

Detroit Continuum of Care | Board of Directors

Working to Equitably End Homelessness in Detroit, Highland Park, & Hamtramck
September 13, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

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

Board Members Present

Amy Brown
Catherine Distelrath
Celia Thomas
Chioke Mose-Telesford
DaJuan Smith
Deloris Cortez
Donna Price
Elizabeth Vasquez
Erica George
Gerald Curley
Ray Shipman
Sharyn Johnson
Shawntae Harris-Mintline
Tasha Gray

Absent Board Members

Joy Flood
June White
Terra Linzner
Vanessa Samuelson

Excused Board Members

Ari Ruttenberg
Eleanor Bradford
Katie Zeiter
Ted Phillips

General Public

Amanda Sternberg
Alyssa Rietveld
Benne Baker
Beverly Ebersold
Bobby Brown
Cynthia Adams
Deborah Drennan
Gerald Piro
Greg McPherson
Jane Scarlett
Jasmine Morgan
Kaitie Giza
Kathleen Noel
Kiana Harrison
Kimberly Benton
Len Sanchez
Lindsey Bishop-Gilmore
Matthew Niemi
Melissa Fernandez
Patricia Parker
ReGina Hentz
Renee Bryant
Taleshia Moss
Viki DeMars
Vineta Mitchell

Amy B. opened the meeting at 2:05 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.
- Board member Resignations
 - Ashlee Cunningham and Anne Blake have both left their positions at their respective agencies and have submitted letters of resignation. Their vacant seats will be filled at the upcoming CoC Board Elections in January.
- Michigan Homelessness Policy Council
 - Elections for the Michigan Homelessness Policy Council were open last month. 4 persons submitted requests for letters of recommendation from the CoC to the Executive Committee and all four letters were issued.
- 2022 Point in Time Count Planning

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- Our CoC's next Point-in-Time Count will be held in January of 2022. We will conduct a sheltered and unsheltered count. Efforts to plan for this will begin soon. Board Members will be asked to volunteer to participate on a planning committee and should be on the lookout for more details.
- Openings on Grievance Committee
 - There are open seats on the Grievance Review Committee. The committee has been struggling to meet quorum and is seeking available board members to participate. You can contact Kaitie at kaitie@handetroit.org if you are interested.
- Launch of Governance Charter Revisions Process
 - The Governance Charter revision process for 2021 is underway. The Review Committee has been meeting to compile the changes that will be proposed for this year. These changes will be reviewed at the upcoming General Membership Meeting on September 21st. Everyone is encouraged to attend and to leave public comments. Public Comments will be open for a month. The revisions will be voted upon at the November General Membership Meeting.

Consent Agenda

August Board Meeting Minutes

- The floor was opened for questions. None were asked.
- Donna motioned to approve the August 2021 Board Minutes. Erica seconded the motion. Of the 11 voting members present, 11 voted in favor. 0 were opposed. 0 abstained. The motion passed.

FY2021 CoC Competition:

Summary –

- NOFO Analysis
 - Kaitie explained that the Notice Of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) was released on August 18th and the CoC Application is due to HUD on November 16th. That allows us just under 90 days to complete the application. There are a total of 97 questions in the application.
 - HUD identified the following priorities for 2021:
 - Ending homelessness for all persons
 - Using a housing first approach
 - Reducing unsheltered homelessness
 - Improving systems performance
 - Partnering with housing, health, and service agencies
 - Racial equity, and
 - Elevating persons with lived experience
 - There is a total of \$34 million dollars available in new and renewal and new project funding. There is \$921,535 available in CoC Planning funding – this is awarded separately and helps to fund the system coordination.
 - There are total of 163 possible points available for the application. There are also 25 Bonus points available, bringing everything to 188. HUD significantly decreased the number of data driven scoring elements in 2021 in recognition of the impact of the pandemic. There are 15.5 total points available – down from 64 in 2019. It is estimated that we will be able to earn 12.25 of those.
- New Project Funding Recommendations

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- Amanda reviewed the recommendations from the New Projects Review Committee ([linked](#)). The CoC Board was asked to vote on recommendations for two pools of funding: CoC Bonus Funding (for RRH & PSH programming) and DV Bonus Funding (For DV-focused RRH, joint TH/RRH, and CE-supportive services only programming). Two calls for applications were held for these funding sources – one in early 2021 and one in the summer of 2021. All projects were assessed and scored by the committee.
- For CoC Bonus – There is a total of \$1,520,891 available to be applied for. The Board was reminded that they approved one project in the first funding round. 5 additional projects applied in the second round. 3 of those projects were recommended for funding while two were not. See the linked recommendation document for a full rationale.
- For DV Bonus – There is a total of \$4,562,673 available to be applied for. There were no applications approved in the first funding round. 1 project applied in the second round. It did not meet the scoring threshold and was not recommended for funding.
 - Due to the significant amount of funding available and the lack of viable applicants, it is recommended that a third RFP be released for the DV Bonus funding. The allowable activities that agencies are allowed to apply for will be expanded in the hopes of garnering more applicants.

