

Detroit Continuum of Care | Board of Directors

Working to Equitably End Homelessness in Detroit, Highland Park, & Hamtramck

April 5, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

(Agenda can be accessed by [clicking here](#); Supporting Materials by [clicking here](#))

Board Members Present

Amy Brown
Anne Blake
Catherine Distelrath
Celia Thomas
Chioke Mose-Telesford
DaJuan Smith
Donna Price
Eleanor Bradford
Gerald Curley
Joy Flood
June White
Katie Zeiter
Ray Shipman
Sharyn Johnson
Shawntae Harris-Mintline
Tasha Gray
Vanessa Samuelson

Absent Board Members

Ari Ruttenberg
Deloris Cortez
Elizabeth Vasquez
Ted Phillips

Excused Board Members

Ashlee Cunningham
Erica George
Terra Linzner

General Public

Amanda Sternberg
Allison Green
Alyssa Rietveld
Ayana Gonzalez
Bobby Brown
Erica Snyder
Jamie Wojahn
Jamie Ebaugh
Jasmine Morgan
Jay Krammes
John Stoyka
Kaitie Giza
Karlton Akins
Kathleen Noel
Kiana Harrison
Kimberly Benton
Laura Urteaga-Fuentes
Lauren Bianchi
Lindsey Bishop-Gilmore
Marguerite Lawrence
Matthew Tommelein
Nailah Brown
Olivia Carter
ReGina Hentz
Rosie Jones
Roslyn Baughman
Sandy Clarke
Shani Campbell
Slaynne De La Cruz
Theresia Prince
William Sheeley

Amy B. opened the meeting at 2:04pm with introductions – utilizing the chat box.

Executive Committee Report & Announcements:

Summary –

- Amy B. took some time to go over the webinar logistics: including the agenda, breakout rooms, and the presentations.
- COVID Emergency Rental Assistance (CERA) Update:
 - The funding for CERA is no longer being held in the legislative process and has begun to be made available to communities. Therefore, the program in Detroit has officially begun operating.
 - Tasha shared the flyer to advertise the resource ([linked here](#)) and encouraged folks to begin sharing with clients, landlords, and community members.

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- Update on Board Values Revision Process
 - There has been progress on the efforts to finalize the values for the CoC Board (a process which began in 2019). A small group of Board Members met in March to incorporate the feedback from the last Board Discussion. The feedback requested to better center the values on equity and to ensure that they were framed in a way that was asset/strength-based. The discussion around values will be revisited at the May Board Meeting.

Consent Agenda

March Board Meeting Minutes

- The floor was opened for questions. None were asked.
- Celia motioned to approve the March 2021 Board Minutes. Gerald seconded the motion. Of the 14 voting members present, 14 voted in favor. 0 were opposed. 0 abstained. The motion passed.

FY2020 CoC Competition Update & Projected Timeline:

Summary –

- Amanda reminded the board that the FY2020 competition was cancelled by HUD due to the pandemic. As a result, all projects funded in FY2019 were automatically renewed. In total, Detroit received 28,917,271 in CoC Funding for FY2020 (factoring in the increase for FMR and the full CoC Planning Grant allocation).
- Amanda then provided the board with updates about the FY2021 competition. Amanda anticipates that this year's competition will follow a more traditional timeline – with the NOFA being released in May/June and the application being due in late summer/early fall. Similarly, the CoC can likely anticipate the award announcements in the late months of 2021 or early months of 2022.

Next Steps –

- The Board can anticipate the following Competition-related content to come before them in the coming months (final timelines may vary):
 - May –
 - Evaluation and Scoring Recommendations
 - Priority Ranking & Reallocation Recommendations
 - New Project Funding Recommendations
 - June/July –
 - Progress updates
 - August –
 - New Project Applications
 - September –
 - General Membership reviews and approves the written application
 - November/December –
 - Debrief of the 2021 Competition.

