

OHS Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

January 16, 2025

9:00am

Front Steps Housing & Services

Members Present: Barb Karam, Chris Knestrick, Gillian Prater-Lee for Michiel Wackers, Levine Ross for Yvonne Conwell, Liam Haggerty, Allison Schaefer, Christie Sozio for Shajuana Gaston, Angela Davis for Marcia Zashin, Eric Milkie, Karen McHenry, Michael Hahn for Linda Uveges, Sherri Clancy, Mike Bernot, Beth Graham, Cynthia Dailey, Beau Hill, Elaine Gimmel, Loh, Stephanie Thomas, & Chris Anderson.

Members Absent: Beverly Torres, Dr. Kate Nagel, Dorivette Nolan, Kris Harsh, Ed Abshire, Jeanna Davis, Raymond Mills

Others Present: Megan Scheck, Shawna Gurley, Christie Sozio, Schanavian Adams-Luke, Tiarra May, Nick Butina, Allison Gill, Marcos Cortes, Prentis Jackson, Angela Glassco, Christine Palangio, Chris Krueger, Erin Rearden

- I. Welcome and Opening Remarks
 - a. Elaine Gimmel welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:20am.
- II. Decision Issues
 - a. Approval of Advisory Board Minutes
 - i. Elaine presented the minutes from the 11/14/2024 Board meeting and asked for any discussion.
 - ii. Mike Bernot motioned to approve the minutes, Karen McHenry seconded. All were in favor with no opposition or abstentions. Motion carries.
 - b. Approval of HMIS Policies and procedures
 - i. Nick Butina provided an overview of the changes to the Policies and Procedures.
 - ii. Nick also shared some areas for improvement with regard to data quality and HMIS.
 - iii. One member asked about error rate thresholds from HUD, and Nick shared that HUD doesn't give a threshold, but Cuyahoga County uses 2.5% as the quality measure, because that is similar to other communities.
 - iv. One member asked if there is any funding available for data entry at each agency since there will be more of a push for data quality. Nick advised that agencies utilize the allowed HMIS line item when applying for their grants in the next NOFO. A discussion ensued.
 - v. Nick stated data entry staff are allowed to enter in data for things like "did not ask", and to put what is accurate instead of "refused" for everything.
 - vi. Barb Karam motioned to approve the HMIS Policies and Procedures, Loh seconded. There were no oppositions or abstentions, motion carries.
- III. OHS Staffing Updates (Marcos Cortes/Allison Gill)
 - a. OHS Director Job Posting – closes 1/17/2025
 - i. Marcos presented.

- ii. They will review the applications and conduct interviews and if an appropriate candidate is found, they will make an offer. If an appropriate candidate is not found, the position will be re-posted.
 - b. New Staff and Staff Role Changes
 - i. Nick is stepping into a role in which he will be coordinating the OHS Advisory Board.
 - ii. Prentice is a new staff member with OHS but has been with the county in housing for 6 years.
- IV. OHS Advisory Board Membership (Elaine Gimmel)
 - a. Announcement of new members
 - i. Dr Seidman has resigned, and Dr Kate Nagel is going to be filling that seat.
 - ii. Liam Haggerty will be filling the designated seat for the city
 - iii. Other new board members were announced at the last meeting.
 - iv. Elaine stressed the importance of sending a proxy if someone cannot attend as a Board member.
 - v. Designated seats will continue to be renewed every 3 years unless the member states they wish to resign and then will designate a replacement.
 - b. Request for Chair applications
 - i. Will be sending an email asking for a statement of interest from anyone who is interested in serving as the third chair of the OHS Advisory Board.
 - ii. Hoping to get more than one applicant, but need one more Chair.
 - iii. Elaine gave an overview of the commitment involved.
- V. Seasonal Shelter Update (Chris Knestrick)
 - a. Metanoia received the variance to open, likely 1/24.
 - b. Chris expressed concern regarding the weather conditions and delay in opening the seasonal shelter at the time when it is very much needed by unsheltered people.
 - c. Marcos asked if there is a way to open rec centers as extended warming centers. Another member advised these are only open until 10pm.
 - d. Stephanie Thomas shared the delay is due to having to have a public meeting and give a 7 day notice to the public of the meeting before opening the shelter.
 - i. Loh expressed objection to this shelter being opened so late and the dangerous conditions unsheltered people are experiencing.
 - ii. Other members expressed agreement that this has not happened timely enough.
 - iii. One member shared that the county put out a RFP for seasonal shelter in August but no one responded.
 - iv. Stephanie expressed that her organization was not told about the RFP nor were they involved in the beginning planning for seasonal shelter and they would have been involved sooner.
 - v. Some members wondered if the shelter could legally open ahead of 1/24, as the variance was granted per Chris Knestrick's understanding. Stephanie was not sure that the variance was officially granted, however. Stephanie will talk to city council today to see if it can be pushed to open sooner.

