

**Detroit Continuum of Care | Board of Directors**  
Working to Equitably End Homelessness in Detroit, Highland Park, & Hamtramck  
**June 7, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes**

*(Meeting packet can be accessed by [clicking here](#); Meeting Slides by [clicking here](#))*

**Board Members Present**

Amy Brown  
Anne Blake  
Ashlee Cunningham  
Catherine Distelrath  
Celia Thomas  
Chioke Mose-Telesford  
DaJuan Smith  
Deloris Cortez  
Donna Price  
Eleanor Bradford  
Elizabeth Vasquez  
Erica George  
Gerald Curley  
Joy Flood  
June White  
Katie Zeiter  
Ray Shipman  
Sharyn Johnson  
Shawntae Harris-Mintline  
Tasha Gray  
Ted Phillips

**Absent Board Members**

Ari Ruttenberg  
Terra Linzner

**Excused Board Members**

Vanessa Samuelson

**General Public**

Amanda Sternberg  
Alyssa Rietveld  
Andrea Dye-Farginson  
Cole Forfinski  
Curtis Smith  
Deborah Briggs  
Desiree Arscott  
Gerald Piro  
Jamie Wojahn  
Jasmine Morgan  
Joey Merchant  
John Stoyka  
Kaitie Giza  
Kathleen Noel  
Kevin Solarte  
Kiana Harrison  
Kimberly Benton  
Lindsey Bishop-Gilmore  
Matthew Tommelein  
Mercedes Brown  
Michele Robinson  
Molly Mueller  
ReGina Hentz  
Scott Jackson  
Shani Campbell  
Stephanie Osterland

**Amy B. opened the meeting at 2:03 pm 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.
- July Board Meeting Date Moved:
  - Amy B. informed the board that the next Board Meeting will be moved from July 5<sup>th</sup> to July 12<sup>th</sup> due to the holiday and many people being out of the office on the originally scheduled meeting date.
- Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) Update:
  - Jasmine M. let the board know that the Detroit CoC has been awarded 160 Emergency Housing Vouchers (110 from MSHDA and 50 from DHC). This is a resource that has been made available through the American Rescue Plan. These vouchers will provide leasing assistance and other supports to promote stable housing. Work is underway to get things in order for these vouchers to begin being used within the community. More information will be provided with the CoC Board as it becomes available.

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- Alternative Shelter Incentives
  - The City of Detroit received a new grant from the United Way to continue providing incentives to encourage folks to get the results to their COVID-19 test and to remain at the alternative shelters for their full isolation period. The incentives will operate similarly to how they have to-date with the caveat that there will be a cap on how much funding a household can receive for their quarantine stay. This cap has been imposed to try and help the funding to be able to serve more folks.

### *Consent Agenda*

#### May Board Meeting Minutes

- The floor was opened for questions. None were asked.
- Donna motioned to approve the May 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:*

#### Summary –

- Amanda S. reminded the CoC Board about what has happened with the CoC Competition to-date and what they can expect to come before them in the coming months. As a reminder, in May the CoC Board approved the Renewal Evaluation Criteria and New Project Application Process Recommendations. Renewal projects and new projects are currently working on their applications and they will be due in the coming month. It is expected that the NOFO (Notice of Funding Opportunity) from HUD will be released sometime in July. If this is the case, the application will likely be due to HUD sometime in September.
- Amanda went on to review the FY2021 Project Priority Ranking and Reallocation Policy with the CoC Board. For context, HUD requires CoCs to have transparent policies that determines how projects will be prioritized and ranked for funding. It is a way for us to communicate our priorities to HUD in terms of which projects that we want funded. In February, the Values and Funding Committee reviewed the FY2021 Project Priority Ranking and Reallocation Policy. This went out for public comments in March. Those comments were reviewed by the Values and Funding Committee and updates to the policy were made in alignment with the comments. The full policy and contextual details can be found in the Meeting Packet (linked above).
- The recommendations aim to accomplish the following things:
  - Projects are prioritized for funding in a transparent and performance-based manner
  - The CoC is aligned with HUD's expectations of using objective performance criteria when ranking projects
  - To preserve funding for projects that continue to meet performance standards and continue to meet a need in our community
  - To prioritize projects for funding that align with our goals (e.g. ending chronic homelessness)
  - Finding a balance between prioritizing projects for continued funding while also creating space for new projects that can expand our capacity and diversify our portfolio
- The proposed ranking order is as follows:
  - Renewal CoC Infrastructure Projects (Coordinated Entry and HMIS)
    - New this year: If a project does not meet certain performance standards detailed in the board packet, those projects would be bumped down and ranked instead with the renewal permanent supportive housing programs. This is to emphasize that performance matters regardless of project type.
  - New CoC Bonus projects (up to \$1M)

