

Council to End Homelessness in Durham • August 18, 2016, 10:00-11:30am

Location: Families Moving Forward, 300 N. Queen St, Durham, NC 27701

Attendance:

Amanda Sale (Families Moving Forward), Ann Tropiano (FMF), Cynthia Harris (HFNH), Darius Hunt (Healing with CAARE, Inc.), Doneicia Johnson (Durham VA – HUD VASH), Fred Stoppelkamp (UMD), Gudrun Parmer (DCo CJRC), Janet Xiao (CEF), Jennifer Goodrich (UMD), Joyce Stancil Williams (CASA), Lloyd Schmeidler (City of Durham), Maria Davis Dorsey (DDI), Matt Schnars (City of Durham), Melissa Oberrath (Freedom and Hope Center), Melody Marshall (Durham Public Schools), Nigel Brown (HFNH), Olive Joyner (HFNH), Randy S. Oberrath (Freedom and Hope Center), Robin Henry (VoA), Sheldon Mitchell (UMD), Stephanie Williams (Alliance BHC), Sterling Hooker (Freedom and Hope Center), Valaria Brown (Alliance BHC)

Welcome and Call to Order: Olive called the meeting to order at 10:02am. The group shared introductions.

Valaria made a motion to approve the June meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by **Lloyd**, and passed.

Janet Xiao, Community Empowerment Fund

Debrief – Mayor’s Landlord Roundtable

- Janet shared an overview of the event, which had so much support from CoC agencies and the larger community!
- The group shared reflections and feedback:
 - Lots of affirmations were shared about the event! The group noted that landlords provided valuable information, that many landlords expressed being on the fence (and hopefully were able to see Mr. Scott’s implementation of immediate changes), that the engagement of elected officials was crucial, and that the facilitators/planning team did a good job of pulling everything together.
 - The group shared that this is a crucial opportunity to continue building partnerships and engagement with the DHA, which is a shift. We were glad that DHA is approaching this with a spirit of partnership.
 - The group noted that this event was really tailored towards the DHA. We shared a desire for something tailored to programs like Rapid Rehousing, and also recognition that landlord engagement efforts shouldn’t be limited just to housing vouchers and the DHA.
 - The group spoke about Rapid Rehousing (RR) and larger system design:
 - We also have the opportunity to use Rapid Rehousing also serving as bridge funds for the HCV. RR figured out how to leverage/maximize funds from City and pair it with HCV program, using progressive engagement practices.
 - Also affirmed the success of implementing diversion program tactics.
 - Question about HCV eligibility criteria: does everyone feel that the qualifiers on the HCV application are the main things we use? Are there added qualifiers that we should consider on an individual basis?
 - Nicole (diversion) asks additional questions to ask people about possible solutions and things that will assist them outside of the voucher. She helps

- promote some planning/strategizing, and funding lower-cost alternatives to address the need.
 - Lloyd and Matt have been working with DHA to consider relaxing eligibility criteria, such that we would have more people who would be eligible. This is a recommendation that they'll be making.
 - The benefit of organizations like Kingdom Life: you can continue working with people after they move in anyway, which is a great public-private partnership. With private resources, we can add supportive services that are needed for chronically homeless individuals, which is crucial and aren't able to be provided by other organizations.
 - Kingdom Life mainly works with people who are chronically homeless and unsheltered, and need more than just the housing. Need to move into a new lifestyle.
 - Generally, our first line for chronically homeless people is to make available CoC-funded PSH.
- Next steps & Group Comments:
 - Janet will send out a follow-up email to the event; landlords will get invitation to join.
 - In upcoming months:
 - Landlords who join will receive access to phone line
 - Voucher-holder listening session
 - Set up snapshot-style infographics for landlords re: supportive services, one for each agency
 - Carried forward by a governing body, including Mr. Scott + housing non-profits + landlords + voucher-holders.
 - Q: Supportive services: most of our agencies provide some case management and support. The bigger picture is that regular voucher-users don't have that. The challenge is to think of private/other resources for how to fund and support those supportive services, which may come in the form of people that we have at the table. But it will have to be intentional and direct. The bigger issue for this communal problem to be resolved is we've got to identify support services for regular DHA clients. There's a lot of talk about whether or not Medicaid resources can be used for supportive services as an option for that community. So, conversations are being had that could be a solution to a national issue.
 - Q: Has there been a change on DHA's policy re: criminal backgrounds?
 - Lloyd introduced Gudrun Parmer, director of CJRC, which provides services to adults in the criminal justice system. Work with them from entry to exit in the system.
 - What drives the screening out/in of applicants is the Administrative Plan, a new one will begin at the end of Sept. HUD is going to expect a deeper involvement from Housing Authorities in the CoC, so our voices will be more important to the DHA.

