



Lenawee County Continuum of Care United Way of Monroe and Lenawee Counties October 31, 2022

STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION MINUTES

1. Welcome / Introductions

In attendance: Madeline DeMarco, Laura Schultz-Pipis, Clint Brugger, Lynne Punnett, Kelly Castleberry, Claudia Annoni, Jennifer Ferrari, Jill Hicks, Nancy Bishop, Shannon DeSlover, Renee Kimball-Rouse, Dawn Scott, Christy Brugger, Becky Selenko, Moises Regalado, Annie Waltz, Jackie Bradley, Chief Vince Emrick

2. CoC Orientation

Clint shared an overview of the CoC. This included explaining what a CoC is and its main goals of preventing homelessness and preventing homelessness from reoccurring. We also discussed the importance of diverse, multi-sector membership. We defined the Housing Assessment Resource Agency (HARA), which in our community is Housing Help of Lenawee. Clint talked through the 4-step the Coordinated Entry System (CES) which we officially adopted in 2018. Clint mentioned that the VI-SPDAT, the evaluation tool being used to help rapidly rehouse folks, was deemed not racially equitable and invasive. The VI-SPDAT is currently being phased out. Another challenge with our current system is the lack of affordable permanent housing. HUD's definition of homelessness is anyone "forced to stay in a place not meant for human habitation" – in other words, literally homeless. This does not include folks who are doubled-up. Other organizations, such as McKinney-Vento, define homelessness differently. Many funding opportunities related to housing have to go through a community's CoC. These Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFO) will be posted on the [CoC's Facebook page, 211](#), the [Collective Impact Core's website](#). Organizations must be full-members of the CoC to be eligible for funding through the CoC. This means that the group has attended at least 75% of meetings they were eligible for, an up-to-date Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on file, and is a member of at least one CoC workgroup. The process for Request for Proposal (RFP) applications is very similar.

Clint also shared an overview of the Advocacy Toolkit. Clint reminded us that the CoC is and should be one of the largest voices speaking up around homelessness in our community. Please use the Advocacy Toolkit in your own organizations for issues including, but not limited to housing! Renee mentioned that she was part of a national, state, and local group that also created an advocacy toolkit. Many times, it is folks with lived experience who are able to be the most impactful with their stories.

Clint will add the Advocacy Toolkit as part of the new member orientation.

Renee will share the advocacy toolkit with our CoC.

3. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and CERT

Claudia shared an overview of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and how it relates to our CoC. A future goal of ours is to add belonging to this list of values. In addition to being the right thing to do, funders are placing more and more importance on DEI in their funding applications. This is something that we need to focus on moving forward, particularly as it relates to LGBTQ+ folks, folks with lived experience, and the full breadth of cultural identities in our community. These are all practices that our CoC needs to emphasize as a collective, not just individual member organizations. Based on the folks that self-disclose

Renee shared an overview of the CoC Equitable Results Team (CERT). This group started off with some foundational learning before conducting community listening sessions to determine what perfect housing services would like to folks impacted by homelessness. The results were put into a thematic analysis to look for Lenawee County-specific trends. One of the big takeaways from this report includes working with local grassroots organizations that work with specific populations, spiritual leaders, food pantries, libraries. Another

recommendation is using people-first language: “person with lived experience,” “person experiencing homelessness,” “community member currently without a roof” to help decrease stigma. We now know of some amazing tools at our disposal that we can take better advantage of. CERT is currently working on systems mapping for our community. Working with folks with lived experience, it is important to offer some sort of compensation. Renee will be setting up a weekly listening session at Share the Warmth to learn more about how we can meet the needs of people impacted by the work we’re doing. We’d also like to offer listening sessions on Point in Time (PIT) Count days. Facilitators for these listening sessions are ideally peers that work outside of homelessness and housing.

4. Data & Coordinated Entry

Shannon shared a brief overview of the Coordinated Entry System and HMIS. Most referrals are coming from literally homeless shelters or self-referrals. A lot of organizations don’t realize that Housing Help is the HARA and folks can be referred there for housing needs. Housing Help determines eligibility for the Section 8 voucher. MSHDA pulls names from the waitlist. Housing Choices is a separate, regional entity that actually contacts and works with folks pulled from the waitlist. Being pulled from the waitlist doesn’t guarantee you a voucher – about twice as many people are pulled as there are actually vouchers available.

There are a lot of ways that we can be utilizing HMIS in this community. For example, folks can use their HMIS ID number to get a Michigan ID card from the Secretary of State.

We expect the EHV waitlist to go away at the end of this year, along with the ESG-CV dollars.

Some things we can do to improve the Coordinated Entry System:

- Public Awareness Committee can help engage providers about CES.
- Talk about it at the Lenawee Human Services Collaborative (Madeline DeMarco can easily add you to the agenda).
- Networking at groups and meetings like the CoC so that we have relationships and informal knowledge about where we can refer folks to for specific needs.
- Starting a “By-Names” list. This could be a meeting that happens after the monthly CoC meeting with direct service providers and other staff working directly with those individuals.
- Future conversation around 1) does the system work? Is it what we want it to be? 2) how do we get it to the people who need it?
- Measuring and valuing qualitative data.

5. The Future of the CoC

Kelly led this conversation. Our current workgroups are public awareness, homeless youth, CERT, and affordable/emergency shelter. Is there a workgroup or specific topic we can focus on now to be more competitive for future grants. Some of the topics we get asked in grant applications include:

- How are we leveraging housing?
- How are we leveraging health care?
- How are we involving folks with lived experience?
- Response protocols
- Leveraging permanent supportive housing + temporary housing?
- How are we identifying community members without a roof?

CERT will continue to stay as a workgroup. Potential workgroup topics include:

- Public awareness
- Equity and membership
- Ranking and evaluation (to evaluate potential grant opportunities and progress on current grants)
- Governance

- Add units – we need housing! Permanent and transitional housing, all kinds of units in all kinds of markets
- Healthcare, social determinants of health
- Decriminalization of homelessness
- Case managers -> help people navigate the system to connect them to care. In order to get this, we'll need to:
 - Know what the systems are and how to navigate them
 - Identify gaps in systems with data that supports those gaps
 - List of resources
 - Resources that people want to use
 - Accessible resources (literacy, tech...)
 - Connections back to the local community, warm hand-offs to people back on the ground
 - Timely resources when we need them – outside of the typical 9-5 business hours
 - Cooperation around the system
 - Ways to reach people before it's a crisis
 - Trust in and relationships with systems
 - After hours supports, diversion
- By-name – meeting that we can call as needed. Would need to develop a plan to call it monthly.

We will ask the full body which topics we should prioritize as workgroups.

- More units, landlord engagement
- Supportive services
- Prevention
- Retention
- CERT – Membership & Equity
- Governance
- Public Awareness – Data, Advocacy Toolkit

Everything we do should be done through an equity lens.

- **Madeline will send out a survey to the full CoC asking for our workgroup priorities out of the ones we discussed here. The top 5 (including CERT and Public Awareness) will become our workgroups. We will come to our December meeting ready to recruit for workgroups.**
 - Jackie would be willing to lead a governance subcommittee.
- **Everyone will donate to the cost of the plaques for the Norma Dell Courage to Care Award (cash or check made out to Housing Help of Lenawee)**

6. Closing

7. **NEXT MEETING: November 8th at 3:30pm at Goodwill Industries & via Zoom (CoC Open House)**