Decision –

- Gerald motioned to approve the recommendations from the New Projects Review Committee related to both DV and CoC Bonus Funding. Chioke seconded the motion. Only non-CoC funded Board Members were eligible to vote. Of the 6 eligible voting members, 6 voted in favor. 0 were opposed. 0 abstained. The motion passed.

Next Steps –

- HAND will continue to move forward the work of the CoC Application. The Board will be asked to provide input to help draft the CoC application in October.

MSHDA ESG FY2-23 Provider Selection Process:

Summary –

- Jasmine M. explained that in June 2021, HAND had a conversation with SWCS regarding the MSHDA ESG Grant. As the current subgrantee, SWCS would like to continue to handle the HARA operations, but wishes to release the RRH/Prevention portion of the funds to an alternative subrecipient. MSHDA has approved making such a change. Therefore, HAND needs to identify an alternative recipient to administer the RRH/Prevention funding. This new recipient would begin operating in the FY22/23 grant cycle (which begins in September 2022).
- Jasmine has developed an RFP to be utilized to select a new subrecipient. ESG Planning and Values and Funding have both reviewed the proposal and the components of the RFP and their feedback is incorporated. One of their recommendations was to prioritize the funding for RRH rather than Prevention due to the large inflow of diversion and prevention funding within the community already.
- Jasmine went on to review the proposed components of the RFP (outlined in the slides).

Decision –

- Elizabeth motioned to approve the recommendation for SWCS to continue serving as the HARA, for an RFP process to be launched to identify an agency to administer RRH, and to approve the scoring criteria. Gerald seconded the motion. Of the 11 voting members present, 9 voted in favor. 2 were opposed. 0 abstained. The motion passed.

Next Steps –

- Jasmine will move forward the RFP process.

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Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Updates:

Summary –

- Emergency Housing Vouchers:
 - Jasmine M. reminded Board Members that The American Rescue Plan has allocated \$5 billion for the implementation of Emergency Housing Vouchers to target specific populations that will allow individuals and families to choose and lease safe, decent, and affordable housing. It is expected that individuals are housed quickly. These vouchers were divided by HUD among a number of Housing Authorities across the nation to be distributed to local communities. The Detroit CoC will receive a total of 160 vouchers from both MSHDA and the Detroit Housing Commission (DHC).
 - In essence, the EHV's will function like a traditional Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) but with the addition of targeted supportive services to assist clients with lease up and stability post-housing. For Detroit, CHS and Wayne Metro will act as the supportive service providers.
 - To-date, 111 clients have been issued a housing voucher through MSHDA. Of those, 29 have moved into units and 7 are awaiting inspection for their selected units. All other clients are in the housing search process.
 - To-date, 15 clients have been issued a housing voucher by DHC and are in the housing search process. 40 clients have been assigned to DHC. 18 have returned their eligibility documents. All other clients are working with their service providers to submit application materials and move to the briefing stage.
- Housing Choice Vouchers
 - MSHDA has pulled a large volume of homeless preference HCVs in recent months.
 - In July 2021, 431 clients were pulled for a voucher. In August, an additional 31 clients were pulled. And 122 vouchers have been pulled in September to-date.
 - To assist providers in managing the influx of vouchers, Housing Agent Office hours will be held on August 12 from 1 – 2pm via zoom.
 - Typically, only households prioritized in Acuity Groups 2 & 3 are added to the waitlist for HCVs. However, CAM Governance Committee approved to begin adding households from Acuity Group 4 to the waitlist in light of the large inflow of vouchers. This will allow even more persons to access much needed permanent housing resources.

Next Steps –

- Jasmine will continue to oversee and assist with the process. The board will continue to be updated as relevant information arises.

