

Housing First Solano | Vallejo/Solano County Continuum of Care

Housing First Solano
Vallejo-Solano County Continuum of Care
Board Meeting Minutes
March 22, 2017
11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Board members present:

Tranine Chisom, Caminar
Anne Putney, City of Vallejo
Norma Jean Ramos, Christian Help Center
Lori Bowley, Veterans Affairs
Ruth Matz, Community Action North Bay
Scott Mulvey, City Church 2:42
John Evalle, Congressman John Garamendi's Office
Kristin Kamm, City of Benicia
Maurilio Leon, CHOC Housing
Tamara Colden, City of Vacaville
Jerry Huber, Solano County
Katrina Lorey (Alternate for Suzanne Frank)
Dawn La Bar (City of Fairfield)

Other attendees:

Ron Marlette, Mission Solano
Reginald Doss (pending application for return to CoC Board)
Reginald Ross, City Church
Kim Deocampo, Tribal TANF
Michael Wurz, Edge Community Church
Katrina Morrow, Circle of Friends
Carolyn Wylie, HomeBase, CoC Staff
John Melis, HomeBase, CoC Staff

1. Tranine Chisom called the meeting to order at 11:31 a.m.
2. There was a quorum of Board members present.
3. There were no presentations.
4. There was no public comment.
5. Staff asked to add an item to the agenda. Community Action North Bay requires a letter of support for their Veteran's Grant Per Diem program.

Kathy Lawton-Caesar moved to amend the agenda to add under new business 9.05 the action item to vote on a letter of support for Community Action North Bay's Veterans Grant Per Diem program. Ruth Matz noted that Ron Marlette at Mission Solano would also require a letter of support as well.

Kathy Lawton-Caesar amended her motion to include an agenda item to approve letters of support for both Community Action North Bay's and Mission Solano's Veterans Grant Per Diem programs should Mission Solano submit a draft letter. Lori Bowley seconded the motion. All voted in favor with Lori Bowley abstaining from the vote. The motion carried.

Ruth Matz noted that she felt it was wrong that agencies had to draft their own letter. John Evalle, from Congressman Garamendi's office, and several jurisdictional representatives noted that was standard practice for them.

John Evalle asked if the CoC should adopt a formal policy for requesting letters of support. Chair Tranine Chisom agreed that would be a good idea and directed staff to draft a policy for Board review.

6. Lori Bowley moved to approve the agenda as amended. Anne Putney seconded the Motion. All voted in favor with no abstentions. The motion carried.

7. Consent Calendar

7.1. Participants reviewed the minutes from January 25, 2017.

Kathy Lawton-Caesar noted a typographical error in her name and asked for it to be corrected.

John Evalle moved to approve the minutes with the change. Kathy Lawton-Caesar seconded the motion. All voted in favor with Anne Putney and Dawn La Bar abstaining. The motion carried.

8. Old Business

8.1. Solano Strategic Plan Update

Staff informed the Board the Regional Strategic Plan is in a close to final form. The plan benefitted from significant community engagement including multiple consumer focus groups and issue summits. Staff met with consumers, providers, the business community, and the faith communities along with government representatives. The plan will be presented to the Community Action Partnership Solano Joint Powers Authority for approval. Once the plan is approved, annual implementation plans will be drafted which outline how the metrics of success will be met.

Staff noted the specifics of the plan would be discussed later on the agenda.

9. New Business

9.05. Approval of letter of support for both Community Action North Bay's and Mission Solano's GPD program. Approval of Chair to sign similar letter on behalf of Mission Solano.

Ruth Matz discussed how her Veteran Grant Per Diem program has helped the Solano community. The funds have been used to rehabilitate units in Solano County for veteran housing. The program is also kept at 85% occupancy. Ruth thanked Housing First Solano for its support.

Ron Marlette discussed Mission Solano's success with their Grant Per Diem program. Mission Solano provides 30 Grant Per Diem beds and 10 Emergency Shelter beds for veterans.

Lori Bowley, a representative from the Veterans Affairs office, noted that both Mission Solano and Community Action North Bay provide excellent service to Solano County's veteran populations. The VA only has a 65% housing success target. Community Action North Bay's project has a 100% success rate and Mission Solano is at approximately 75%. Given her comments in support of the organizations and her position with the VA, she would abstain from voting.

Maurilio Leon asked what made the programs so much more successful than the 65% benchmark. Ruth Matz explained that both programs have excellent service linkages and are designed to work with Supportive Services for Veteran Family and HUD-VASH vouchers to quickly and permanently house those veterans. Additionally, Lori Bowley noted the programs work well with other counties to find placements for veterans when availability in Solano County is low.

