

Housing First Solano
Vallejo-Solano County Continuum of Care
General Membership Meeting Minutes
April 26, 2017
10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Suisun City Council Chambers, 701 Civic Venter Blvd., Suisun City, 94585

1. Meeting **called to order** by Chair Tranine Chisom at 10:04 a.m.
2. No additions to or deletions from the Agenda were proposed.
3. Jonathan moves to **approve the agenda**; Norma Ramos seconds the motion. Unanimous approval at 10:04 a.m.
4. Kathy Lawton-Caesar moved to **approve the minutes** of the CoC General Membership meeting from February 22, 2017. John Evalle asked whether these were the minutes of the meeting when the committee discussed establishing a letter of support. Kathy indicated that John was thinking of a different meeting. John then seconded Kathy's motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval at 10:06 a.m.
5. **Old Business: Point-in-Time Count Update.** Carolyn Wylie updated the CoC on the PIT Count. Carolyn indicated that staff had received draft numbers from the subcontractor and were currently entering them into HDX, the system used by HUD for reporting data. Carolyn reported that the PIT was due to be submitted on May 1st. HomeBase was checking for errors, and making reconciliations. Staff anticipated submitting on time on the 1st, maybe even a little bit early. As part of the process, HUD will reach out to Solano after submission if they have any concerns.

Staff reported that it appeared the count had increased due in large part to a more robust count. For example, previously Solano had counted around 7 youth, and this time quite a bit more were counted because of the separate youth-focused count in collaboration with youth providers and local schools. Similarly, having outreach teams go into the encampments resulted in a more accurate count as well.

This back-and-forth process with HUD to check the numbers usually lasts about a month, which fits in with the expected NOFA timeline. Staff reported that they expected that the PIT-count contractor, Applied Survey Research, would have a final report completed by early June public release..

There were no questions for Carolyn on the PIT Count.

6. **New Business: Housing First Solano Board Elections.** Tranine explained the current openings on the CoC Board of Directors: there were three positions available, and were applications for two of those positions in the white packet distributed to attendees. Carolyn explained that applicant Debbie Tavi was the Executive Director of Suisun City's Chamber of Commerce, and was applying for the business seat, which has been open since the board was formed, so the CoC Board was excited to have her.

Carolyn explained that Ed Lowe was from North Bay Health Care, and was applying for the healthcare/hospital seat. This was added about 2 years ago and the Board has been reaching out to hospitals / health care organizations looking for someone to join that seat since. Ed has been coming to coordinated entry meetings, a board meeting, and a regional planning meeting over the past year so he has been actively involved.

Carolyn explained that Reginald Doss has been one of two formerly homeless members of the board since its inception. He would have been able to renew his application at the February meeting, but did not submit it in time. He had submitted it in time for April, but due to an error on the part of HomeBase, the application was not included in the printed packet today. His application had not changed, so the CoC was able to refer to his previous application if needed as the reference.

Norma added that Reginald was a real asset for the formerly homeless; that he was very verbal, good about asking questions, giving opinions.

Carolyn noted that the other person in that slot had stepped down, so the CoC would have both openings for homeless or formerly homeless if his application was not approved.

At 10:13 a.m., Reginald Doss entered the meeting.

John Evalue concurred with the comments above.

An attendee asked if he could self-nominate for the second open homeless representative position. Carolyn said that he could self-nominate per the Charter. Tranine told him to "fill out an application at the end of the meeting and we will put it on the agenda for next general meeting."

An attendee asks whether adding the second homeless representative would fill all of our board seats. Carolyn answers that we would still have one at-large seat open.

Tranine calls for voting *en bloc* on all three applicants (Debbie, Ed, and Reginald) at 10:15 a.m. Kat moved to accept all three applicants. Norma seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved at 10:15 a.m.

