



MDHI Coordinating Committee Meeting

February 23rd 2018

9:00am-11:00am

Mile High United Way, 711 Park Ave West

Minutes

Attendees: Dave Riggs (ACHA), Sue Gilman (Bayaud), Logan Robertson (Father Woody's), Molly Duncan (Bayaud), Joel Cassady (St. Francis Center), Courtney Fischer (Irving Street Women's Residence), Diane Alumno (VA), Shawna Miller (Almost Home), Maryjane Carr (OneHome), David Cornish (Salvation Army), Laura McGarry (MHBHC), Katherine Keenan (Energy Outreach Colorado), Heather Seiden (Jewish Family Services), Shelley McKittrick (City of Aurora), Gerald Homel (Impact Empowerment Group, Inc.), Morgan Wieziolowski (Family Tree/VISTA), Paige Dennis (MCPN/VISTA), Cameron Shropshire (MCPN), Jared Kebbell (MDHI/VISTA), Jackie Hernandez (MDHI), Ilyas El-Amin (OneHome/CCH), Karissa Johnson (DRH), Megan Morales (OneHome/VOA), Laura Ware (CCLP/Bayaud), Megan Nyce (CDOH), Jack Regenbogen (CCLP), Tom Luehrs (St. Francis Center), Amanda Peacock (Aurora@Home/Americorps), Chris Venable (Urban Peak)

Meeting called to order at 9:05am

I. Introductions/Updates

- MDHI updates:
 - hired new MDHI grant coordinator - Jackie Hernandez
 - Applying for Youth Homeless Demonstration Project grant. 2018 NOFA will select 11 communities and awarded 43 million dollars. MDHI Planning launch is March 13th. The application is due in April — putting together a picture of what it would look like if we were awarded funds. Once awarded we would put together a more in-depth Coordinated Community Plan. Looking for Youth with lived experience to create a Youth Action Board for the CoC. Email diane.howald@mdhi.org to get involved.
 - Applying for a continuation of an AmeriCorps VISTA grant — new partners, opportunities, 1 year long, and must be housing focused and capacity building role. Also contact diane.howald@mdhi.org for more info.
 - OneHome family is holding monthly rotating location family shelter meetings, beginning to collect more data and can address additional concerns
 - **County or community updates can also be added to MDHI's emails, and would be a powerful addition to MDHI's E-Weekly (email Diane if you'd like us to share info!)**
- Housing Authority in Adams County is changing their name soon FYI
- St Francis opened apartments at St. Cathedrals square 50 units for - Grand opening was Sunday— with lots of volunteers and participants!

- We should share how the cold weather is affecting people experiencing homelessness (discuss further in the break out discussion)
- changes in Boulder but they still have Severe Weather sheltering
- St. Francis started diversion services for singles
- City of Aurora is attempting to get more funding from City council for their HAP funds (Housing Aurora Partnership – flexible housing funds)
- Urban Peak drop in center will be re-open for services 5 days a week rather than 3 days

II. Point in Time Discussion/Debrief

- Mobile surveys were very helpful (hopefully will speed up data entry process) *next year improve survey and have more time to practice and train
- Increased collaboration and coordination for 2018 PIT
- Magnet events were very successful in most areas, especially Jeffco and Adams
- Increased volunteer participation
- Branding was great / pins “everyone counts” etc.
- Unfortunately, there were sweeps near PIT date again, and they were in locations outside of Denver as well this year
- Lots of incentives gathered by the VISTAS, over \$20,000 worth, every site that requested incentives received them, helpful in getting participation
- A Community PIT launch will be happening again this year in October
- Final results will be ready in May/June
- MDHI created comprehensive list of participating agencies and sites to utilize year/year
- Working to get number “submitted surveys” versus the those validated/de-duplicated to assist with volunteer use and possible need for more training at locations
- Considering having a short “PIT Stop” email weekly next year

III. Advocacy Presentations

1. Jack Regenbogen, Esq. ~ from Colorado Center for Law and Policy
5 bills that would provide economic security for people experiencing homelessness (3 have already been introduced)