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- There is a maximum amount listed here to strive to align with the goal to balance prioritizing renewal and new projects for funding
- New Domestic Violence (DV) Bonus projects (Up to \$500K)
  - There is a maximum amount listed here to strive to align with the goal to balance prioritizing renewal and new projects for funding
- Renewals with less than 12 months of operations
- Renewal Permanent Supportive Housing Projects
  - This is where the bulk of our funding lies (roughly \$20M of our typically \$28M allocation)
  - New this year: If a project does not meet certain performance standards detailed in the board packet, those projects would be bumped down and ranked instead with the renewal rapid re-housing programs. This is to emphasize that performance matters regardless of project type.
- Renewal Rapid Re-Housing Projects
  - If a project does not meet certain performance standards detailed in the board packet, those projects would be bumped down and ranked instead with the renewal transitional housing programs. This is to emphasize that performance matters regardless of project type.
- Renewal Joint-Component Rapid Re-Housing and Transitional Housing
  - If a project does not meet certain performance standards detailed in the board packet, those projects would be bumped down and ranked instead with the renewal transitional housing programs. This is to emphasize that performance matters regardless of project type.
- Renewal Transitional Housing
  - If a project does not meet certain performance standards detailed in the board packet, those projects would be bumped down and ranked at the bottom of the ranking list. This is to emphasize that performance matters regardless of project type.
- Remaining CoC Bonus Projects
- Remaining DV Bonus Projects
- Per the proposed policy, a project is allowed to be reallocated (not renewed for funding) for the following reasons:
  - They voluntarily choose to release their grant
  - They do not meet the scoring threshold and are not granted a waiver
  - The board determines to reallocate the funding for another reason that must be demonstrated by data.

### Decision –

- Celia motioned to approve the FY2021 Project Priority Ranking and Reallocation Policy. Eleanor seconded the motion. Of the 17 eligible voting members present, 16 voted in favor. 0 were opposed. 1 abstained. The motion passed.

### Next Steps –

- HAND will continue to move forward the work of the CoC Competition and will come to the Board for updates and decision-making in the coming months. The Board can expect to review the final project ranking priority ranking list in September.

### ***Committee on Youth Homelessness Update:***

#### Summary –

- The Committee on Youth Homelessness' purpose is to lead a responsive system of care in Detroit to meet the needs of youth experiencing homelessness and at risk of homelessness to make youth homelessness a rare, brief, and one-time experience.
- The committees core values are as follows:
  - Housing first and harm reduction

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- Trauma informed and healing centered
  - Positive youth development
  - Youth centered/youth choice
  - Racial equity and inclusion
  - Data driven
  - Dignity, hope, and resilience
- The CYH is currently focusing on cultivating and strengthening authentic youth collaboration to ensure that young people have a say on the policies that directly impact them. The committee has also been preparing to apply for the recently available Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) funding.
    - YHDP is a HUD program that awards funding to CoCs to create a coordinated community plan and implement innovative projects to address youth homelessness. HUD has made available 150M dollars to be split between up to 50 communities (minimum award of \$1M and maximum award of \$15M). There have been three funding rounds to-date. Detroit has applied twice before (in the first and third rounds) and has not been successful. However, there has been a great deal of progress made locally since our last application and the committee thinks we are in a strong place to be competitive in this current round. Some of the various areas of progress include increasing youth leadership, greater collaboration within our system and with other systems, and new projects coming online to meet local youth needs. If awarded, the funding can be utilized to develop a comprehensive plan to end youth homelessness and to implement innovative and flexible programming to enact that plan. The CYH is seeking the Board's approval for Detroit to move forward with applying for the YHDP funding.

### Decision –

- Celia motioned to approve the Detroit CoC applying for the available YHDP funding. Chioke seconded the motion. Of the 17 eligible voting members present, 15 voted in favor. 0 were opposed. 2 abstained. The motion passed.

### Next Steps –

- HAND will lead the local efforts to apply for the funding in close coordination with the Committee on Youth Homelessness. HAND will work to secure a consultant to help with the application, but will move forward with the application process as if no consultant were secured in the interim. The application is due by July 27th.
- If selected as a YHDP community, Detroit would enter into a 6-month process where they would develop a coordinated community plan to address youth homelessness. That plan would then be submitted to HUD for approval. Once approved, the community would then launch a local selection process to fund innovative projects designed to advance the coordinated community plan.

### ***Final PIT & HIC Data:***

#### Summary –

- Kiana briefly reminded the board that HUD requires CoC's to conduct a bed inventory and a sheltered count of the entire homeless system each year in January. CoCs are required to conduct an unsheltered count every 2 years. There was no unsheltered count in Detroit this year due to the pandemic and the next unsheltered count will occur next year in 2022.
- There were a number of factors that impacted the PIT and HIC this year:
  - Providers struggled with timely data input and meeting our standard data quality performance and expectations. There was also difficulty in importing data from the VA's HOME database to capture VASH data.