- 7. New Business: Rank and Review Report.** Carolyn updated the membership on a CoC Board Report about the Mid-Year Review. The purpose of Mid-Year Review is to give projects a chance to see how they are doing on the revised scoring tools. It is not intended to be punitive. It is meant to allow projects to be better prepared for actual competition and to seek out appropriate technical assistance to better reduce homelessness in the community. Most of the results of the Mid-Year Review were confidential; agencies received individual scores and suggestions to allow for more candor. One of the main findings to come out of the review was that data quality is very poor. HomeBase is in the process of providing technical assistance to agencies to improve their data quality, and once data is entered, that may have significant effects on where projects would appear on the ranked list. For example, if a resident has not had a mid-year checkup but has gained income since entering the program, then your data will under-estimate your true performance at increasing income. The reason why some programs were marked "N/A" is because they do not yet have a full month of data. Typical practice is to place all such programs at the bottom of Tier I, which mostly insulates them from the risk of losing HUD funding. Carolyn reminds the meeting of the importance of solid grant management, noting that any funds lost due to failure to spend are lost not just to the individual project, but to the Solano CoC as a whole.

2 new people entered the meeting at 10:24 a.m.

HomeBase is proposing to offer data quality and fiscal trainings. There was a CoC program that (Mission Solano?) had, but they did not meet their deadlines for getting the grant off the ground or re-assigning it to another party, but although HomeBase contacted HUD and said that there were interested parties who could spend the \$60,500, HUD said that it was too late and that the money had already been returned to the Treasury. The CoC only found out about this as a result of the mid-year review; the project did not notify CoC about HUD's interest in reclaiming the funds.

Reginald asked whether we can we schedule these workshops immediately, because we need all of these. How many people do we need to come to the workshops?

Reginald and Carolyn agreed that data monitoring is most important; Carolyn proposed sending a survey to the entire group (not just CoC-funded projects) to identify which topic is the second-most urgent. HomeBase will also create a schedule for trainings for the rest of the year. There was broad agreement that Solano is open to other ideas as well.

There were no questions; Carolyn concluded this portion of presentation at 10:31 am.

- 8. New Business: Summary of Changes to Review and Rank Policies.** Carolyn explained that the document on pink paper, "Summary of Changes to the 2017 Review and Rank Policies, Scoring Tools, and Local Applications" serves as a change log showing all of the changes that

HomeBase was proposing to make to the relevant documents; as such, the committee could review the pink document without going over all of the attachments page by page. Except as noted in the pink document, all of the attachments were still the same as last year.

(Carolyn then went on to review the Renewal Scoring Tool in detail).

There were no substantive questions or comments. One member said, “Good Job!” Another said “John [Melis] listened well to us.”

(Carolyn then reviewed the New Scoring Tool in detail, including threshold factors, and explained how thresholds work.)

Carolyn urged the committee to look at both of the scoring tools to tell HomeBase if anything seems off. Carolyn explained that part of why new projects have to meet so many thresholds is that those thresholds are imposed by HUD; a project that was approved by CoC that did not meet threshold would be at risk of not receiving HUD funding despite being placed near the top of the ranked list.

Tranine asked if there were any questions or concerns. Hearing none, Tranine called for a motion to approve the rank & review policies & procedures, and the scoring tools and local applications as presented. Reginald so moved at 10:49 am. The motion was unanimously approved at 10:49 am.

9. New Business: Housing First Training. Jason Green-Lowe presented additional training on applying Housing First principles. Some comments from providers during this portion of the training were as follows:

- We have no metal detectors, gates, etc. (In other words, providers don’t think their environments have issues with excessive security.)
- We use a series of escalating consequences leading up to removal. We only had to remove one person.
- If someone gets rude, life threatening, watch your back – you always have to watch your back. Take it to the 25th power when dealing w/ homeless people because they have MH issues, substance use issues, and they are desperate for housing and food.
- Are there ways that projects are very trauma-informed? One provider offers a table with coffee, water, granola bars, and a career board. Clients traditionally respect the table.
- Open-ended questions: Lisa uses them all the time. She gets better results if she dresses down, is friendly, and fits in with them and walks the walk and talks the talk. Use their lingo a bit. Facial gestures all help.

