, Patrick Hayes, Aleasha Eaves, Maya Marshall, Hope Marshall, Rodney Tucker, Anthony Ryback, Lashieka Hardin, Lily Haken, Sonia Jenkins, Timica Melvin

Board Members not in attendance: N/A

Guests in attendance: Jane Shutt (Pineville Neighbors Place), Sandy Buck (Catholic Charities Diocese of Charlotte), Megan Coffey (Mecklenburg County CSS), Courtney LaCaria (Mecklenburg County CSS), Mary Ann Priester (Mecklenburg County CSS), Kim Sanders (Mecklenburg County CSS), Tawanna Denmark (Carolinas Care Partnership), Shamika Agbeviade (Mecklenburg County CSS), Kecia Robinson (VA), Kenya Dawson (Mecklenburg County CSS), Renee Johnson (City Council), Karen Pelletier (Mecklenburg County CSS), James Scearcy (Promise Resource Network), Daniel Crow (Supportive Housing Communities), Shannon Ferrar (Carolinas Care Partnership), Jeanelle Perry, James Lee, Carrie Christian (Families Forward Charlotte), Katie Church (Urban Ministry Center/Men's Shelter of Charlotte), Patricia Bryant (Cardinal Innovations)

- No public comments received. (Erin)
- Motion: Approve the March minutes. (Stephen McQueen made motion; Deronda Metz second)
Meeting minutes approved.

COVID-19 Response:

What are we seeing in our homeless population in response to COVID-19?

Deronda Metz (Salvation Army Center of Hope): We had this capacity challenge before COVID-19. Thankful for the hotels that have become available. Sees our system trying to get going again. Challenge is not having anything in place for the people who are trying to come into the system. How will we handle the new homeless population, trying to keep them out of the system.

Patrick Hayes (Veterans Bridge Home): Biggest concern is what happens in June/July with people coming out of this with really high hotel and rent balances.

Karen Pelletier (Mecklenburg County CSS): People are calling 211 that are facing eviction from the hotels. As a community, we are following up with those that are calling 211, those that have a very large bill that they are accruing, or people who are paying. These people are being connected to a case manager and the case managers are working with those families/individuals to connect them to resources. Today, we are kicking off a response with funding from Social Serve. Able to provide flexible

funding. Referrals will be made to Social Serve. Social Serve has one person dedicated to this project. It will not be Social Serves responsibility to case manage everyone. This is money from the COVID-19 response fund. Employment is not a requirement for assistance. Clients should have a long term plan.

Kathryn Firmin-Sellers (United Way of Central Carolinas): Shelter space is limited. Learning more about the population that was stable, but have now loss income and/or resources. What about the population that has not yet hit the homeless system that were piecing things together but now that is not working for them any longer.

Tchernavia Montgomery (Crisis Assistance Ministry): 1300 families have been helped to remain in their hotel. \$700,000 have been spent. Have seen a decrease in requests for assistance since Attorney General guidance came out. On the verge of rolling out an electronic system for referrals. Will reach out to partner agencies soon and will be taking on new partner agencies as well. Early on, there was no criteria for hotel assistance, new criteria has come out 1. sole place of residence, 2. employment—or as of 2/15, experienced decrease in hours, apply for unemployment, 3. apply for SNAP benefits

Kathryn: Do we, the board, have an interest in beginning to shape how the funding is used? How can we be sure that as we are making those decisions we are using a racial equity lens? What is most important to tackle?

Deronda: We should set some guidelines as a CoC about what is needed, be inclusive, but look at program criteria. Racial equity—what are individual agencies doing to address racial equity.

Stephen McQueen (Urban Ministry Center/Men's Shelter of Charlotte): How as a community do we prioritize urgent issues? How can we understand, as a group, with things that are limited? This isn't going to go away like Lake Arbor, it's going to continue.

Patrick: CE is a great place to start. We already have the VI-SPDAT in placed, coupled with diversion conversations. Use the tools we already have to assess people. Maybe look at new prioritization tools.

Stacy Lowry (Mecklenburg County CSS): We may need to start thinking more broadly. How will we move forward with rehousing. We might need to go back to CE and see how we prioritize, or do we have a new focus with rehousing and look broader. Worth considering a discussion, do we do something different or do we fit it in with what we're already doing. Our community is asking for FEMA dollars, there are specific parameters around the use. FEMA dollars won't address people who are living in hotels and can know longer pay. Mecklenburg County will be submitting a FEMA application. FEMA dollars are open to non-profits as well.

Erin Nixon (Mecklenburg County CSS): How do we look at the funding that is coming into our community, how do we apply that to gaps in our community? Ensure no duplication is happening. What data would the board want to see to inform that discussion?

Kathryn: Are we as a board interested in convening a group? Yes. What data do we need to inform this?