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- The HMIS team is considering proposing to VFPC that a scoring element be developed for the FY2022 CoC Competition that scores providers on their PIT/HIC data quality.
- Kiana went on to review the PIT data. Some highlights are as follows:
  - The total number of persons experiencing sheltered homelessness went down by 13% from 2020 to 2021 (1,379 total).
    - This matches an overall trend of decline (excluding the small spike in 2019 that was related to the polar vortex).
  - We saw a small increase in persons with HIV/Aids experiencing homelessness on the night of the PIT as well as persons who were fleeing domestic violence.
- Kiana then reviewed the HIC data. Some highlights are as follows:
  - We reported 98 projects in the CoC as compared to 104 in 2020.
    - There was a small decrease in the number of family and seasonal beds from 2020 to 2021.
    - There was a decrease in the number of transitional housing beds.
    - There was a slight increase in the number of PSH and RRH beds.
  - Across all bed types, we were at 93% occupancy on the night of the PIT.
    - PSH & RRH were at 100% capacity.
    - Emergency shelter was at 78% capacity.
    - Transitional Housing was at 66% and safe haven was at 58% capacity.
- Full PIT/HIC Data, analysis, and visualization can be found on HAND's website : <https://www.handetroit.org/reports>.

### Next Steps –

- The HMIS team will continue to monitor and analyze the CoC over the coming year. The HMIS team is considering reporting out on utilization on a more regular basis.

### *Review of NIS Housing Justice Roadmap:*

### Summary –

- A proposed vision to drive the work of the CoC was developed out of the system analysis work done by the National Innovation Service (NIS). After a 3-month review and discussion process, the Detroit CoC voted to adopt the vision at the May General Membership Meeting. This is a major success for the CoC in our quest to center equity and housing justice in our system.
- The Board was reminded that the CoC engaged in an 8-month analysis phase, facilitated by NIS, during which the CoC was evaluated and assessed for equity, inclusion, and the impacts of our system on the persons we serve.
- The road map strives to reflect the community perspective and analysis about our CoC. Within the roadmap, the CoC is offered seven substantial recommendations for action to move towards embodying the CoC's newly adopted vision. Kevin S. reviewed the 7 recommendations. They are as follows:
  - Build a system across the CoC and the City of Detroit to coordinate on the homeless response and housing resources within the community.
    - This is foundational due to the need to redesign how decisions to ensure that power is redistributed equitable to those with lived expertise.
  - Focus housing priorities on Detroiters by working to build generational wealth and counter gentrification within Detroit.
    - This includes the need to develop a community-driven comprehensive affordability plan that builds the definition of affordable housing based upon local income, resources, and needs.

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- Redesign Detroit's homelessness crisis response by de-congregating shelters and offering alternative forms of crisis housing with strong housing navigation supports.
- Improve the quality of services that are connected to affordable housing and crisis response that are based on the concerns and priorities of people experiencing homelessness.
- Support and protect transgender and gender non-conforming Detroiters to improve safety and increase access to homeless services.
  - This includes increasing programming run by transgender and gender non-conforming persons and increasing consistent, enforceable accountability for equal access violations.
- Target homelessness (and non-CoC) resources to increase emphasis and investment in preventing persons from becoming homeless. Strong coordination between CoC and non-CoC resources is crucial.
- Coordinate and improve access to other systems to meet Detroiters holistic needs.
- Participants broke out into breakout rooms to discuss the roadmap, initial reactions, and what conversations they'd like to have next.

### Next Steps –

- The Board can expect updates in the coming months about the plans to launch the community's system re-design process.

### **Medicaid Waiver Update and Service Funding:**

#### Summary –

- Services funding has been and continues to be a major barrier to supporting homeless Detroiters in obtaining and maintaining housing. Over the past 6 years, efforts have been underway to obtain a Medicaid Waiver to allow for providers to receive supportive services funding to enable their efforts to assist clients. In 2019, Michigan was successful in getting federal approval to bill Medicaid for housing supports. This benefit is currently underutilized and so efforts are underway to ensure that housing providers are aware of this funding availability. It also signifies the need to improve infrastructure across the state to enable providers to bill Medicaid for housing supports.
- There are efforts underway to address the challenges and provide supports to providers to ensure this resource does not remain under-utilized. CSH is hoping to offer technical assistance to organizations across the state (and in Detroit specifically) to increase provider billing to Medicaid. The ultimate hope is to create a Medicaid billing institute that can be accessed and utilized on an ongoing basis.
  - CSH is in the preliminary conversation phase with providers to begin building out the engagement plan for Southeast Michigan. Please reach out to Lindsey ([lindsey.bishopgillmore@csh.org](mailto:lindsey.bishopgillmore@csh.org)) or Mercedes ([mercedes.brown@csh.org](mailto:mercedes.brown@csh.org)) if you would like to be a part of these conversations.

### Next Steps –

- Updates and more specifics about upcoming opportunities will be shared as they become available.

**Amy B. closed the meeting at 4:41pm.** *The next CoC Board meeting will be on Monday, July 12<sup>th</sup>, from 2 – 4:30pm. Location will continue to be virtual due to COVID-19.*