

Council to End Homelessness in Durham

July 19, 2018 Minutes

Attendance: Joseph Barnes (Homeshare Durham), Donna Carrington (Community Empowerment Fund), Tasha Melvin (Families Moving Forward), Carolyn Schuldt (Open Table Ministry), Rikki Gardner (Housing for New Hope), Andrea Mikesell (Durham Crisis Response Center), Liz Brown (Community Empowerment Fund), Ashley Towe (Volunteers of America), Jasmine Dulin (PLM Families Together), Lloyd Schmeidler (City of Durham), Catherine Pleil (families Moving Forward), Valaria Brown (Housing for New Hope), Spencer Bradford (DCIA), Malcolm White (Alliance BHC), Charita McCollers (LCHC-HCH? HSAC).

Absent: Chairman Sheldon Mitchell (UMD), Secretary Ann Tropiano (Families Moving Forward)

The meeting was called to order at 10:01am with welcomes and introductions by Vice Chairperson Rikki Gardner. Minutes from June 2018 meeting were reviewed. With note that the Secretary's name (Ann Tropiano) be added to the end of the June minutes, and all future minutes, the Motion to approve the June minutes was made by Lloyd Schmeidler, seconded by Catherine Pleil and unanimously approved.

1. **Update on Housing Choice Voucher (HVC) Referrals-** Rikki Gardner.

The following numbers were provided by Denita Johnson, Director of HCV Program, to Rikki:

HOMELESS PROVIDER REFERRALS JULY 17, 2018	
STATUS	NUMBER
HOUSED	41
DENIED	25
PENDING ELIGIBILITY	39
ACTIVE VOUCHER SEARCHING	53
PORTED VOUCHER	4
Total Number of Referrals Received	162

It was noted that a Ported Vouchers means the voucher recipient has moved outside of Durham and voucher has been used outside Durham. Total 162 referrals received, out of 225 available, from Oct 1 2017 through Sept 30th, 2018. As of mid-July, there are 2.5 months to get approximately 60 more referrals to utilize all of the vouchers. Rikki shared the last update for HVCs was in May and in two months there has been an increase in 60 referrals. Durham is behind on HCV referrals, only 72% of the 225 referrals have been allotted, which is cause for

concern. The Continuum of Care is asking agencies to make good faith efforts with individuals if they are eligible for the HCV.

Obstacles noted that families experience in the HCV process are the following: 1) Lack of apartment availability. 2) People moving into apartments reporting they receive no case management support. 3) Denials based on criminal backgrounds or monies owed. 4) Long turn-around time for applications.

Lloyd noted that agencies housing individuals should be providing crisis intervention/case management support for 12 months or another agency should be providing that support. It was noted that there is a policy stating the recipient's case manager must attend the DHA initial appointments. It was noted that clients can always appeal their denial and specifically regarding any criminal background, individuals have the opportunity to advocate for themselves by sharing what they have done since that time (Ex: classes, programs, etc). Applicants with a criminal background can proactively share a letter from Parole Officer to show they are taking classes, etc., when they begin the application process. It was also noted that applicants can set up with payments for monies owed. It was noted that there is possibility for individuals with history of substance abuse to be a protected class, but it is difficult to accommodate this.

Rikki stated she will follow up with Denita Johnson regarding the following and send out her responses to the group via email: 1) What are the most prevalent reasons for denials? 2) What agencies are frequently receiving denials? 3) What is the average length of time for applicant eligibility to be determined? 4) What is the turn-around time for processing referrals? 5) Clarification on the Ported Vouchers- are these recipients housed outside of Durham?

2. **Note** was made by Spencer to add Joseph Barnes to future CEHD agenda to share updates regarding Homeshare Durham. Approved.

3. **Discussion/Work on Notice of Funding Availability- Continuum of Care (NOFA-CoC) Application-** Lloyd Schmeidler

Lloyd shared that the City of Durham is in the process of completing the CoC application to HUD. Application deadline is Sept 18th 2018. It is a competition and they are expecting more applications for funding than monies available. It was noted that the CoC funding can be used for permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless people, with approximately 2/3 of the CoC funding used to support existing projects, 1/3 used for Rapid Rehousing (Short-term rental assistance, CM, housing search assistance, and support to move out of homelessness). Lloyd noted the difficulty in finding landlords willing to work with the CoC. The funds could also be used also for HMIS, to help get an accurate, in-time count of homeless individuals in Durham. The Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Funds can help fund shelters and RRH funding as well. NC ESG and Durham ESG have combined funds of approximately available annually.

