

Lee County Continuum of Care (CoC)
Governing Board Meeting
January 14, 2020, 1:30 P.M.
Lee County Human and Veteran Services
Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Janet Bartos, Lee County Homeless Coalition
Myra Fiory, Central Florida Behavioral Health Network
Kimberly Anderson, Lee Health
Adina Bridges, Centerstone
Danyale Kinney, New Beginnings
Sheryl Soukup, Residential Options of Florida
Daleen O'Dell, Advocate
Lue Richardson, Veterans Affairs
Keith Campbell, Celedon Recovery
Daniel Kruse, Providence Family Life Center
Jennifer Nelson, City of Cape Coral
Joe Paterno, Career Source
Sharon Rozier, City of Fort Myers
Jerod Murphy, Advocate
Elenia Cooke, Advocate
Lisa Vogt Wells, Advocate
Linda Hafner, United Way
Eduardo Gloria, Catholic Charities

Staff Present: Jeannie Sutton, Lee County Human & Veteran Services
Roger Mercado, Lee County Human & Veteran Services
Mark Tesoro, Lee County Human & Veteran Services
Kim Hustad, Lee County Human & Veteran Services
Christine Sebastian, Lee County Human & Veteran Services

Others Present: Carolyn Johnson, Goodwill
Tony Ceresoli, Salvation Army
Kim Clement, Center for Progress and Excellence
Karen Watson, St. Vincent De Paul
Sheila Dorsey, JFCS of the Suncoast Inc.

I. Call to Order – 1:30 pm

Jennifer Nelson, Chair

- a. Welcome and Introductions
Marl Tesoro reviewed list of attendees

- b. Members Absent with and without excuse
Eduardo Gloria and Heidi Shoriak – absent with excuse

Public Comment

Pat wanted to bring attention to the passing of a homeless individual living outside the library, with physical and mental health issues, in the hopes this tragic loss can be avoided in the future. Roger Mercado addressed the situation of confidentiality and stated he could not give any personal information on any particular individual. Mr. Mercado mentioned the candlelight vigil held yearly on the courthouse steps to honor those who have lost their lives on the street or in shelter. Mr. Mercado will go into more detail later in the meeting of outreach services and what is being done to engage homeless individuals to be part of a shelter plan that may later lead to housing.

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II. Approval of May, August, September, November, December Meeting Minutes*

Mark Tesoro

Mark Tesoro explained the meeting minutes have not been completely transcribed from the Zoom recordings and should be available at the February meeting. Approval of meeting minutes tabled to February meeting.

III. Recent Cold Weather Outreach/Severe Weather Plan

Roger Mercado/Jeannie Sutton

Roger Mercado explained a Severe Weather Outreach Plan was created in November to early December to address a couple of events. Lee County under the direction of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has always had a cold weather shelter plan in place with Salvation Army that when the temperatures reaches 40 degrees or lower for an extended period of time, the weather advisory and the Salvation Army regardless of capacity does not turn anyone away. The Severe Weather Outreach Plan grew out of the original plan and also addresses other inclement weather events possibly triggered by a tropical warning or watch that will not trigger the rest of the shelters to open for the general populations. An example of such an event was back right before Veteran's Day, with a threat of rain, winds and potential flooding where it didn't trigger shelters to open, but people were sent out for four days to do outreach. The idea of the plan is 8 different locations are designated where staff and volunteers and HOT team members go out with blankets, hot coffee, hats, gloves, socks, and warm clothes with the opportunity to provide options for individuals who want to get out of the weather. One-way bus passes are provided to shelter and another if the individual chooses to leave the next day. The team did outreach on December 8th, 25th and 26th. A couple of voicemails were received after 5:00pm last night. Mr. Mercado returned one of the phone calls and even though the weather did not meet the threshold, he reached out to Bob Janes Triage and the Rescue Mission who were at capacity and Bob Janes Triage extended their capacity. Therefore beds were available at Bob Janes Triage and the Rescue Mission. As part of the HOT team, Centerstone mobile crisis team went to the library where to original call came from and spoke to 14 individuals. Centerstone offered transportation and LeeTran was on standby if additional transportation was needed. One individual wanted to go to shelter and transportation was provided by Centerstone. An App was created that is used by the outreach team when they are out talking with individuals. Part of the App is, if someone does not want to go to shelter, the team tries to determine why they do not want to go and possibly other opportunities can be provided. All this is tracked on the App.