- Q: Can we pull together a coordinated response, making sure that the main concern about criminal backgrounds is on one list that we're submitting to DHA?
 - Lloyd will be communicating the concerns that were summarized at the ED meeting on Tuesday.
 - Wouldn't be a bad idea if CEHD could send in an official question about the Administrative Plan, and what the opportunities are for CEHD to give input.
 - Janet will follow-up with an email question to invite community agencies to share their concerns about the DHA Administrative Plan:
 - Want to communicate (a) continue to want the 225 vouchers, we're focusing on vetting them and making sure we have good clients; (b) understand that getting the voucher is 20% of the challenge, that getting the landlord is the major concerns – we need to think about criminal backgrounds as well.
 - This links up to the conversation about scaling supportive services: what do we mean? What are people hearing? There are two categories: (1) client-side, (2) non-client-side – landlord – is just as important. Figure out ways to parse those out so that not one person is doing both. It's hard to do both (supporting the tenant and landlord), and everyone is doing both now.

Fred Stoppelkamp, Urban Ministries of Durham & Homeless Services Advisory Committee

CoC Housing Choice Vouchers Update

- The Housing Results Team had been vetting the CoC applications, in order to screen those applications. A lot of CoC applications came in with red flags on them. If the referral gets denied by the DHA, then we lose that referral opportunity. That was not the original mission of the Housing Results Team.
 - Who is sending in applications: Open Table Ministries, the VA, Healing with CAARE, health agencies etc.
 - If you didn't get assigned vouchers, this is the way for you to skip the HCV waitlist and go straight to an immediate referral
- We're going to create a new committee (CoC Referral Committee) that will do this vetting, instead of the HRT. I will announce this at HSAC on Wed. If this is something you're interested in or if you have a staffmember who might be interested, let Fred know. We need at least 4-5 on this committee.
- How it works:
 - Applications are uploaded onto the secure website
 - Applications go to Community Development, who then sends it out to the team
 - You review applications on your own, and the team meets once a month to review them as a team.
 - Commitment: 1 hour/month

- Q: How many vouchers are left?
 - A: We've referred 10-12, all who have been referred have been awarded a voucher
 - Maybe this committee could do some follow-up
- Q: This team would meet prior to the care review meeting?
 - A: They are separate processes! Generally, care review meetings focus on the chronically homeless, and Alliance would provide their voucher
- Everybody's talking about there not being enough affordable housing. This is not a Durham issue, this is a national issue. HUD is catching up in acknowledging what the real issues are, and possibly relaxing some of their CoC regulations to consider that we have an affordability issue.
- One thing to remind people of: HUD relaxed the rule around using PSH funding within your particular county only. They recognize that in certain communities, affordable housing is not possible, so they have relaxed the rule to let you go to neighboring counties.
 - eg. If someone has a HCV from Durham Housing Authority and couldn't find something affordable in Durham, and wanted to move to Burlington, they could use their voucher to do that.
 - On the flip side, you have to move them to a county where supportive services are available. Rural counties may not have robust supportive services or public transportation.
 - This has not changed for ESG

Olive Joyner, Housing for New Hope & **Matt Schnars**, City of Durham Community Development
Reflections on NAEH

- Who was able to attend from our community? HNH staff and Matt Schnars
- Olive's reflections:
 - It was my first time going to NAEH. I was encouraged to hear and see what other people and agencies are doing across the country. Some are doing exciting, innovative things, working on some of the issues we talked about today—eg. aligning Medicaid to provide supportive services (eg. to voucher-holders who don't come with supportive services). They did an entire track on that subject alone!
 - One specific thing that stood out is the concept of shifting how we think about our challenge. Not just seeing the housing piece as the challenge/asset, but to step back and see our people as the assets, and how we invest in them. This is a shift, because we're all so busy trying to get that place, but you've got to have a parallel track and begin to see that people are our biggest assets. We've got to begin to refocus on pouring our resources into that arena. I was particularly struck by the "Moving Forward Initiative": the concept is to do just that. We want to make sure that we're not creating a system of dependency.
 - CT found a way, by partnering with their Housing Authority, to find a way to make that happen for people who are ready. My question is: what would that look like for us in Durham?
 - Eg. Is it possible that, at some point, our folks in PSH be a priority for DHA for a HCV, so they're not doubling-up on the funds, but moving that person