This year's NOFA CoC application: Bi-weekly sessions have been scheduled for the community to assist in the completion of the application. The next session will be held at the Department of Community Development, 807 E. Main St, Second Floor, on Friday August 3rd. Lloyd encouraged community members to attend, participate, and contribute, and called for agencies to be truthful, strategic, and give grace in completing the application. HUD has expanded the amount of characters allowed in application, so more information can be shared about the needs and progress of Durham. Rikki shared that two weeks ago, in the First collaborative meeting, there were different agencies represented and encouraged more agencies to participate, so that we can share our celebrations and support Durham in getting the funds needed. For those who want to review the 2017 Collaborative application, it is available on the opening doors website. HUD is increasing focus on system performance and Durham's average length of stay in Emergency shelter has increased to 90 days. HUD wants to see this number decrease. Our challenge is to work as a community to help people get rapidly rehoused. It was noted that in this year's application, there is a DV Bonus. DCRC is planning on applying for those funds.

One change that will be occurring by HUD is that the "Permanent Housing Bonus" will now be referred to as "Bonus" and allows the community to use the bonus funds (approx. 90,000) towards areas such as Rapid Rehousing, Coordinated intake, implementation, among others. It was noted that as these funds have more options in how they can be used, discussions need to occur regarding how the community wants to use them and where will be they be used best. It was noted this dialogue could take place in CEHD meetings and also in HSAC subcommittee review projects between now and end of March. Lloyd stated they are not recommending reallocating any current funds.

HSAC Subcommittees were discussed. It was noted that anyone can join. The meeting should be chaired by member of Homeless Services Advisory Committee, but it is not required, however, HSAC must be represented at the meeting. Charita shared that they are reviewing what needs to change, what needs to be eliminated, and what needs to be added, making sure these meetings are occurring. A question was raised regarding what the HSAC Structure meeting discusses- Charita shared that the HSAC Structure meeting pertains to governance.

Lloyd distributed Durham Co. Health Assessment Executive Summary and Key Findings document from Durham County Health Department. Lloyd highlighted that one of the community health priorities is the issue of affordable housing. The health department contact is Marissa Mortiboy mmortiboy@dconc.gov .

Lloyd shared a flyer from HelpHomelessKidsNow.Org, sharing information regarding the homeless children and youth act that was introduced the H.R. 1511/ S. 611. Catherine encouraged support of this bill as it aims to support all homeless children and youth (not restricted to only children/youth in shelter).

Lloyd shared that most of the information recorded is self-reported and encouraged people to evaluate the vulnerability of the individuals they are encountering in their work. It is

recommended that individuals coming into shelter have 1-2 weeks to self-resolve their situation. Rikki posed the question- should Durham take ownership and make sure that agencies serving the homeless population can successfully administer the evaluation tool? Discussion ensued supporting Durham training, to encourage consistent reporting. Issue noted that scores cannot be changed once completed. It was stated that the tool should not be used as the end all be all, and hopefully staff input, evaluation, and wisdom should still be accepted in regard to referrals and treatment interventions. Malcolm shared that Durham regularly has higher scores compared to Wake County.

4. Agency announcements

- A. DCIA is promoting the participation in public comment meetings to advocate for inclusion of housing units. The DCIA.org website calendar has the dates and times for these meetings.
- B. FMF- BACKpacks 2 School. August 4th, 2018. 1:30pm -4:30pm. Joint event with UMD and FMF all school age youth. Volunteers are needed and if students from the community are in need of supplies, they should contact Gin Jackson (919-682-0538) to sign up.
- C. FMF- Kids for Change event at Durham Central Park, free and open to public. The date is August 26, 2018. 3-5pm.
- D. City of Durham- Welcome to Hanaleah Hoberman, who will be working with Lloyd Schmeidler, and will be working primarily with system development work and HSAC. Hanaleah and Kathy Hodges from DCRC will be facilitating a training at the next CEHD meeting.
- E. Volunteers of America- If you have any leads on homeless veterans in Durham and other counties, please send referrals to Ashley Towe. They can help with employment and housing.
- F. CEF- The interview process has begun for 3 final candidates for the co-director position, but CEF is still accepting applications.
- G. HFNH is searching for an executive director. Information is posted on the HFNH website.
- H. DCRC is hiring the following positions:
 - Adult counselor (part-time) for individual counseling and support groups
 - Family Violence Case Manager- on-site full-time at DSS and part-time with DCRC.
 - Legal Advocate- works primarily out of the Family Justice Center.
 - Executive Director
- I. HomeShare- is looking for individuals who are willing to share their home. Looking to start the first of August.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:21AM

Secretary: Andrea Mikesell (Substitute)

Next Meeting Date: Thursday, August 16, 2018