Question: What services are provided after hours?

Answer: Center for Progress and Excellence has been contracted to answer the Coordinated Entry line after 5:00, weekends and holidays. Center for Progress and Excellence is equipped with a mobile crisis unit. The agencies along with Centerstone who are a part of the HOT team are Lee County Sheriff's Office, Fort Myers Police Department, Cape Coral Police Department, Sanibel Police Department, Florida Gulf Coast University, the Port Authority. There are members of a HOT team available 24/7.

Question: How do we prevent having Vigils?

Answer: The very reason the CoC exists is to try to prevent this from happening.

Question: Do emergency shelters accept individuals that rely on wheel chairs or have open sores?

Answer: Salvation Army answered that they will accommodate individuals who rely on wheel chairs for the 1-2 nights. If they have open sores or need medical attention, there is a nurse on duty who will

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assess and treat the medical issue. If it is something that cannot be treated at the shelter, 911 would be called transport the individual where care can be provided.

Question: What is the telephone number for the HOT team?

Answer: (239) 533-7996 is the Coordinated Entry line which is answered by staff during the day and then forwarded to Center for Progress and Excellence after hours, weekends and holidays.

Question: Who are the HOT team members at the police departments and the Sheriff's Office.

Answer: There are too many to name. Roger Mercado will send out an email to the Board with that information.

Question: Are there intentions of putting up tents?

Answer: Roger responded that the Department Human and Veteran Services (DHVS) has no intentions of putting up tents. He is unsure whether other agencies have that intention. The goal of DHVS is to assess and connect individuals to services they need and get individuals into temporary and permanent housing.

IV. Presentation: "Peer Specialist" for RRH Providers

Kim Clement

Kim Clement explained the contract between Center for Progress and Excellence and Lee County Human and Veteran Services. Part of what mobile crisis provides is a Peer Specialist. A Peer Specialist is someone who has been through similar situations as individuals we service. The Peer Specialist designated to this contract is someone who has experienced homelessness, battles with addiction and has turned their life around. The service provided is the Peer Specialist meets with the client once a week for approximately 3-6 months at a place convenient for the client to provide quality mentoring. The Peer Specialist will work on establishing trust and assisting with what the client wants to accomplish to get back on their feet (i.e. skills for obtaining a job, resumes, job search, housing). The Peer Specialist will be working with caseworkers of the Rapid Rehousing population. Mark Tesoro will send out the Center for Progress and Excellence Referral Form to the CoC members. Mr. Clement will send an email to the members describing the services of the Center for Progress and Excellence.

V. Update: 2021 PIT Count

Janet Bartos/Mark Tesoro

Janet Bartos presented a Power Point explaining what is the Point-In-Time (PIT) Count and who is Counted in the PIT count. The PIT count is scheduled for January 27, 2021. Strategies are being discussed how to perform the PIT count this year due to COVID-19. The best compromise strategy plan to date for COVID-19 safety measures is for the CoC to ask for a waiver to do an abbreviated survey over a longer period of time. To use existing outreach personnel, HOT teams, service base sites and members of the COC to collect survey data via interviews and rely less on volunteers. PIT count information is available on the Homeless Coalition website.

VI. Approval of Updated Governance Charter and Written Standards*

Mark Tesoro/Jeannie Sutton

Mark Tesoro explained the CoC updates its Governance Charter and Written Standards based on state and federal recommendations. HUD and DCF recommended that each CoC conduct a formal review

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of their current ESG written standards and develop an addendum to cover the written standards and policies for activities funded by the ESGCV which is the coronavirus version of ESG.

Jeannie Sutton explained the majority of the changes to the governance charter is in reference to HMIS capacity building grant which is being used to improve the software used.

Mr. Tesoro asked the Board to review and approve the Governance Charter and Written Standards addendum.

