

Continuum General Assembly Minutes

Date and Time

Thursday, June 19th 2014 12:00 p.m.

Location

434 Lake Ave. 4th Floor

Attendees

April Purinton	Bill Sullivan	Cathy Kuhn	Charles Perkins	Elise Annunziata
Jean Melvin	Kaitlyn Norden	Keith Howard	Kevin Kintner	Kyle Beaulieu
Laurel Redden	Lauren Paradis	Lisa Jacobus	Lynn Morrow	Mary Sliney
Melissa Hatfield	Mike Austin	Monica Zulauf	Rich Doyle	Robert Mottola
Susan Howland				

May Minutes Approved

Voting on Bylaw Amendment

- To comply with HUD, we need to amend the MCoC bylaws to include a requirement that a homeless or formerly homeless individual sit on the Leadership Committee. The amendment reads:

G. Amendment Six:

- a. Article VI Section G.1 Members of the Leadership Committee Include: v. At least one homeless or formerly homeless individual shall sit on Leadership Committee. The Homeless Liaison Committee will recommend an individual to fulfill this position to the Leadership Committee. The individual will be appointed to serve on the Leadership Committee by a majority vote of the Leadership Committee.

- Rich moved that we vote, Mark seconded.
- The MCoC unanimously voted to approve the amendment by 20 - 0.

Introducing April, the New NH Food Bank's SNAP Outreach Coordinator

- April Purinton introduced herself as the new SNAP Outreach Coordinator with the NH Food Bank. She explained her role of providing assistance filling out applications for SNAP benefits and helping identify eligible people.
- She serves Manchester as well as other towns along I-93.
- They are trying to reach elderly people, many of whom need assistance buying groceries but many are not receiving benefits for which they are eligible.
- She indicated that she has also not received any requests from families with children. This could either be because they are already connected with benefits or they also need to increase outreach efforts to this demographic.
- She has been working at the Homeless Services Center to connect guests to benefits. She can also go to other agencies to help connect their clients.
- Laurel asked for clarification on the requirements between fuel assistance and SNAP benefits.
 - Melissa said that at a recent meeting she heard that in order to receive the maximum amount in SNAP benefits, you need to receive at least \$20 in fuel assistance.

Coordinated Assessment

- Melissa Hatfield is the new Program Administrator for BHHS and is assisting in establishing Coordinated Assessment systems throughout New Hampshire.
- At a meeting last week, service providers came and voiced input and concerns about current models of this system being used in NH.
- The Seacoast has a Coordinated Access system in which all referrals go through someone named Erik who fields all the screenings and intakes.
 - He only works during normal business hours and 2-1-1 handles calls during off hours.
- She said that looking at every community's assessment tools, they are all similar and ask many of the same questions.
- Many people have indicated a desire and need for a database, possibly HMIS, which is open and updated in real time so that assessment information can be stored.
- Nashua is still in the first phases, where they are compiling a list of providers.
- Kevin said that New Horizons has had communication issues with referrals from the Seacoast. He wishes they could speak directly with clients instead of going through the Coordinated Access system.
- Lisa from the VA said that they have found that some of these assessment systems screen too many people out. For example, sometimes people are doubled up and drinking or using drugs and they are diverted away from a shelter where they would have more structure.
- Elise was wondering if one point of contact, like on the Seacoast, has the capacity to field all the calls or if we have the right idea in Manchester where people can access a universal tool through any agency.
- Does the entire state need the same tool?
 - Mark said that we do not all need the same tool, each continuum has their own form.
 - Susan added that we probably could align all the forms in the state if they are similar anyway. We could possibly just have the first part the same.
- Manchester's ESG contacts will require ESG funded agencies to start using our assessment tool.
 - We could always change our tool as the state makes new requirements.
- Going forward, we will begin using this new method and tool city-wide in August. I will send another reminder e-mail and attach the current tool.
 - We will continually update and improve the tool and procedures as we use it.
- Rich said that Helping Hands has been using the new tool since March and the biggest concern he has that we should be sure that we are assessing efficacy of the tool and collecting and tracking outcomes.
- Kevin said that real-time updating of HMIS, particularly number of open beds, is not possible.
- We could simply keep a tally and report these numbers to Data Collection every month.
- Mary asked about how to report diversions if they are referred to services at the same agency performing the intake.
 - It does still count as a diversion if we do it this way and agencies can continue providing services just as they do now.
- Elise wants to require agencies doing this to record and report outcomes. Perhaps further planning meetings are required to now make decisions around recording and tracking outcomes.

Other Announcements

- The Way Home has some open PSH units for veterans with families. Contact Tracy Noonan or Beth Alves at the Manchester VA for intakes.

Erik's Last Meeting

Thanks to everyone in the MCoC for a great year! This is my last meeting; I'll be working until July 11th. Mark has made an offer to a potential VISTA for next year and hopefully we will have someone to take my place for August.

Homeless Services Center

- The Management Team for the Homeless Services Center has reached an agreement to keep the Center open at least through June of 2015.
- The Center is closing for the week of 6/30 – 7/6 and then reopening with different policies in place.
- It will be open to any homeless adult from 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. and still serving lunch.
- From 1:00 – 4:00 people are only allowed in the Center if they have an appointment with a service provider or if they are attending a workshop.
- They are working to more strictly serve only homeless persons

Meeting Attendees Voted NOT to Hold a July General Assembly Meeting.

ESG Training

- Elise announced that the city is holding an ESG training at 434 Lake Ave. 4th floor on July 10th at 10:00 a.m. to go over new policies. She thanked everyone who helped in writing the new ESSG standards.
- There will be a similar CDBG training on July 16th at 2:00 p.m., same location.

General Assembly will NOT be meeting in July.

Minutes Prepared By

Erik Wirkkala, VISTA
MCoC Coordinator