- (*SB18-010*) First one would require people to receive a copy of their lease, and a receipt from every rent payment in cash or money order. (passed State Senate already-has bipartisan support)
- (*Strengthen Aid to the Needy Disabled*) Next bill —would aid disabled who are very needy, psychologists would be able to confirm disabilities in addition to MD’s —and the State would have discretion to add more providers if necessary
- (*HB18-1192*) Another bill — would provide funding to help state disability recipients apply for federal disability benefits (SSI & SSDI is a very difficult process and people need assistance prior to appeals stage) *either hire a person or hire 3rd contractor non-profit to provide this service

Next two bills have not been introduced yet

1. “Clean Slate” — automatic record sealing for small records (it is extremely expensive to seal records, and many of these records prevent people from accessing housing). **automate this process [still trying to generate knowledge and support of this bill]
2. Bill that would create a pilot project for employment supportive services (to prevent people from losing their jobs due to one setback or emergency) —In need of endorsements from local organizations

Also, for our information -CO Dept. of Human Services issued new regulation:

Homeless people will not be mandated to work in return for food assistance

- local agencies are not always following this.... let CCLP know if you have a client that lost SNAP benefits for this reason

2. Jared Kebbell AmeriCorps VISTA from MDHI – Guidelines advocacy/lobbying for nonprofits

- Advocacy ~ your organization can politically advocate but not lose 501(3)(c) status or funding
- IRS & HUD have oversight in these matters
- Lobbying by non-profits is specifically permitted by the IRS, but within limitations
 - the IRS definition of lobbying differs significantly from HUD’s definition. IRS definition is broad and encompasses any attempt to influence legislation at the state, federal or local level through communication with any member/employee of a legislative body and the general public
 - However, communications are considered to be “educational activities” if they do not meet 2 specific criteria:
 - referring to a specific piece of legislation and advocating a position on that legislation
 - Examples of direct lobbying: organize an Advocacy Day, direct mail campaign, plan a rally
 - How IRS Measures or counts lobbying:
 - a) substantial part test
 - b) expenditure test
- HUD definition of lobbying is established in the Byrd Amendment and only applies to activity designed to influence federal contracts, grants or loans
- Continuum of Care advocacy — can lobby and advocate at state, local and federal level (can be very successful)
- Cannot endorse a candidate

IV. Discussion

Severe Weather sheltering

Tough season around temperature-especially the past couple weeks

This winter season has been more difficult than the past couple of years and funding is being spent faster than before

Aurora has had an additional 80 people in Aurora warms the night than they usually have

Questions regarding:

Should we standardize our criteria across the region?

If someone is barred from shelters, how long? When can they try to come back?

Suggestions:

Service provider communication would be helpful

Possible to create a cross-county winter/overflow sheltering option with bussing? Shared cost would help.

Homeless County Coordinators could have meetings to discuss things monthly

Possible for each county can write up a summary, what worked and what didn't this Severe Weather season?

Discussion around upcoming shelter changes

Samaritan house will be closing in the spring to renovate family wing — (will slowly decrease families they take in until that point so they don't have to exit many families at one time).

Should we have emergency shelter updates including in MDHI weekly emails?

Crossroads possible closure was discussed (3.7.18 edit – *Denver's Road Home* shared the following info regarding crossroads:

"The City of Denver is currently working with Crossroads to create a vision that could possibly include eventual redevelopment of the site. This vision is very much in pre-planning phases with no pro forma, site plan, or demo/construction schedule—though Salvation Army does have a concept. Meanwhile Denver's Road Home continues to support Salvation Army Crossroads' operations at the existing facility. Capacity limitations have been issued under the authority of the city's building inspector and fire department however no directives have been issued or are imminently anticipated regarding a full closure of the facility. Instead we continue to work with Salvation Army, DFD, and Community Planning and Development toward continued operation within the necessary health and safety standards elaborated by code. This has been a blend of programmatic solutions, temporary improvements to the existing facility that could allow it to safely serve more (not fewer) guests, and introducing Salvation Army's longer goal of a larger project to replace Crossroads. While that project is not imminent it certainly will affect programming when it is grounded and ready to move forward."