Scott Mulvey moved to authorize the Chair to sign letters of support for Mission Solano and Community Action North Bay for their Grant Per Diem programs, if Mission Solano presented one, and Norma Jean Ramos seconded the motion. All voted in favor with Lori Bowley abstaining from the vote. The motion carried.

9.1. Report on Board Election Status

Staff informed the Board that the General Membership re-elected Ruth Matz and Norma Jean Ramos to their board positions. Reginald Doss and Ron Marlette reported that they will submit applications for consideration at the next General Membership meeting. Ed Lowe and Debbi Tavey will apply for the medical representative seat and the business seat respectively. The City of Rio Vista is still working on assigning an individual to their seat on the Board and there is one available at large seat.

9.2. Mid-Year Review and Rank debrief

Staff provided the results of the Mid-Year Review and Rank to the board. The Mid-Year process went well overall. The main process change is providing PRESTO reports to the providers sooner in the review process. The process revealed some issues of concern. Common issues included difficulties with financial accounting and poor data quality. Finally, through the Mid-Year process it was discovered that Mission Solano's Rays of Hope had voluntarily returned its funding to the Department of Housing and Urban Development meaning that all their funds were no longer available to serve homeless individuals.

Over the next few months, staff will work with Continuum of Care projects to revise the scoring tools and process in anticipation of the 2017 Continuum of Care Competition. Additionally, staff will provide technical assistance to under performing projects in order to ensure they comply with HUD regulations.

Reginald Doss asked how information was analyzed by the panel. Staff explained that Annual Performance Report data was added to provider responses from a local application and placed into a reporting database used by the Review and Rank Panel to score projects.

Ron Marlette asked if there was anything Mission Solano could do to retain the funding they lost. Staff clarified that prior to informing HUD that Mission Solano

longer wanted the funding, it should have reached out to staff for assistance. That may have allowed Housing First Solano to reallocate Mission Solano's funding during the competition or find another way to preserve the funding. However, now that the funding was surrendered, there was nothing more the CoC could do to preserve that funding.

9.3 Review proposed strategic plan

Staff noted the Board had been provided with copies of the plan and instructed to review it prior to the meeting given that it is a lengthy document. Generally, the plan seeks to put in place systemic changes that will reduce the number of persons experiencing homelessness within five years. This reduction will be achieved through a combination of better data integration and sharing, coordinated entry systems, specialized housing navigation staff, and the construction of new, deeply affordable housing. Staff asked if the Board members had any specific questions about the plan.

Jerry Huber asked if each of the cities will review and approve the plan. Staff said the plan will be presented to the cities at a joint meeting where the specifics of the first year implementation will also be discussed.

Ron Marlette asked if the County will embrace the strategic plan. Staff said the County is likely to adopt the plan given their integration in every step of the planning and writing of it.

Anne Putney expressed concern about the title of the document. The City of Vallejo has an organization called "Vallejo Together" that closely matches the title of this document: "Forward Together." Anne was concerned persons may think the Regional Plan is part of Vallejo Together, which it is not. Anne also expressed concern over some of the consumer quotes in the report and how they might be perceived by elected officials. Overall, Anne liked the document and thanked the staff that worked on it.

Jerry Huber noted the goal of the document is to focus on providing housing rather than eliminating homelessness. The County is interested on focusing on the solution rather than the problem.

Maurilio Leon agreed the focus should be on increasing housing, but also noted there needs to be supportive services to ensure a positive, long term outcome. Maurilio hoped the plan would focus heavily on creating new housing as that is what will solve the core problem of homelessness.

Chair Tranine Chisom noted the plan provides the overarching framework for moving forward, but that the annual implementation plans will describe how the Solano community will move forward one bit at a time.

Scott Mulvey moved to approve the plan with the caveat that staff are allowed to make minor stylistic or other proofing changes as necessary prior to publication. Lori Bowley seconded the motion. All voted in favor with no abstentions. The motion carried.

9.4 Proposed training topics

Due to time considerations, it was agreed that this item would be considered at the next meeting of the Board.

10. Board Comments

Jerry Huber informed the Board that Daniel Del Monte, who coordinated homeless programs with the County of Solano, has moved to a different position and is no longer with the County. The County is currently hiring to fill that position.

Dawn La Bar informed the Board that Bryan Briggs is taking over as Fairfield's representative to the Board. Dawn La Bar will remain as the alternate.

11. Staff Report

11.1. Funding Opportunities

Staff directed the Board to review the funding opportunity handout. Staff noted that many funding opportunities have not been issued yet due to the lack of clarity from the federal government about funding availability.

11.2 Federal Updates

Staff referred the Board to review the federal updates handout provided as part of the meeting materials.

13. Adjourn.

Kathy Lawton-Caesar moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:34 PM. Lori Bowley seconded the motion. All voted in favor with no abstentions. The motion carried.