- vi. Elaine wondered if there was an opportunity to ask the warming centers to open overnight, and Chris shared that these conversations are underway.
- VI. 2025 PIT/HIC Webinar Announcement (Nick Butina)
 - a. Tomorrow at 10am is a webinar for all HMIS data entry workers at agencies. Have received a lot of emails from people who are not available, but it will be recorded and posted to view after.
 - b. PIT count will be 1/28. PIT Cards are available now through next week at OHS.
 - c. Will not be meeting with people individually to explain things that will be covered in the webinar, so it is on each agency to make sure they are in attendance and well informed.
 - d. Beau expressed gratitude and appreciation to Allison and Nick for the changes and assistance. Allison expressed gratitude to Nick and Amanda for all their work.
- VII. REACH Board Updates and Annual Priorities (*REACH Board Member*)
 - a. Christie Sozio presented on behalf of Shawana.
 - b. REACH is the youth action board of young adults working to end homelessness.
 - c. Currently have 10 YA board members.
 - d. First objective is youth drop in center, have a proposed location. Granted a variance for this, but one neighbor appealed so they are waiting on the appeal.
 - e. Working on PR campaign to focus on the need for the drop in center.
 - f. Chris Anderson shared two initiatives.
 - i. First, the CQI workgroup has created two projects from the \$4MIL for youth homelessness.
 - 1. The workgroup is focusing on monitoring the program and making sure that lived experience is at the forefront of the program.
 - 2. Have started housing people.
 - ii. Second, A Place 4 Me is working to build better community partnerships where young adults are leading the process. Hope to have this become common practice to have youth in leadership.
- VIII. A Home For Every Neighbor Update (*Liam Haggerty*)
 - a. Begin with outreach (NEOCH and Frontline), identify sites or individuals living unsheltered.
 - b. Visit with the regular stayers and that becomes the by name list and then work towards getting those stayers housed.
 - c. Rental units with 12 month subsidy, housed with the household members they identify (couple, family, friend group, etc.)
 - d. Connected to long term case management throughout the 12 months, and work with furniture provider for a fully furnished apartment and get them hygiene products.
 - e. 116 people are housed in this program, which started in August.
 - f. Have worked at 13 different sites. A few people moved on from the site and didn't want to engage, and a few were found again at another site and were then interested in being housed and were housed.
 - g. Actively engaged in smaller sites, around 20-25 total sites currently.
 - h. 12-14 sites on the list to still engage with, but usually get to most sites within a couple days.

- i. Weekly case management visits are typical especially in the beginning. Can taper down over time but are based on participant needs, so sometimes these visits will not taper down as quickly.
 - j. Loh expressed concern that the number of persons served is not high enough to address the need, and that the units are not in the areas that people want to live. Liam shared that they have always been able to find units, and are making slow progress with getting units on the west side, but they have gotten a few landlords.
 - k. Allison shared that OHS submitted an application to HUD for a unit acquisition team to further the success of this program.
 - l. Elaine asked what happens at the end of 12 months. Liam shared that all participants are labeled as RRH, so they are eligible for other housing, but further planning is needed in this area.
 - m. Loh asked about master leasing. Liam shared that they have only done tenant leasing, and have not run into any issues. They have also not run into any issues with tenants being denied housing due to background.
 - n. A discussion ensued on housing resources.
- IX. Initiative Reports
- a. Ending Veteran Homelessness (EVH) (*Shawna Gurley*)
 - i. As of 1/1 there were 93 veterans on the census. Not hitting goal marks, but not too far off.
 - ii. There are 7 CH veterans.
 - iii. At 107 days, placement into housing is a little slower than the goal of 90 days.
 - iv. Decrease in unsheltered homeless.
 - v. Struggling with lack of housing capacity.
 - vi. Barb shared that the FMR being released late has been a challenge in getting people housed, and lost one landlord due to lower FMR.
 - b. Rapid Rehousing (RRH) (*Elaine Gimmel*)
 - i. Accepting 20 referrals for DV RRH, and 5 for traditional RRH.
 - ii. Prioritizing families
 - iii. In January, subsidizing 130 households in DV RRH, and 66 in traditional RRH.
 - iv. Provide full subsidy for 12 months, not a declining subsidy, but they are discussing the possibility of changing that model.
 - c. Ending Youth Homelessness (EYH) (*Ebony Clayton*)
 - i. Increase in number of YA experiencing homelessness, most are in shelter but 49 are unsheltered.
 - ii. Christie shared that 14 YA have moved into the Lotus building and working to move in more.
- X. Meeting adjourned at 11:02am.
- XI. The next meeting of the OHS Advisory Board is March 20th.