ACTION: Mr. Joe Paterno made a motion to approve the Governance Charter and Written Standards addendum. Ms. Sheryl Soukup seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Connect List/Housing Surge Plan Update

Mark Tesoro

Mark Tesoro explained the Housing 100 Households in 100 Days with a 30 day assessment to improve performance along the way. After 100 days, 30 days is taken to assess performance. Challenges encountered and mistakes made are looked at and necessary adjustments are made. The cycle starts over after the 30 day assessment. Mr. Tesoro presented a dashboard that was created to show progress of goals.

VIII. Code of Ethical Conduct

Jennifer Nelson, Chair

Jennifer Nelson mentioned the development of the Code of Ethic that was introduced at the last meeting and to remind everyone to be professional at all times to each other, in meetings, social media, and correspondence.

IX. Member Comments - New CoC Logo/Re-Branding*

Mark Tesoro/Matt Visaggio

Mark Tesoro explained the old Continuum of Care logo seemed outdated and Matt Visaggio was asked to create a new logo.

Matt Visaggio explained the logo was reflective of what the Homeless Coalition has adopted as Rare – Brief – One-Time logo. The conformity is the CoC is working toward that same goal. The logo has a picture of three individuals from 30,000 feet above all working together. The individuals are different colors working collaboratively in a circle, the idea of a continuum. Mr. Tesoro asked the Board to share comments and opinions of the logo. If the Board liked the logo, then there would be a vote to approve it.

After further review, some members shared they did not think the general public would understand the message of Rare – Brief – One-Time and maybe the word “Homelessness” should be added somewhere on the logo or tag line to further explain the mission of the CoC.

Mr. Matt Visaggio stated he would draft another logo and would bring it back to the Board for review at the February meeting.

X. Funded Agency Updates

Eduardo Gloria provided updates for Catholic Charities. They have been receiving referrals and have been able to house clients quickly. New staff members are being hired to increase the number of referrals they can accept. The clients have access to all ancillary services such as their counseling program, human trafficking program, elderly program to keep clients connected with as many services they may be needed.

Karen Watson provided updates for St. Vincent De Paul. They have taken on a few referrals and have three that hopefully will be in housing next week after inspections are complete.

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Roger Mercado provided updates for Salvation Army on behalf of Tony Ceresoli who had to leave the meeting. Salvation Army set up the Homeless Resource Center in one of their existing buildings. They just received their business license to open. It is a 6-day a week drop-in center. They will be doing a soft opening tomorrow. The center will be open Monday thru Saturday, approximately from 8am-6pm during EST and approximately 8am-8pm during EDT. It is a 6-day a week drop in center. Some of the services individuals will be able to access is; showers, beverages, cell phones and laundry. The end goal is to have coordinated entry on site, contract with Centerstone to have clinicians on site, Goodwill job link RV a couple of times a month. Salvation Army is continuing to solicit partners and providers to offer services at the resource center. The Homeless Resource Center is being funded by the Lee County for the first year of operation and we will be looking for other funders for sustainability moving forward.

Sheila Dorsey provided updates for JFCS of the Suncoast, Inc. They are working with one client who should be housed soon. They are also working with 9 veterans with pending leasing options that should be housed in the next 1-2 weeks. They are expanding their staff. The Program Director, Richard McDaniels, has been promoted to Chief Client Services and a new Program Director has been hired and started on Monday. They are also looking to hire a Senior Case Manger to work in Lee County.

Carolyn Johnson provided updates for Goodwill. There has been two individuals referred to caseworkers and they are ready for more referrals.

Kim Hustad provided updates for Human and Veteran Services. Family impact has been short-staffed due to two caseworkers extended leave. There has been an offer extended to two more caseworkers and once they are trained they should be able to take on approximately 60 people once they are trained.

XI. Adjourn
Jennifer Nelson, Chair

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Lee County will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in its services, programs, or activities. To request an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication or a reasonable modification to participate, contact Joan LaGuardia by phone at 239-533-2314, adarequests@leegov.com or through the Florida Relay Service, 711. Accommodation will be provided at no cost to the requestor. Request should be made at least five business days in advance.

For translation services or additional information, please contact: Jeannie Sutton, Lee County Human and Veteran Services at 239-533-7958.

Meeting minutes and agenda are posted on our website: <https://www.leegov.com/dhs/funding/coc>