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Tracking of the Impact of ESG-CV Funding:

Summary –

- Technical Assistance (TA) Work:
 - Ayana G. and Erica S. introduced themselves and explained that they work for The Technical Assistance Collaborative, INC. (TAC) – a nonprofit technical assistance (TA) provider who HUD has assigned to provide intensive support to Detroit (one of 29 communities selected). Some of the goals for their TA in Detroit are as follows:
 - Help with the speed and coordination of the administration of the relief funding provided to the community, assist with the implementation of best practices, increase system capacity, and maximize outlets for systems transformation.
 - Ultimately, they are working to help communities transition from a crisis-response to the development and implementation of longer-range rehousing strategies and operations.
 - Ayana and Erica also spent some time celebrating what has been able to be accomplished as a result of the increased pandemic-related funding in the community. As a reminder, Detroit received roughly 22.6 million dollars in ESG funding in 2020 (roughly \$19 million more than the standard \$3 million annual allocation) Some of those accomplishments are as follows (tied to the goals stated above):
 - Speed and Coordination –
 - Developed the ESG Planning Group
 - Targeted community response to COVID-19 which has been adaptive to the ever-changing pandemic
 - Implement Best Practices –
 - Surveyed shelter and RRH providers and used the results to provide targeted training opportunities
 - Developed a homeless prevention assessment tool and provided trainings
 - Developed ESG-CV Written Standards
 - Coordinated with the health department for a comprehensive vaccine distribution strategy
 - Systems Capacity –
 - Developed ESG-CV data dashboards
 - Developed the Homeless Prevention Provider Workgroup
 - Maximize Systems Transformation
 - Launched the Family Housing Accelerator initiative
 - Created an ESG-CV RFP and scoring tool to assist with the strategic allocation of the additional resources
- Integrating Prevention into Coordinated Entry (CE):
 - Catherine D. explained that Detroit has received roughly \$3 million in homeless prevention funding to assist the most vulnerable households who are at “imminent risk of homelessness, meaning that the household is likely to be literally homeless within the next 14 days.” This funding is unique from the more than \$100 million eviction diversion funding that Detroit has received which is targeted to those facing eviction, but are not at immediate risk of homelessness.
 - With the increased prevention funding came an opportunity to integrate prevention into Coordinated Entry which allows for a streamlined prioritization and referral process for resources and ensures the funding is targeted to the most vulnerable.

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- After several months of hard work, CAM was able to launch its new process on February 1, 2021. 53 households have been assessed to-date using the new prevention prioritization tool. Some of the preliminary data is as follows:
 - 78% of those assessed were staying with family or friends (doubled up); 15% were staying in a h/motel; and 7% were staying in some other at-risk situation.
 - 48% had no income or were below 14% Area Median Income (AMI).
 - Of the 53 assessed, 10 have been successfully referred to homeless prevention providers to receive assistance.

Next Steps –

- TAC will continue to provide support on an array of the efforts listed above. CAM will continue to monitor and adjust as needed.

2021 Housing Choice Voucher Surge:

Summary –

- Catherine D. reported that an unprecedented number of homeless households (258 so far in 2021) have been pulled from the MSHDA Homeless Preference Housing Choice Voucher (HP HCV) waitlist. Per conversations with MSHDA, it is expected that there will be even more (likely up to 500) pulls throughout 2021. This is an exciting opportunity to provide a large number of persons experiencing homelessness with a long-term housing resource.
 - To successfully link as many clients as possible to this resource will require a concerted effort, coordination, and collaboration. Staff from CAM, HAND, and the City of Detroit have been meeting to develop a systems level strategy and response. Efforts have already been underway to partner with MSHDA and the housing agents to ensure no clients fall through the cracks. This team has also developed some high-level goals. They are as follows:
 - 100% of persons still in a CoC Program (street outreach, emergency shelter, transitional housing, rapid re-housing) at the time of the pull from MSHDA will be contacted and offered assistance with completing the voucher paperwork.
 - 80% of persons still in a CoC program at the time of the pull will successfully navigate the process and lease up with a voucher.

Next Steps –

- The interagency team will continue to meet to plan for and respond to the surge of pulls and to advocate on behalf of the system.

