

NORTHWEST MINNESOTA *Continuum of Care*

NWCoC Executive Board Meeting Minutes

Location: ZOOM

Date: January 18, 2024, 10:30am

Attendees: Lori Wollman, Shannon Lee, Maureen Hams, Rita Ostman, Catie LeMay, Jyll Gudvangen, Laura Robertson, Elizabeth Arevalo, Jean Roper, Deb Wold, Amber Gamache, Megan Chavez, Margret Treuer, Barbara Johnson

Guests: Misty Bjerklie, Family Safety Network; Mike Manhard, Minnesota Engagement on Shelter & Housing (MESH)

Agenda Items:

- I. Approved agenda addition to include Minnesota Engagement on Shelter & Housing discussion. MESH Executive Director, Mike Manhard led the MESH training plan discussion. In response to a statewide needs survey in 2018, MESH has been working on developing a training offering plan that encompasses training needs in the areas of culturally responsive resources, trauma informed trainings, racial equity, etc., as they relate to rural and metro needs. MESH is collaborating with a wide range of trainers to build a training offering that addresses these areas in an approachable, cost-effective manner. Mike requested verbal approval from the NWCoC to continue to pursue this plan with no financial or participation commitments from the NWCoC.

M/Deb Wold, S/Rita Ostman to provide MESH with verbal approval to move forward in pursuing training offerings. Motion passed with unanimous approval.

- II. Request a motion to approve November 18th, 2023, NWCoC Board of Director Meeting minutes.

M/Rita Ostman, S/Amber Gamache to approve November 18th minutes as presented. Motion passed with unanimous approval.

III. High Priority Homeless Defined

- IV. Discussion was had around crafting a definition of High Priority Homeless (HPH) that represents what the NWCoC understands HPH to be in our region. The board approved for committee consideration and adoption, with full definitions of the Categories of Homelessness attached, the following definition:

For the purposes of the Minnesota Housing Trust Fund (HTF) program requirements, the Northwest Continuum of Care (NWCoC) defines High Priority Homeless (HPH) to mean persons, including individuals, youth and/or households with children, whose needs cannot be met through Rapid Resolution or Diversion, and would be prioritized for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), with or without a disability, through the Coordinated Entry System by meeting one or more of the following:

- Long Term Homeless (LTH)-lacking a permanent place to live continuously for one year or more or at least four times in the past three years;

And/or meeting the Department of Housing & Urban Development's (HUD) definition of homelessness as described in the following:

- Category 1: Literally homeless as defined by HUD
- Category 2: Imminent Risk of Homelessness as defined by HUD
- Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence as defined by HUD

M/Laura Robertson, S/Debbie Wold to approve for committee consideration and adoption. Motion passed with unanimous approval.

V. Administrative Policy Language Revision for the Rapid Re-Housing Program

An omission in language in the Administrative Policy was discovered as it relates to the CoC funded RRH program requirements under the program services and eligibility criteria. Based on HUD recommendation, added to Eligibility Criteria is the defining language to include "Individuals and households who are defined as literally homeless and/or meets homelessness as defined by HUD's Categories 1, 2, or 4 and demonstrates need to gain stability in permanent housing". Added to Essential Program Services is "Assistance is typically tailored to the unique needs of the household".

M/Shannon Lee, S/Rita Ostman to approve and adopt language revisions to the Administrative Policy. Motion passed with unanimous approval.

VI. School Liaison Connections

Contact was made with the school liaisons within our region as it pertains to the 2024 PIT Count. Eight districts responded with a positive response for collaboration with the NWCoC. After discussion, the board determined that an annual meeting be set up with school liaisons and the NWCoC, with regional connections to be made with service providers and the liaisons that serve in those regions throughout 2024, with the hope of building collaborative relationships to better serve homeless households within the region. Barbara will reach out to the liaisons to determine a good time to set the first meeting.

VII. Youth Housing System Improvement (YHSI) Funding Update

Margret and Barbara provided the board with an update on the opportunity to apply for YHSI funding for the region. This system planning funding, \$200,000-\$2million, may be used to build out planning and partnerships, data systems, Coordinated Entry and Racial/Gender equity systems as they pertain to the service of our youth populations experiencing homelessness over a 30-month period. The funding encourages broad partnerships throughout the region and state. The Northwest Minnesota Foundation is in a position to apply for the funding with the intent to sub-grant to regional partners, specifically including the Minnesota Tribal Collaborative. (MTC). MTC has provided NMF with an MOU, indicating their willingness to move forward in pursuit of the funding in accordance with a February 15th deadline. Sanford and Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe offered letters of support for the YHSI grant application. M/Catie LeMay, S/Laura Robertson and Jean Roper to approve NMF to move forward in the application process to secure YHSI funding. Motion passed with unanimous approval.

VIII. NWCC Coordinator Evaluation Discussion and Language Change

The Governance Charter's current language dictates the following:

a. Executive (Committee): Comprised of the Chair, Chair elect, Secretary, CoC Coordinator (non-voting), the Executive Committee is responsible for recommending updates to CoC Policies, annually reviewing the CoC Coordinator's performance, establishing an annual work plan with the CoC Coordinator, and providing feedback to the CoC Coordinator on CoC business between meetings.

As the CoC Coordinator position is held at NMF, it was decided to adopt the following language change as it applies to the NMF as Collaborative Applicant for the NWCoC:

a. Executive (Committee): Comprised of the Chair, Chair elect, Secretary, CoC Coordinator (non-voting), the Executive Committee is responsible for recommending updates to CoC Policies, annually reviewing the Collaborative Applicant's performance, establishing an annual work plan with the CoC Coordinator, and providing feedback to the CoC Coordinator on CoC business between meetings.

M/Catie LeMay, S/Rita Ostman to approve and adopt the language change. Motion passed with unanimous approval. The Executive Committee will develop an evaluation plan.

IX. Onboarding Session Discussion

Discussion took place around the need to have an onboarding session for new and returning board members. Session to include responsibilities and expectations of the board according to Governance Charter, review of 2024 calendar, acronym refresher, NWCoC contact and programming and assignment of board buddies. Barbara will send out a Menti poll to determine available date and time for in-person session and to include ZOOM option.

X. Participation at Case Conferencing

Update was provided to inform board of P&E and NOFO committees move toward more robust scoring for participation and attendance at case conferencing on the NOFO applications, 2024. The current policies do not reflect defined participation requirements. The board decided that a stronger stance in policy needs to be taken to support this participation. Further discussion regarding what this may look like will take place at the February meeting. Also requested to add to February agenda is defined board attendance.

XI. Upcoming Events: January 24th Point in Time Count

M/Catie LeMay, S/Laura Robertson to adjourn meeting at 12:05pm

The NWCoC November Board of Director meeting adjourned at 11:45 am.