Renee Johnson (City Council): Important to see data and that it is being shared. There should be a coordinated focus on the evictions. Work together to solve the problem and address these needs. Website that lists the members of the Recovery Task Force.

Courtney LaCaria (Mecklenburg County CSS): As a result of COVID-19, we've been able to put a number on those in hotels. It doesn't mean these people weren't already experiencing homelessness. COVID-19 has been able to shine a light on this. Advocate for more housing—quantify the number of housing solutions we need. CEOC—role is to ensure access, prioritize housing assistance across the CoC. COVID-19 Hub has been created on dashboard website with resources and information.

Stacy: City has a new Recovery Task Force. Who is on the task force? Is there a way to connect the CoC work with the City work? Kathryn or Patrick may need to be on the task force.

Deronda: Is on the Recovery Task Force. It's bigger than homelessness. Involves housing development partners as well. Deronda was asked to be on the Task Force by Councilmember Malcolm Graham. She is the only homeless provider on the Task Force.

Kathryn: What is the goal of the City's Recovery Task Force? What is the goal of the proposed Rehousing group? Reach out to the leader of the Recovery Task Force. We all agree we need to identify the gaps.

Patrick: Area of overlap is the prevention work. CoC role should include being at the table to provide expertise. We should use this as an opportunity to build bridges and collaborations. We should be at the table to have conversations about prioritizations.

Warren Wooten (City of Charlotte): Not directly involved with the Recovery Task Force. This group's (CoC board) input is extremely important. Deronda is a great representative of the group. There is a lot of uncertainty about the additional funding that is coming down. Hopeful that there will be additional funds. Important to keep an eye on how things are changing. Identifying gaps is really important.

Timica Melvin (Inlivian): One of the gaps that she sees is missing is communication among clients. Clients are missing out on important information being shared by Inlivian in order to be housed. Funding for post office boxes would be helpful.

Mary Ann Priester (Mecklenburg County CSS): CEOC is beginning to look at updating prioritization for CE system.

Stacy: Supports Mary Ann's statement about the work staying with CEOC if they have already started the work.

Renee: Make sure the data is being shared since there is representation at the table of the City's Recovery Task Force.

Kathryn: Agreed that CEOC continue the process (all agreed).

Membership/Nominating Committee (Erin)

Current roster as of April 17, 2020 (see materials provided). Patrick is the Chair of the committee. The committee should work to fill the 2 vacant board seats (Faith Based Organization and Philanthropic Partner) and recruit new members to the CoC. Make sure that all voices are heard. Erin and Branden can work with Patrick to get the committee started.

Patrick: Transitional Housing partners that serve women are missing (YWCA, Catherine's House, etc.)

Equity & Inclusion Committee (Branden)

UNCC is doing an evaluation on our Coordinated Entry system, which is a HUD requirement. This evaluation will include looking at racial disparities in our CE system.

Mecklenburg County has 2 planning grants. One will focus on developing a prevention framework for our system (work will begin in May 2020). The other has multiple priorities that were developed via a community input process. A large priority in the grant is looking at our homeless services system from a racial equity lens. We reached out to 2 consultants about this work. Community Solutions currently works with our system in the Built for Zero effort, which works to end Veteran homelessness and they also provide TA around chronic homelessness. They are developing capacity to be able to do this work, but don't yet have the framework established. Our current TA provider offered to have monthly phone calls to provide support around the work. The second consultant we reached out to is C4 Innovations who is known for doing this work with organizations and homeless systems. Their proposal was included in the meeting materials.

Kathryn: Is C4 who Mark Donnes used to work for who is responsible for many reports on racial equity and disparity? Yes.

Dennis: how were these providers chosen? Google and we reached out to ones we knew do the work. We are open to other suggestions.

Suggestion of a consultant in Greensboro that does similar work.

Board agreed to allow Equity & Inclusion Committee to decide if there should be a RFP process or if we should go with C4.

Equity & Inclusion committee will meet for the first time in May

Other Business:

Action taken by vote via email: A letter of support request was submitted to the CoC Collaborative Applicant by Catholic Charities Diocese of Charlotte for the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP). The request for the letter of support was approved by email on April 15, 2020 by the Governing Board, with 14 votes in favor of providing the letter of support, 0 votes not in support and 3 abstained. The letter of support was signed by the Chair of the Governing Board and submitted to Catholic Charities Diocese of Charlotte.

Setting meeting schedule for CoC members. This should be determined by the Board. Suggested by Stephen that we have a CoC membership meeting in August.

Next meeting: May 28, 2020, 2:00pm-4:00pm , location TBD

Meeting adjourned at 11:32am (Patrick moved; Stephen second)

Submitted by Branden Lewis and Erin Nixon