2021 PIT & HIC Data Submission:

Summary –

- William S. explained that CoC's are required annually to conduct a count of the number of persons experiencing homelessness and staying in shelter on a single night. This is known as the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count. Every two years, CoC's are required to conduct a count of persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness. 2021 would have traditionally been a required year for the unsheltered count, however Detroit received a waiver from HUD to forgo the count due to the risks incurred from the ongoing pandemic. Detroit still conducted the sheltered PIT and HIC for 2021.
- William went on to briefly review the *draft* PIT data for 2021. HAND is still working with providers to clean up any data errors to ensure the final information is as accurate as possible. There are also still a few providers who have yet to get their data to HAND. The *preliminary* data shows that 1,171 persons were experiencing homelessness in the Detroit CoC as of January 27, 2021. This is 24% decrease from January 2020. While homelessness decreased overall, there was a slight increase in the number of persons experiencing chronic homelessness on this night as well as those fleeing domestic violence.
- Kiana H. explained that HUD requires to do an annual inventory of the number of beds that are operational within the CoC. This is called the Housing Inventory Count (HIC). The HIC gives a community a sense of what their capacity is (the maximum number of beds that are available to serve persons experiencing homelessness in the community). It is conducted at the same time as the PIT. Kiana went on to explain that 2021 is unique in that HUD has not opened the

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portal to enter and submit the data (called the HDX) yet. This is typically opened in March. HUD has not made any announcements as to when the portal will open or if they will extend the submission deadline due to their delays. HAND has collected the majority of the data for 2021. However, the HUD VASH data still needs to be collected. HAND is working with the VA, MCAH, and MSHDA to determine how to obtain that data. The *preliminary* data has shown that for shelter, transitional housing, and safe haven we have generally experienced a decrease in the total number of beds available in the system. Providers report that this is due to COVID-19 and the need to social distance. Our community has seen a slight increase in the number of PSH beds and a decrease in the number of RRH beds. Again, all of this data is preliminary and may change as it is finalized. In total, 104 projects reported data for the HIC.

- Once the data is finalized, HAND can then determine our community's utilization rates – which compares the maximum number of beds available to the number of persons who were utilizing those beds on the night of the PIT.

Decision –

- Donna motioned to approve the HMIS team to finalize the data and submit it to HUD. Eleanor seconded the motion. Of the 15 voting members present, 15 voted in favor. 0 were opposed. 0 abstained. The motion passed.

Next Steps –

- HAND will keep the Board updated about the status of the submission. The final data will be uploaded to HAND's website once it is complete.

Continuing the Conversation on Adopting a Vision as the Detroit CoC:

Summary –

- This conversation is a continuation of the effort to adopt a vision for the CoC that is rooted in equity. These joint discussions between the CoC Board and General Membership began at the March Board Meeting and continued at the March General Membership Meeting. Amy B. explained that today's discussion will work to engage with the feedback that was received in March. Amy briefly recapped some of the feedback. Amy also took some time to briefly review the process that has led to the conversation today. This began out of the CoC Board making a commitment to focus on promoting racial equity and centering the work of the CoC around those with lived expertise. The National Innovation Service (NIS) was contracted to help advance this work and their scope of service was oriented to these goals. While the adoption of a vision wasn't the initial focus, the need for a centralizing vision for the CoC was highlighted during the community engagement process that NIS conducted.
- Vanessa S. went on to re-review the proposed vision. Vanessa then went on to directly address some of the questions that were asked during the meetings in March. Vanessa then discussed the ways that adopting the vision can lead to action. If adopted, the vision would function as the umbrella under which all of our collective work falls under, is guided by, and is measured against. The Board and General Membership are also being asked to commit to (re)designing a system that aligns with the vision. Ideally, this (re)design process would be coordinated, addresses accountability, and address the need for a community-driven processes to set priorities.
- Kaitie G. briefly discussed what the co-design process could look like. She emphasized that the intention is to center frontline staff and persons with lived expertise throughout the entire process.
- Tasha G. briefly discussed the importance of adopting a vision. She explained that the vision will provide the CoC with a framework under which to develop necessary partnerships with the City and other key service and funding partners. Adopting the vision is a first step to addressing ongoing CoC challenges and will hopefully help drive the CoC towards action.
- The group then broke out into small groups to continue the conversation.

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Next Steps –

- This discussion will continue at the May General Membership Meeting – at which point the Board and CoC will be asked to vote.

Amy B. closed the meeting at 4:32pm. *The next CoC Board meeting will be on Monday, May 3rd, from 2 – 4:30pm. Location will continue to be virtual due to COVID-19.*