

OHS Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

July 18, 2024

9:00am

Front Steps Housing & Services

Members present: Raymond James for Karen Anderson, Michael Seidman, Barb Karam, Chris Knestrick, Gillian Prater-Lee for Michiel Wackers, Yvonne Conwell, Ed Abshire, Allison Schaefer, Fred Berry, Marcia Zashin, Mike Bernot, Erin Miyashi for Beth Graham, Angela Glassco, Beau Hill, Elaine Gimmel, Mike Sering, Shajuana Gaston.

Members absent: Dorivette Nolan, Kris Harsh, Karen McHenry, Linda Uveges, Mary McNamara, Kirsti Mouncey, Jeanna Davis, James Dombard, Raymond Mills, Loh.

Others present: Melissa Sirak, Amanda Larson, Nick Butina, Lydia Roldan, Nikki Eggert, , Yolanda Peoples, Spence Kline, Danielle Cosgrove, Christie Sozio, Brian Lutz, Jenny Eppich, Valerie Novack, Shalonda Swanson, John Wolak, Liam Haggerty, Nicole Evans, Terrel Valentine, Eric Milkie, Renee Williams, Megan Scheck.

- I. Welcome and Open Remarks
 - a. Elaine Gimmel, tri-chair, established quorum and called the meeting to order at 9:08am
- II. Decision issues
 - a. Approval of Advisory Board Minutes 5/16/2024
 - i. Fred Berry presented the minutes and asked for a motion to approve.
 - ii. Barb Karam motioned to approve, Mike Sering seconded.
 - iii. All were in favor with no opposition, no abstentions, motion carries.
 - b. OHS Advisory Board membership
 - i. Change for Youth Advisory Board/REACH Board member. Chris was unable to continue in their position, so A Place4 Me has recommended Shajuana Gaston to fill that seat. This is one of the tri-chair seats.
 - ii. This is a seat that is filled for the YAB by A Place 4 Me.
 - iii. Mike Sering asked if a orientation would be provided and Melissa said yes.
 - iv. Fred asked for discussion and a motion to approve. Mike Bernot motioned to approve Shajuana Gaston's appointment to the Board as one of the tri-chairs, Elaine Gimmell seconded.
 - v. All were in favor with no opposition, no abstentions, motion carries.
 - c. Approval of CE Redesign
 - i. Melissa Sirak presented.
 - ii. This is the second or third time that this has been reviewed.
 - iii. Consultants focused specifically on coordinated entry have been engaged to work on this redesign.
 - iv. Request for Qualifications will come from OHS and there will be a webinar hosted by OHS.
 - v. Mike Sering asked if the RFQ would replace the RFP, and Melissa answered yes and provided a brief overview of the RFQ.

- vi. One member asked if this would be open to new partners or continue with current CE providers. Melissa said it would be open to anyone interest to apply under the RFQ with the hope that current CE providers would still want involved.
 - vii. Barb Karam motioned to approve the CE redesign as presented, Mike Bernot seconded.
 - viii. All were in favor with no opposition, no abstentions, motion carries.
 - d. Approval of YHDP Policies and standards (Navigation and TH-RRH)
 - i. Melissa Sirak presented on behalf of the Policy Committee.
 - ii. 2023 started to focus on putting policies and procedures in written form.
 - iii. No changes to the content, but have added the joint component to the policy where it is needed for the new program.
 - iv. Elaine Gimmel motioned to approve the YHDP policies and standards as presented, Allison Schaefer seconded.
 - v. All were in favor with no opposition, no abstentions, motion carries.
 - vi. Melissa thanked everyone who has participated in the policy committee and expressed gratitude for the hard work.
 - e. Approval of PSH Work Group Charter
 - i. Jenny Eppich presented.
 - ii. PSH Work Group Charter was sent out to the Board.
 - iii. This charter addresses system and program-level opportunities and challenges for PSH providers and forms a charter. This includes all PSH providers in Cuyahoga County.
 - iv. Meet monthly, reviews data and performance. Working with consumers and PSH program providers. Discusses system level improvements. Focusing on the PSH standards approved by the PPC committee and OHS Advisory Board.
 - v. Melissa thanked the consultants and the workgroup for their time over the last year. This work has pulled all of the PSH providers together for the first time. Looking forward to more formal report outs to the OHS Board. PSH Work Group may become a committee itself.
 - vi. One member asked how the persons with lived experience would be selected. Jenny shared that right now they are at the PSH buildings and meeting with staff and residents there, and Jenny shared that she is open to ideas on engagement and would share her contact information.
 - vii. Chris Knestrick asked about any language about chronically homeless and a focus on that population, and a discussion ensued. This needs continued
 - viii. Elaine Gimmel motioned to accept the PSH Workgroup Charter as presented, Barb Karam seconded.
 - ix. All were in favor with no opposition, no abstentions, motion carries.
- III. 2024 NOFO Update
 - a. Howard Burchman presented
 - b. HUD has not yet released the NOFO but the deadline will not change in September.