- Open-ended questions allow people to tell their story. Use the VI-SPDAT, but allow them to tell their story through it. Once they see that you are genuinely interested, the rapport and trust builds more quickly because you show that you care and that there is no judgment. Dress down.
- The basic elements are fear and trust. People offer help and back out. Law enforcement comes in and cites you, you go to jail for 7 hours, etc. We are all human beings and need to help each other. We need to take away the sense of fear and develop a sense of trust.
- Caminar is about to launch a training on dual-diagnosis around harm reduction/motivational interviewing.
- At NorCal services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Elaine makes herself available. Caminar uses Language Line. Is there a mobile app that works on the phone?
- Lack of supportive services, housing location, landlord assistance
- Long process to get services; difficult to get them to go through that long process
- Best way to reduce those barriers will be to better know our system, and to get to know clients in advance so that you have a better idea of which services / appointments you will need to arrange for them.

The Housing First training concluded at 11:22 am.

10. New Business: HMIS User Group Update. Carolyn presented the following update: At the HMIS User Group, we discussed the data issues that have been happening. We had Bowman come out and do a training with our staff, in part for coordinated entry, in part because of recent software updates. There is a new intake form, both on paper and in HMIS, and we went over that with the providers who were there. We will also send out materials to those who were not able to attend. We also discussed System Performance Measures, which must be submitted to HUD. This means looking at how we're doing on several factors, many of them captured by our scoring tool. Last year, for the first time, Solano took these measures directly from HMIS. HUD was not impressed with the data quality behind the system performance measures (in part because there was only one month's notice to prepare the measures) – so we have to decide within the next month whether to take advantage of HUD's offer to replace all of last year's performance measures with new data. We would not be able to replace only one or two; instead we must either replace all of last year's measures or none of them. We also must submit the FY17 system performance measures in about a month.

In addition, at the HMIS User Group, we discussed SAGE, the new system that will be used to upload data instead of e-snaps. SAGE should be more functional than e-snaps, and should

allow projects to better understand their data. SAGE just came online on April 1st. We will have more info on that soon. We demonstrated some new video trainings for HMIS; we will be updating training documents and uploading some video trainings that people can use.

There were no questions; this segment concluded at 11:26 am.

11. **New Business: Tripartite Advisory Board Representative Election Results.** At the Tripartite Advisory Board, low-income representatives were elected. Paul Newman stepped down, Jill Sowards was nominated and elected to fill the vacant slot. The other three low-income representatives were re-elected. The other new member is in the private section; her name is Laura Crutsinger. The speaker commented that it is nice to have families and legal services represented as stakeholders in one of our boards now. This segment concluded at 11:28 am.

12. **New Business: Regional Strategic Plan Update.** The final draft of the regional strategic plan has been approved; thanks to members for participation in the process. We can now move forward on implementation, and the plan is posted on the website, with a few minor changes. We are trying to build a workgroup who will shepherd the implementation and broaden the planning group to ensure that all of the categories of stakeholders are represented. The grey-and-white document includes a list of these categories along with a list of proposed and/or agreed-upon representatives who can fill those categories. This is a work in progress, but we're trying to hammer it down so we can hold a meeting next month; HomeBase is open to suggestions if you have ideas for who can join the committee! If so, please get in touch with Carolyn or Gillian of HomeBase. This segment concluded at 11:30 am.

13. **New Business: NOFA Preparation.** Carolyn presented an update on NOFA Preparations. HUD still says they will release the NOFA in end of May or early June. There is still no federal budget, so HomeBase is not clear on how the NOFA could be released, but many things this year are surprising and different, so HomeBase urges everyone to prepare as if HUD is going to follow through on this plan. In Solano, we need a governance committee meeting to go over our charter and written standards, and to make some changes related to new standards for, e.g., coordinated entry. Carolyn proposed May 18th from 10 to 11:30 am, at a location TBA. At the next CoC meeting, which will be two months from now, we plan to bring the documents, with the recommendations from that committee, so the CoC's general membership was officially notified that we plan to review those recommendations.

There were no objections to that proposed schedule; the schedule was confirmed.

14. Seeing no further business, Chair Tranine Chisom **adjourned** the meeting at 11:33 A.M.