

River Valleys Continuum of Care Meeting
Thursday, June 16, 2011
Cabela's, Owatonna, MN

It is our mission to prevent, respond to and help end homelessness in Southeaster Minnesota by coordinating services and maximizing resources.

Attending:

Angie Peterson, Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center (ZVMCH)
Beverly Jacobsen, Rochester Family Y-Link
Bruce Beneke, Southern MN Regional Legal Services (SMRLS)
Caitlin Powers, Minneapolis VA Healthcare Center
Carol Juvland, Three Rivers Community Action (TRCA)
Cindy Norgard, Rochester Salvation Army
Colleen Hansen, TRCA
Corrine Erickson, Olmsted County Social Services
Greggory Hoiseth, ZVMHC
Julie Anderson, Steele County Transitional Housing
Karen Kroll, TRCA
Kris Kvols, HOPE Coalition
Mary Ulland Evans, TRCA
Mary Vrieze, SMRLS
Melissa Brandt, Rochester Public Schools
Nancy Cashman, Center City Housing
Patrick Arden Wood, Elim Transitional Housing
Patrick Leary, Department of Human Services (DHS)
Renee Lorence, Red Wing HRA
Robin Yaffe-Tschumper, Bluff Country Family Resources
Ruth Hickey, Ruth's House
Sam Manning, SMRLS, Refugee, Immigrant & Migrant Services
Sheila Alba, Project Home HRC
Sheryl Block, ZVMHC
Sue Worlds, Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV)
Vicky Helland, Semcac
Recording Secretary, Kelli McMullen, TRCA

Welcome, Introductions and Announcements

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting and introductions were made.

Robin

- There will be a Garden Tour in Houston County one month from today.

Sam

- Handouts: *SMRLS Refugee, Immigrant and Migrant Services brochure; SMRLS Power Point packet*
The program serves those who travel overnight to and agricultural or canning job.

Approval of April Minutes and June Agenda

Robin noted Jennifer from Semcac's last name was misspelled. The correct spelling is Slabaugh.

Nancy Cashman motioned to approve the April 21, 2011 with the change in spelling; Robin Yaffe-Tschumper seconded the motion; motion carried.

Beverly Jacobsen motioned to approve the June 16, 2011 agenda with the addition of a discussion of agency plans for the state shut down; Mary Vrieze seconded the motion; motion carried.

Education Law Project, Bruce Beneke, SMRLS

Handouts: *III. School Dismissal (Law excerpts); Educational Rights of English Language Learners brochure*

SMRLS is one of the oldest law programs in the Midwest and celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2009. SMRLS serves 32 counties in southern MN. The headquarters is in St. Paul with offices in Albert Lea, Fargo, Mankato, Rochester, Shakopee, Winona and Worthington. SMRLS handles cases in many areas of civil law including public benefits, housing, Family Law, Immigration and Education. We serve families up to 187% of poverty. We are down 20% staff so may be lowering the guidelines. There are asset limitations. The board consists of two thirds private and one third clients.

The Education Law Project started with a special pot of money. We have been partnering with Hamline University since 1994. The focus of the program is serving low income children. There is a low achievement gap with minority children. We work closely with the parent but the child is the client. The goal is to make sure the child succeeds to the best of their ability. We will assist with communication between the child and the school.

Questions:

- What problem with the law do you see most? There are many cases dealing with discipline problems in Special Education situations. Bruce shared examples.
- Do you serve children who are undocumented? The Federal funding prohibits this. We have a very active pro bono program. What are the rights of homeless students and the responsibilities of the school district? This is summarized on page 8 of the handout.
- On page 8 of the handout it states a homeless student's school district shall be the district in which the shelter or facility assisting the person is located **or** the last school the student attended before losing housing. Who makes the "or" decision? They will ask the parent what they want. In the event of a disagreement we can assist the family.
- What if they attend one school at the end of the year and the district says they must attend another school in the fall? If they are in transitional housing or are homeless, they can stay in the original school.
- What if there is Special Education? If the child has an active Individual Education Plan (IEP) and is homeless, the obligation continues to rest with the school providing the services. If they are homeless and the new school wants to change the IEP the parent can contest the changes.

If you have further questions, please call Bruce at 651-894-6850.

Committee Reports

HMIS

- Colleen reported people are now doing their APR's in Esnaps. The transition ends June 30th. She strongly recommends printing the directions.
- Please still continue to send APR's to Colleen for review.
- It is important to have the correct grant number and program type listed on the APR.
- Wilder surveyed programs and the computers they are using for HMIS to ensure they can handle the upgrade.
- The self sufficiency model will be in place in the new biennium.

Executive

- The committee met before the plenary meeting. Most of what was discussed will be covered on this agenda.
- It is hard to determine a meeting schedule with the impending shut down.
 - There will be no July meeting.
 - Please schedule the third Thursday of the month on your calendars from August through December. Locations will be determined at a later date.
 - When the NOFA is released the Executive Committee will meet to determine a set schedule.

2010 NOFA Debriefing and 2011 Application

Handouts: *NOFA Debriefing/ Score Summary; Point In Time Summary for MN-502 Rochester/Southeast Minnesota CoC*

We scored 84.75 of 100 on the 2010 Exhibit One. Mary UE reviewed the debriefing notes. Our CoC scored the highest in CoC Housing, Services and Structure; Mary knows we lost some for not meeting monthly.