- responsibly from care to something that's permanent. Because that financial resource is there, around housing, they'll be fine.
 - I was encouraged that ideas can work! It was good to be in a setting to hear that it really is working in other places, and can we bring those things to Durham.
- Matt's reflections:
 - The general theme is that things are moving towards more deeper collaboration. There were sessions led by VA staff, Dept of Justice representatives, there was a growing emphasis on youth, there was involvement from Dept. of Health and Human Services. Folks interfaced on a higher level, which means that things are going to trickle down in a meaningful way.
 - We have a lot of key players that are the "trickle-down" representatives from those federal departments at our table.
 - Information/using data now permeates the whole conference. To the extent that we can build on what we've done, that would be powerful! HUD's message was: "we're all in."
- Nigel's reflections:
 - This showed me that City of Durham is still on the cutting edge of making things happen. One of the sessions really mirrored Unlocking Doors—a collaborative out of Fairfax County. They went through the phases that we've already seen from June 30th—getting landlords' take on things and setting up a system. Now, they're moving into their second phase, just as we are.
 - Maybe we can reach out to Fairfax County. Share ideas, snowball and collaborate on the ideas that we're doing.
 - Olive: My hope is that Durham will be at some of those discussions and that some of you will be some of those panelists, because we've been doing work for a really long time. We've learned a lot that we can share.
 - Matt: on the Housing Authority collaboration/partnership, still have a lot of things to work on. My supervisor was invited by HUD to a roundtable discussion, sharing how you and Housing Authority in your area have collaborated. Takes place in September.
- Cynthia's reflections:
 - Attended "Challenges and Rewards of Shifting from Permanent Housing Program to Rapid Rehousing." Learned about entry into transitional housing: there needs to be the notion that there will be a housing plan developed, deadlines, and excitement about the idea of moving out. Don't be afraid of raising expectations.
 - They also talked about assigning each family a circle of support once they come into transitional housing to work with them steadily.
 - It made me realize that HNH's rehousing team will have to do some things differently. Eg. Rapid Rehousing is going to hold on-site monthly meetings with FMF families.
 - Albuquerque, "There's a Better Way" program: being creative about how we serve! Their focus was on individuals who were panhandling. A non-profit was set up to offer them day work, hired \$9/hour. Olive will send the link to the group: is this

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something that could work for us in Durham, as one more tool and method to humanize and respect the people for whom we work so hard?

- Eg. Downtown Durham Inc. has an “Downtown Durham Ambassadors” program. They apply through Eric Nystrom at the Budd Group, Maria Davis-Dorsey will share their phone number: 919-682-2855
- Olive encouraged us to look at the presentations online!

Agency Announcements:

- **Melody (DPS):** new homeless liaison for DPS. I’m also a family from Durham who experienced homelessness. To sit at this table and hear all of the supports that didn’t exist 25 years go. Thank you – from a Durhamite that has experienced homelessness.
- **Valaria (Alliance):** on Sept 12, Alliance and DSS will be sponsoring/presenting a community emergency assistance presentation at DHHS Building from 9am-12pm. We’re also looking for supportive housing agencies to come to a brief presentation. DSS, Salvation Army, Catholic Charities. I’m also looking at putting the information on Alliance’s website. Please register if you’re able. This presentation is geared to mental health providers, to know what is available when they are sending in referrals, if the consumer needs assistance with utilities, first month’s rent, evictions, disconnections etc.
- **Lloyd (Community Development):** those interested in helping us review CoC Collaborative Application – next preparation meeting is Friday, August 26 at 2:00pm in Community Development Dept. I also sent out a lot of information through CEHD and CoC email lists, which provides an overview of system-level things. If you’re interested in being on that list, I can add you to or confirm that you’re on the list.

Olive adjourned the meeting at 11:29am.