

Council to End Homelessness in Durham
June 21, 2018 Minutes

Attendance: Sheldon Mitchell (UMD), Samantha Martin (HNH), Rikki Gardner (HNH), Andrea Mikesell (DCRC), Ann Tropiano (FMF), Randy Oberrath (TFAHC), Malcolm White (ABHC), Gino Nuzzolillo (CEF), Robin Henry (VoAC), Jessica Herbin (VA), Spencer Bradford (DCIA), Joyce Hicklen (CASA), Lloyd Schmeidler (City of Durham), Melody Marshall (Durham Public Schools), Charita McCollers (LCHC), Kevin McNamee (FMF)

The meeting was called to order with welcomes and introductions by Chairman Sheldon Mitchell. Minutes from the May 2018 meeting were reviewed. With note that Malcolm White was listed twice in the attendance roster, the Motion to approve the May minutes was made by Rikki Gardner, seconded by Lloyd Schmeidler and unanimously approved.

1. Lloyd shared that HUD released the NOFA yesterday and reminded the group that preparation for that CoC application review process is important because: 1) the funding is available to communities across the country; 2) CoC funding is provided through Federal budget and Durham can apply for about 1.3 million dollars to support permanent housing, RRH, PSH projects, and some HMIS support. 3) Agencies around the table receive these funds. 4) The briefing gives communities an opportunity to show, and to look at, how well communities are doing. The debriefing document was released in late May, is being reviewed with CEHD and then with the CoC Board—HSAC will review it next week.

It is recommended that folks read the document when they can. There are three sets of information: 1. How we did as a continuum with high priority questions; 2. The scoring summary which has 4 parts and how Durham did; and, 3. Summary of average scores across the country.

Durham application strengths: HMIS bed coverage, length of time homeless measure, timely submission of system performance measure, RRH unit availability, perfect 22 on cross-cutting policies and part 4 priority questions gives us 19 of possible 22 points in that section. Street outreach and connection to mainstream programs were also community strengths.

Durham application weaknesses: project ranking and selection—there was a request sent to HUD to ask about this score as HUD's optional ranking tool was used, thus the surprise at the lower score in this section. Additionally, it was noted that the application received 0 points for reductions in first time homeless. CEHD members shared ideas about the impact of Opening Doors and Diversion in addition to the fact that CoCs are not able to influence the housing market, the employment rate, etc. Also noted was the possibility of including the partnership with the Eviction Diversion Program and also that some services providers are not using HMIS (ex. Lincoln, Open Table) and thus the data isn't able to show a truly accurate picture. Other areas of weakness in the application include: permanent housing placement and retention (1 of 6 points) and rapidly housing families (0 of 3 points). Lloyd further shared that another appeal regarding specific scoring sections may be made.

It was further noted that: 1) the CoC is seeking technical support, and 2) providers will likely benefit from further review/training of Destination reporting in HMIS.

Rikki observed that her understanding is that the System Performance subcommittee of the HSAC has not been meeting regularly and that this is likely necessary for the success of our CoC and our application.

The question was raised as to whether or not there is opportunity for agencies who are applying to meet with DCD, to which Lloyd replied that this is indeed intended to happen. Group discussion followed, during which it was pointed out that we know what we need to work on.

2. Mayor's Landlord Roundtable – Gino Nuzzolillo gave an overview of the Unlocking Doors event this past Monday and thanked folks for participating. He reported that there were 150 attendees and 117 RSVPs. Good discussion with CEHD members. Positive feedback included: the format including the panel followed by small group conversations, the food, the powerfulness of having CoC partners come to the front of the room, DHA update and the overview of the past two events, different people and points of view represented at each table (good mix), and the in-the-moment notetaking that was up on the screen. Areas for improvement include: more time, landlord attendance (many RSVP'd but didn't show), more voucher holders at the tables, timing of the event may not be best for voucher holders, sustainability of the work is challenging as there is not a lot of institutional support or funding for this event, and continued connectivity between the landlords/mayor/agencies.