The 2011 Application is underway. Mary UE has completed the data entry for the Point in Time Count and the Housing Inventory Charts. She has also reconciled the Grant Inventory worksheet. We do not know when the NOFA will be published. The word is it will be earlier than last year. Last year the NOFA was out in September and due before Thanksgiving.

Mary UE reported the Point in Time Count results were down a bit. The homeless we used to count have ended up in the housing programs we have helped to fund. This shows we have made progress. There were a total of seven unsheltered (two households). We did get credit on Exhibit One for doing a yearly count. Pat asked Mary if the count matches with HMIS. She said our numbers do match. There is a lot of follow up. If a number did not match, she called the provider. In Exhibit One, all numbers and narratives must match. You must also explain the differences from one year to the next.

Mary UE heard that Wilder was dinged for not having 100% coverage at the Coordinators meeting. They want the shelters (Dorothy Day, etc.) to be entered. We have discussed many ways on how to make this happen. They have a lot of volunteers. It would have to be one person responsible to complete the questionnaire and another agency would need to enter the data.

Mary UE reported Partners for Affordable Housing (PAH) and Claire Housing have withdrawn their intent to apply. TRCA will not pursue new funding. Liberty Oaks is a potential new applicant for Permanent Supportive Housing. Nancy said they will apply for funds for Silver Creek Corner and are willing to apply for a portion or the entire amount. Sue said MACV will be doing an expansion right on site with a potential two units set aside for chronic. If there is competition for the bonus, the planning committee will decide how to best utilize the dollars available. We will convene the Executive Committee when the NOFA is released.

State Shut Down, Poll of Agency Plans

Members reviewed their agency plans in the event of a state shut down. Plans included cutting staff hours, using reserves, and shut downs. Providers were concerned about not being able to access services for program participants. Mary was told the MHFA drawdown for CoC will be sent before a shut down.

Pat said the Governor is proposing that staff from the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) would not be critical. This is different than the shut down in 2005 when we were still there to send out checks. We do have recommendations for awards but they will not be announced until the budget is decided. We would have already started the process so we are already behind. In the past, contracts sent out and signed were retroactive to July 1st. This time we cannot ensure expenses will be retroactive to July 1st. Things are changing daily. A notice will be sent June 28th telling providers to keep track of numbers and to be prepared to submit information after the day of the count which is set for July 27th.

Summer Homeless Count

The Executive Committee determined to plan the summer count as if the state will be up and running. Mary will email the survey to all on the list with email asking them to report those who were homeless the night of July 27, 2011.

Our CoC has agreed to do a summer count. We will focus on the communities of Rochester, Mankato, Faribault, Northfield, Red Wing, Winona, Albert Lea and Austin. A simple head count will be sufficient. Melissa said a count in the schools would be difficult in the summer. Pat asked if they had the summer lunch program. Yes, anyone under the age of 18 can stop at a Rochester school for a free lunch. We send a flyer home with all children describing the program and place an article in the newspaper. Nancy said Duluth has the same program. Adults can pay \$2.00 for lunch.

Robyn Yaffe-Tschumper motioned that the River Valleys CoC is committed to doing a homeless count; Ruth Hickey seconded the motion; motion carried.

CoC Subcommittee Structure and Members

- Sign up forms were sent around for the Executive/Exhibit One, CoC Project Review and Rating/ Data & TA; Homeless Advisory and Youth Subcommittees.
 - Executive/Exhibit One
 - Colleen Hansen
 - Mary Vrieze
 - Julie Ackland
 - Cindy Norgard
 - Ruth Hickey
 - Pat Leary
 - Sue Worlds
 - Corrine Erickson

- Warren Duncan
 - Mary Ulland Evans (staff)
 - Project Review/Data
 - Colleen Hansen
 - Mary V.
 - Ruth Hickey
 - Homeless Advisory
 - Mary Vrieze
 - Melissa Brandt
 - Youth
 - Nancy Cashman
 - Colleen Hansen
 - Melissa Brandt
 - Robin Tschumper
 - Kelli McMullen (staff)
 - Vicky Helland
 - Robin Tschumper
 - Mary Ulland Evans (staff)
 - Sheryl Block
 - Kris Kvols/Hope Staff
 - Renee Lorence
 - Beth Holger-Ambrose
 - Desirae Dyke
- Some members said they would like to sign up but at this time, no travel is allowed as part of the shut down.
 - ITV is not an option on Mondays and Fridays.
 - The Data committee will be much larger in the future. We haven't yet discussed how the Hearth Act will change data collection, etc.

Youth Needs Assessment and Work Plan

- We will develop the tool this summer and implement it when school resumes.
- Melissa will convene a SE MN Liaison meeting September 30, 2011. She has received 20 replies of 56 invites sent so far, 19 of the 20 said yes, the other said they did not have any homeless youth.
- The Youth Street Outreach grant application was due to DHS the end of June. Since we will not submit an application, we will use the narrative piece of the application as a work plan for the upcoming year. One of the barriers in the grant was the requirement of having 24/7 access to age appropriate shelter.
- Beverly said Lutheran Social Services (LSS) just wrote a grant for street outreach to start October 1st in Rochester.
- The Rochester Workforce Center opened a youth resource center.

Adjournment

Meeting unanimously adjourned.

It is our goal to identify, determine and implement solutions that meet the needs of the homeless in our communities.