Detroit at Work and Homeless System Referral Pilot:

Summary –

- Chioke M-T explained that Detroit-at-Work is the workforce system for Detroit powered by the Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation. They work to connect residents with the jobs, training, and resources they need to meet their employment goals that put them on a path to sustainable financial stability. The workforce and homeless systems have been partnering together for the past year and a half to increase coordination in a number from data sharing to referrals to cross-trainings to hiring a dedicated position to facilitate alignment. A cross-system advisory group was also formed to advance the work. There are representatives from the following entities: CoC & HMIS Lead, CAM, CoC Board Members, Detroit at Work, City of Detroit, Corporation for Supportive Housing, and PWLEH.
- Laura U-F explained that these joint efforts have culminated in the launching of a 100-day pilot program which strives to improve employment and income outcomes for persons experiencing homelessness in Detroit. The hope is that the pilot will also provide information about how the two systems work together

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and set the ground work to improve joint infrastructure. The pilot program focuses on mutual referrals between the system with warm hand-offs and targeted for support with clients as they navigate the two systems. The pilot will also facilitate referrals to a new program called Skills for Life.

- Chioke explained that skills for life is a paid work and training program that will serve 1200 Detroiters over 3 years. Participants will work 3 days a week, receive training two days a week, and will receive intensive wrap-around supports while in the program. It is hoped that over the course of the program, participants will be supported in achieving their long-term career goals.
- Laura explained that Detroit at Work is seeking agencies to participate in the pilot. The agencies would be responsible for the following: participating in planning meetings, dedicating a case manager to the pilot, and collecting data on a regular basis. Detroit at work would work with providers on data and evaluation, facilitating all of the planning, providing professional development opportunities, and actively working to connect clients to employment opportunities to help improve their long term outcomes.

Next Steps –

- The Letter of Interest for the pilot will be open through September, with selection in October and the hope of onboarding/pilot planning running through November to December. The pilot will run for 100 days from January – March and evaluation will be conducted at the conclusion in April. Those interested in applying can fill out this [linked form](#). Submissions are due September 27th by 11:59 pm. You can reach out to Laura (lurteagafuentes@detempsol.org) with any questions.

Developing a Policy for Compensating People with Lived Experience of Homelessness (PWLEH):

Summary –

- Tasha G. reminded the CoC Board that a number of efforts have been made by the CoC to center the voices of PWLEH within the System. She reminded the board of the equity analysis that was conducted by NIS throughout 2020 and 2021. During this work, an advisors group of PWLEH was formed. It was decided to keep this group on long-term. In light of this, staffing was transitioned from NIS to HAND. Additionally, a position was developed at HAND to advance the work of ensuring the system and any decisions it makes is driven by PWLEH. Tasha announced that Kaitie Giza was hired to fill this role. She will transfer from her role as CoC Coordinator and that position will be filled by someone else.
- From there, Tasha went on to review a proposal to ensure that PWLEH are compensated equitable for the work they are being asked to do in the CoC. A flat compensation rate of \$75 dollars per meeting was proposed. This factors in costs for the meeting time, preparation, and any transportation/technology needs.
- Tasha explained that HAND is able to devote \$50 thousand for compensation. A proposed budget was developed. The funded categories are as follows:
 - Detroit Advisors Group Participation - \$23,400
 - CoC Board and Executive Committee Participation - \$6,600
 - Committee Participation = \$15,000
 - Special Initiatives - \$5,000
- Committees would be able to apply for funding to compensation PWLEH participation. If sufficient funds are available and the request is reasonable, it will be granted. If there are more requests than funds available, an assessment will be implemented to determine which committees will receive funding. If there are fewer requests than funds available, any remaining funds will be added to the pool of funding for special initiatives. Anyone interested in utilizing funding for a special initiative will submit a request and budget for approval. These will be accepted on an ongoing basis.
- In order to promote the centering of PWLEH, a number of changes have been proposed to the Governance Charter. They are as follows:
 - Increase the number of seats on the CoC Board for PWLEH from 2 to 3 and prioritize one of those seats for youth.

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- Add the Detroit Advisors Group to the Charter to have status as a formal entity within the CoC.
- Add the Youth Action Board to the charter to have status as a formal entity.
- Imbed the vision adopted by the CoC in May into the charter.
- Efforts are underway to develop a policy & procedure to guide the work. The recommended components of the policy are as follows:
 - Purpose and Rationale
 - Compensation Rate
 - Eligible Activities for Compensation
 - Types of Compensation, and
 - Compensation Process.

Decision –

- Celia motioned to approve the proposed budget, compensation rate, and policy elements around compensation PWLEH. DaJuan seconded the motion. Of the 11 voting members present, 11 voted in favor. 0 were opposed. 0 abstained. The motion passed.

Next Steps –

- HAND will begin compensating PWLEH at the approved rate beginning on October 1. Staff at HAND will continue to flesh out the policy and procedure.

Amy B. closed the meeting at 4:29pm. *The next CoC Board meeting will be on Monday, October 4th, from 2 – 4:30pm. Location will continue to be virtual.*