- c. Made a lot of progress in preparing for the NOFO – scored all renewing applications, and solicited and received all applications for new projects but have not reviewed and ranked those until as soon as the NOFO is released.
- d. Next year there will not be a CoC competition, whatever score we receive on this year's application will carry over to next year. We do not know if there will be new project opportunities for 2025
- e. \$25MIL awarded to HUD for supportive services staff, and this will be dispersed and awarded to each CoC.
- f. NOFO for new PSH will come just before the CoC NOFO, and will be due after the CoC NOFO.
 - i. Elaine asked about the NOFO for PSH, Howard stated it is for capital only – could be for new developments or maybe for rehabilitation of current units, we will know when released.
- g. Melissa shared that individual scores will be sent to each organization, and there might be a need for an emergency Board meeting to approve the R&R to submit on time. This may be virtual depending on the timeframe.

IV. PIT Presentation

- a. Nick Butina introduced Amanda Larson, the new HMIS Administrator
- b. Amanda introduced herself and shared her background.
- c. Still working to fill the final HMIS position.
- d. PIT Count was submitted in May and approved.
- e. 2021 – 2024 has seen a steady rise in persons served.
- f. Households are generally growing in size, but we are serving slightly fewer households – more people, but less households.
- g. Shared the difficulty with getting an accurate count of the unsheltered population and efforts to get as accurate account as possible.
- h. Family count has increased since 2021 but was the same in 2023/2024.
- i. Chronically homeless numbers have steadily increased from 2021-2024 but Nick guesses this is due to being able to better capture this data and ask the right questions to get this answer from persons served.
- j. Chris asked if numbers of SUD and MI are comparable to national numbers. Nick said he would look into this.
- k. One member asked about adults w/ HIV/AIDS if those persons are provided resources and asked about treatment options. Nick said he wasn't sure, but he would guess that since the counters are providers who work with and usually know the clients that they are already hooked up to providers.
- l. Fleeing DV numbers could have increased from 53 to 100 due to the new DV program capturing those individuals.
- m. The outreach module/mapping encampments in HMIS should help the 2025 PIT count but will still have to go out and find new encampments if any. 2026 should be easier.
- n. HIC counts for TH has decreased since those have been funded less. RRH has increased usage as pushed by HUD. PSH beds decreased, this was due to non-participating PSH beds being counted in prior years but were not dedicated for homeless consumers, so

now that we are not counting those due to not being used by homeless folks, this number has decreased.

- i. One member asked if this decrease would impact scoring on NOFO, and Nick did not think it would.
- ii. Mike Sering asked about the RRH numbers going down for 2025 and Nick stated it could be an issue, but with the new DV dollars, we might see an increase for 2025.
- iii. One member asked about why HUD decided not to do a CoC competition for 2025. HUD did not provide information about why they are not doing a competition.

V. "Encompass" Presentation – Front Steps

- a. Cheryl presented.
- b. Front Steps provides intensive and non intensive SUD and integrated MH services.
- c. Front Steps is CARF accredited and OMHAS certified to provide BH services and focus on providing evidence-based services
- d. Treat all SUDs, and provide a multitude of treatment services, including assessment, urine analysis, level of care, IOP, outpatient treatment, Peer Recovery support, counseling, case management, Psychiatry services on site through Alliant, Primary care on site through Premier Primary Care, and Care Alliance through Women's Health.
 - i. IOP is 3 days a week, 3 hours each session
 - ii. After care is provided after IOP is completed
 - iii. Counseling is individually provided
 - iv. Peer recovery workers help clients connect to 12-step meetings, life skills, and navigating care
 - v. Case Management involves connecting to resources, housing navigation, benefits, basic needs, etc.
- e. Use evidence-based curriculum called "Living in Balance"
- f. Staff are licensed and highly credentialed
- g. Key elements of program are: Evidence based treatment, comprehensive care, and continuum of care.
- h. Work to make services easily accessible through walk-in hours. Accepting clients currently. No wait list at this time. Virtual and same day appointments are available. Accept Medicaid and Medicare, as well as sliding scale fee self-pay.
- i. To make an appointment, call 216-781-2250 or visit the website www.frontstepsservices.org or email referrals@frontstepsservices.org

VI. Shelter RFQ

- a. Melissa Sirak presented.
- b. More communication will come on this. Working on a RFQ for all shelter operations. Hope by end of year release RFQ or early 2025.
- c. Want uniformity in the standards for shelter standards and contracts.
- d. Includes all single adult, family, treatment service shelters funded by the CoC.