Gino further shared that follow up materials will be sent out and put on the Unlocking Doors website. There will also be a list of the landlords who attended sent out to agencies with a “key” to how interested in partnering with agencies the landlords are. Gino also noted that, “if you have landlord partners you work with and they or your agency has not yet signed key partner agreements with Unlocking Doors Initiative, they must be signed by July 31, 2018.” It was further stressed that we want the Risk Mitigation Fund to be used.

CEHD members further shared that the room space was good, the lobby space was not, the question was raised about what support is available so that folks at 80 or 60% of AMI never come into homeless services. Additionally, it was noted that when Denita was asked about voucher amounts, the calculation including utility costs was not clarified or clearly stated which will likely lead to lack of landlord understanding of this. Other questions that were raised included: What happens with RAD properties after DHA is finished and the new owner has the control of units? Do original tenants go back to the units or do Duke students become the new tenants? (ex. 72 year olds having to use internet to apply; this creates a barrier and potentially weeds out an entire sub-population). How do we as providers ensure that the folks from the community get their units back? What responsibility does the landlord/owner have to the original tenants? Additional questions included: How do we increase the stock of units? And, given the mayor’s commitment, how does money from city’s budget support DHA and their efforts?

Gino further stated that it seems as though CEF or someone other than an intern needs to keep track of tenant progress and maintaining a list of units that are available out to voucher holders and providers.

3. Coordinated Assessment refresher- Lloyd shared that Durham is still creating a system for everybody experiencing a housing crisis and that system change works takes time. He reminded CEHD members that there is online training via the OrgCode website for using the ViSPDAT tools. Review included looking at the flowchart and acknowledging that Prevention and Diversion programs are mostly for families who were housed the night before going to Coordinated Intake. It was also pointed out that there is a case management staffing for Veterans twice each month, monthly for families, and monthly for individuals. It was stressed that there are a lot of new singles coming into shelter who are not being discussed at community case management meetings because the focus is on chronically homeless singles.

It was stated that there is not a clear prioritization process for HCV referrals and that shelters can make their own referrals. The reason is that we only referred about 110 households last year and this year we hope to be much closer to the 225 referral opportunities we have. A request was made for periodic updates on the ytd numbers of HCV referrals made and lease ups. Unlocking Doors is tracking families, there is nothing in place for singles and Community Development relies on DHA to update them. Lloyd keeps track of CoC approved referrals, but not the outcome of those. Rikki has agreed to ask DHA for an update on the number of referrals made, who is making them, and the status/outcomes. Rikki added that some providers went to DHA to review their policies and that the group brought up concerns they had regarding barriers (to being approved for DHA housing), such as criminal background. She also shared that the group made a request for real-time numbers/data to be shared with providers.

Lloyd encouraged the group to review the Diversion Screening Tool used by the Balance of State. The OrgCode footnote was pointed out for further reference. Rikki suggested using an upcoming CEHD, HMIS Users, or Housing Results Team meeting for reviewing the system chart and sharing what is currently happening and what needs to change.

The HSAC meeting is next week on Wednesday and City Manager Bonfield is expected to ask for information about city investment based on the Focus Strategies Report; i.e. housing navigator and an improved coordinated assessment process. It was also shared that the City gave some funding to support Eviction Diversion Program.

4. Other Business: There was discussion about CEHD taking a summer holiday. CEHD members voted to hold the meeting as scheduled with an update from DHA regarding HCV numbers and the CoC application being the primary agenda items.
5. Agency announcements
*CEF is hiring for a co-director position;

*NOFA was released yesterday. The deadline for CoC and agency applications is September 18, 2018. There is a new bonus for DV-RRH and Supportive Services only project(s) for survivors of domestic violence: joint transitional housing and RRH.

*Reminder: The meeting on July 19th will be held as scheduled and Andrea Mikesell will take minutes.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:34 AM

Next Meeting Date: Thursday, August 16, 2018