

Housing First Solano
Solano County Continuum of Care
Board Meeting Minutes
January 28, 2015
11:30 a.m to 12:30 p.m.

Board Members Present: Ruth Matz; Ron Grassi; Frank Wells; Reggie Doss; Anne Putney; Emily Cantu; Tranine Chisom

Members of the public present: Phyllis Harrison, Norma Ramos, Carol Elliott, Zoila Perez-Sanchez, Greg Schwei, Laura Escobar, Ashley Hart McIntyre, Carrie Sager, Carolyn Wylie

Ruth Matz called the meeting to order at 11:33.

a. A quorum of the board was present

1. Membership Update: Ruth Matz gave a membership update. The CoC is encouraging new members to join. Anyone wishing to become a member should fill out an application, which may be available on the website [it is]. Becoming a member is the first step to becoming involved with the CoC, followed by increasing participation. Becoming a member requires certain commitments, like adopting a housing first approach.

2. Letter of Support for Healthy Start Family Resource Center: Ashley Hart McIntyre introduced Zoila Perez-Sanchez from the Healthy Start Family Resource Center (FRC), part of the Fairfield-Suisun School District, which was seeking a letter of support from the CoC to support its application for federal funds. A letter to the California Department of Education was included in the handouts.

Zoila explained that the FRC serves homeless students and their families. It leverages partnerships with the community for resources. The FRC is applying for \$225,000 in funding over three years under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act. It has received this grant since 2001. The FRC does a good job of tracking homeless services and students, and other school districts are looking to FRC as a model. While the FRC is not currently a CoC member, Zoila committed to joining and participating in the future.

Ruth Matz asked if there were any youth providers in the CoC. Frank Wells has a program in Fairfield.

Zoila Perez-Sanchez noted that runaway youth are hard to get into shelters and often bounce between friends to stay in school. Ruth Matz asked what the funding would go to. Zoila Perez-Sanchez said that the FRC only provides services, not shelter per the grant requirements, but when housing is an issue, it tries to leverage other agencies and partnerships, for example, finding funds to pay an electric bill when utility back payments may cause a student to lose housing and be unable to attend school.

Ron Grassi noted that the county has worked with the FRC and they do good work.

Ruth Matz said that the CoC's main concern is housing.

Ashley Hart McIntyre said that it would be useful to have the FRC as part of the CoC for coordination purposes.

Frank Wells moved to adopt the letter of support as written. Reggie Doss seconded the motion. The motion passed with the Board in agreement.

3. SOAR TA Request for Applications: Carrie Sager presented an opportunity for SOAR Technical Assistance. SOAR is a way of fast-tracking SSI and SSDI applications for homeless individuals with disabilities. The available technical assistance requires recipients to commit to developing an action plan for SOAR implementation, and includes a planning session with community members and a 3-day Leadership Academy for the lead agency.

Ruth Matz noted that Community Action North Bay is using SOAR, and has applied for TA for three years and been denied every time. CANB is doing it on its own, and has a staff member, Mike Gomez, in the office doing applications with SOAR. Getting the TA would be a good option if people are interested. Projects are scored in grant applications on increased client income. Because SSI goes up every year, once you get a person on SSI, you are automatically increasing their income every year. Right now there are about 6,000 pending applications for SSI, so getting to the top of the list is a very good thing.

Tranine Chisolm noted that this would really impact the population, because waiting for a two year process without income is difficult. Reggie Doss agreed.

Ruth Matz noted that the chronically homeless definitely need this service, but there are no McKinney-Vento funds for it. It is particularly expensive and difficult to appeal a decision when it involves a co-occurring disorder, because it is difficult to show that a disability is not caused by substance abuse.

Reggie Doss wondered if there was a reason why the CoC would not get the grant if it applied. Carrie Sager noted that only five CoCs will receive the TA, and the selection criteria were not specified, so there could be other CoCs who demonstrate greater need.

Reggie Doss moved to apply for the TA. Ron Grassi seconded the motion. No opposition or abstentions. The motion passed with the Board in agreement.

4a. The SOAR TA application requires identifying a local lead. Ruth Matz volunteered that CANB would do it, but that if someone else was interested she would not object.

Carol Elliott argued that the decision as to a local lead could have been brought to the whole CoC. Vacaville Social Services has been using SOAR and might have had feedback.

Frank Wells suggested that the general membership should already be aware if previous applications have failed. Others expressed that they were aware of SOAR, but not of the TA opportunity.

Laura Escobar asked for clarification on the role of the local lead. Would this person get additional training? Carrie Sager said that all participating stakeholders would get training and get

to participate in the action plan planning session, but the local lead would go to a leadership academy where he or she would learn how to train others in the CoC.

Ruth Matz noted that anyone can still get online training and certification through SOAR OAT.

Frank asked if we could send out an email looking for input on the local lead from other members of the CoC through SurveyMonkey. There was discussion on how that would work with the timeline for the application.

Emily Cantu suggested moving forward, as the board had already voted to apply for the TA; however keeping in mind in the future which items and opportunities could be placed on the CoC agenda as well for input.

Emily Cantu moved to apply for the SOAR TA with CANB as the local lead. Reggie Doss seconded. Ruth Matz abstained, as CANB had an interest in the vote. No opposition. The motion passed with the rest of the Board in agreement.

4. 2015 Meeting Schedule: Meetings of the Board will continue to be monthly. The next meeting will be February 25 at 11:30, after the committee meetings. Board members don't need to attend earlier than 11:30 unless they are on a committee. Ashley Hart McIntyre will send an updated calendar, including General Membership meetings.

5. Ruth Matz asked for updates from each board member.

Emily Cantu noted that Vacaville is getting ready for the PIT Count and HMIS collaboration through the Homeless Roundtable. Reggie Doss asked how he could attend meetings of the Roundtable. Emily noted that meetings are on the third Wednesday of the month, at 3:00 at Vacaville City Hall, Conference Room AB.

Ron Grassi is working on the PIT Count and getting CSBG set up for 2015. Ruth Matz noted that Catholic Charities is looking for support for CDBG.

Emily Cantu noted that the provider resource list on the City of Vacaville website (cityofvacaville.com) had been updated. Vacaville city services are split out from services in other locations. Zoila Perez-Sanchez asked if other cities, like Fairfield, were included or if it was just Vacaville. Emily said that other cities are included, but the list may not include all the available resources from those cities. If anyone has updates, they should contact Emily.

Ron Grassi reminded everyone that the PIT Count is on Friday, and Reggie Doss encouraged everyone to come down even if they are not yet signed up.

Emily Cantu moved to adjourn. Ron Grassi seconded the motion. No opposition or abstentions. The motion passed with the agreement of the Board and the meeting adjourned at 12:10.