VII. Home for Every Neighbor Update

- a. Liam Haggerty presented.

- b. Initiative from Mayor's office focused on connecting homeless clients with supportive services.
- c. Working on developing a model.
- d. This is a program focused on connecting people to housing, not about closing encampments.
- e. Unsheltered strategic plan elements are in the workflow/model. Trying to mirror other programs within the CoC so there is consistency in standards and there isn't competition.
- f. Held a series of workshops with community partners.
- g. Came up with a workflow that would focus first on encampments. Team consists of outreach, unit acquisition team, Case management team, and move in team. There are many partners working on this together, including NEOCH, Frontline, LMM among many others.
- h. Intensive CM – weekly visits
- i. This is being classified as RRH in HMIS and is a 12 month program.
- j. Launched pilot on July 1. After pilot is complete, will be refined. 10-12 people in the pilot – these are regulars staying in encampments. Goal is to get housing within 3-4 weeks. Less than 3 weeks in to the pilot, they are starting to make housing offers. Family makeup, pets, and potential reunifications with children are taken into account and honored when making offers of housing. Goal to move all into housing by end of July. Furnished apts. Goal is 150 people housed by the end of the year.
- k. Will do focus groups with clients to obtain feedback after pilot.
- l. Elaine asked could they be referred to PSH project-based units and Liam stated that could happen.
- m. One member asked if there were any trends identified so far, in particular youth. There are no youth currently in the pilot.
- n. One member asked about LL recruitment. Liam shared there has been some progress, but it will likely always be a challenge. Pet fees and other upfront fees are offered to LL to help incentivize, but keeping this consistent with what other programs are offering as incentives to as not to compete.
- o. Mike S shared they have had some success with doing master leases with the organizations has helped with obtaining leases from LLs.
- p. Nick asked if there was an inspection, and Liam replied that LMM does the inspections.
- q. One member asked if utilities were included, and this is coordinated with the LL and utilities are included for the tenant.
- r. One member asked about Severe & Persistent Mentally Ill, and they would still be referred to any housing they are eligible for and need.
- s. Shajuana asked about what happens at the end of the 12 months and Liam answered it will be a continuing conversation about what will happen based on the needs of the clients. She also asked about the language and method for engaging LLs with the hope that other programs can use the same methods and language so that there doesn't become a "preference" from the landlord that impacts other programs negatively.

- t. Melissa shared her support and excitement for this new pilot and furthering the unsheltered plan, and learning from our experience and continuing to invest in the unsheltered population.
 - u. One member asked how many of the pilot were CH, and Liam said half.
- VIII. Initiative Reports
 - a. Ending Veteran Homelessness (EVH)
 - i. Shawna is not here, notes were included. Any questions direct to her.
 - b. Ending Youth Homelessness (EYH)
 - i. Numbers are relatively the same from month to month
 - ii. No returns to shelter
 - iii. Decrease in permanent exits and increase in non-permanent exits, hopeful that with the addition of TAY building that will flip.
 - iv. TH-RRH has not yet launched, waiting on amendment from HUD
 - v. Continuous QI efforts are underway, will be a core CQI workgroup starting in August.
 - vi. Reaching for new heights has over 50 action steps, will host 8/7 and 8/8 Teams meetings to begin the plan to take action.
 - vii. Nick stated there were only 9 applicants who pre-applied for the TAY building, but there are much more people who could benefit from that housing. There are single and family units for 18-24 year olds, and will start filling those units very soon. Allison shared there are many youth in programs who could benefit.
 - viii. Shared about the criteria and preference points.
 - c. RRH
 - i. EDEN still accepting 5 family referrals per month.
 - ii. West side catholic accepting 7 referrals per quarter
 - iii. 20 referrals per month for RRH DV
 - iv. Still having challenges with units being in acceptable condition and not wanting to take the subsidy
 - d. Unsheltered report
 - i. Steady rise of unsheltered homeless.
 - ii. Increase in trans women and nonbinary people experiencing homelessness.
- IX. Adjournment
 - a. Having no further business, meeting adjourned at 10:45am

The next OHS Advisory Board meeting is on 9/19/2024 at Front Steps Housing & Services

Submitted by Megan Scheck 7/18/2024