

**Lee County Continuum of Care (CoC)  
Governing Board Meeting**

June 23, 2021, 1:00 P.M.

Lee County Human and Veteran Services  
Virtual Meeting

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/517946645>

**Members Present:**

Adina Bridges Centerstone of Florida  
Alex Olivares Catholic Charities  
Carolyn Johnson Goodwill Industries SWFL  
Daleen O'Dell Advocate  
Daniel Kruse Providence Family Life Center  
Danyale Kinney New Beginnings of SWFL  
Janet Bartos Lee County Homeless Coalition  
Kim Anderson Lee Health  
Kim Hustad Lee County Human and Veterans Services  
Linda Hafner United Way  
Lue Richardson Veterans Affairs  
Myra Fiory Central Florida Behavioral Health Network  
Sharon Rozier City of Fort Myers Community Development Department  
Tom Felke Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU)

**Other Present:**

Heather Cross The Center for Progress and Excellence  
Sylvia Jackson Taylor Jewish Family & Children Services (JFCS)  
Tony Ceresoli The Salvation Army

**Lee County Human  
And Veteran Services  
Staff Present:**

Carolina Alcantara  
Emilee Sharp  
Frederick Salonga  
Jeannie Sutton  
Jessica Lynch  
Mark Tesoro  
Matt Wallace  
Mindy Willis  
Nazma Niles  
Roger Mercado  
Sylvia Ruff  
Tim Gillmore

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**I. Call to Order 1:05pm**

*Jennifer Nelson, Chair*

a. Welcome and Board Roll Call

- Mark Tesoro reviewed the list of attendees. He stated there was enough for a quorum.

b. Members Absent with and without an excuse

- Eduardo Gloria Catholic Charities absent without an excuse
- Jerod Murphy Advocate absent without an excuse
- Jennifer Nelson City of Cape Coral absent with an excuse
- Joe Paterno CareerSources SWFL absent without an excuse
- Lisa Vogt Wells Advocate absent without an excuse
- Sheryl Soukup ROOF absent without an excuse
- Travis Couch Housing Authority of City of Fort Myers absent without an excuse

**Public Comment**-None

**II. Approval of Meeting Minutes\*(May)**

*Jennifer Nelson, Chair*

**ACTION:** Alex Olivares made a motion to approve meeting minutes for May. Janet Bartos seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**III. Update: RTC/FTC – Goodwill outreach activities scheduled (June 24<sup>th</sup>/July 8<sup>th</sup>)**

*Roger Mercado*

**Rapid Transition Collaborative (RTC)**

The Rapid Transition Collaborative (RTC) was an initiative where they collaborated with The Salvation Army, Law Enforcement, Center Stone, City of Fort Myers and their department. They were actively pursuing apartments and housing units for individuals that were taken from public spaces. They gave them the opportunity to go into a hotel.

As of today, they have 11 individuals still at the hotel from March 2021. The individuals waiting to be housed are some of the more complicated cases. Decisions made by those individuals created some challenges with background checks and landlords approving applications for housing.

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They are working with Cypress Village, The Salvation Army and other Rapid Rehousing providers to try to house them sooner than later.

Family Transition Collaborative (FTC)

The Family Transition Collaborative (FTC) is similar to the Rapid Transition Collaborative (RTC) in the sense they are providing hotel stays on a temporary basis while they get into a Rapid Rehousing Program.

They are using two different hotels primarily funded by Lee County Board of County Commissioners, to get families and committed couples off the connect list into temporary lodging. The Salvation Army then gets them Rapidly Rehoused. They are contracting with Centerstone Behavioral Health and The Salvation Army to help get individuals into hotels, case manage them while they are there to meet their needs and get them housed.

As of today, they have 28 rooms in that particular program. There are 23 rooms that are comprised of families and five rooms that are comprised of either committed couples or adult house hold members with an adult child. They are working with Goodwill, The Salvation Army, Centerstone and The Early Learning Coalition.

Goodwill

Goodwill is working with some employers in the community to do an on-site event at the hotel for the individuals that are looking for employment opportunities or just need to be connected to resources in the community.

On June 24, 2021 individual at the hotels will have the opportunity to work with Goodwill staff, to work on their resumes and job searching skills in preparation for another event on July 8, 2021. With the help of Goodwill, they will have some employer's onsite conducting interviews. The Early Learning Coalition will talk about childcare opportunities and early learning opportunities. The Salvation Army and Centerstone will be onsite to help make those connections. They are trying to provide many opportunities on site for individuals that are in the hotel, to help them move forward in their housing plan.

Non-Congregate Sheltering Program

They are working on two projects that are not part of the Rapid Transition Collaborative (RTC) or Family Transition Collaborative (FTC). One is a Non-Congregate Sheltering Program. Early on during the pandemic, they had over 100 individuals experiencing homelessness that tested positive for COVID or presented with COVID symptoms. They placed them in shelters or sheltered them at a hotel. They isolated, quarantined and case managed them. As of this week, they have one last person in the hotel that's scheduled based on his symptoms to be discharged this Friday June 25, 2021 by the Department of Health.

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#### Sever Weather Outreach Plan

In the winter season, they talked about Sever Weather Outreach Plan they created. It's set to work with Outreach teams when the temperature is projected to drop to 40 degrees or lower. They send out eight different teams to eight different locations throughout Lee County to engage individuals, provide them with blankets, sweatshirts hot coffee or hot chocolate and access to transportation. Whether that be Centerstone, Outreach members, other team members or even Ubers providing transportation to get individuals on the street that want to seek shelter from the cold temperatures.

As they approach into Hurricane Season, they wanted to include some other Server Weather Outreach by working with Emergency Operations Center (EOC). If there is a Tropical Storm warning in effect, they have the ability to send group text messages. They will start mobilizing their eight teams to eight different locations, to engage individuals with transportation to get them out of the elements and into shelters, which could possibly lead them into a housing plan if they desire.

#### **IV. Update: Connect List -100 x 100/Diversion Training**

*Mark Tesoro*

The 100 X 100 campaign is a campaign they put on themselves to stretch their limits to see how much they can do. Its 100 households and 100 days to try to house them. It's an aggressive activity on their part to try to reach that goal. They are three quarters of the way there. They have housed 73 households in 42 days (130 individuals and 49 children). The Salvation Army has housed the majority of individuals.

Diversion Training is a huge portion of what they can do. It provides them effective use of The Salvation Army's shelter. It gives less strain to the system as a whole. It helps individuals reduce the stressful and traumatic experience of being homeless. They are trying to promote their diversion as much as they can. They have been in communication with a facilitator to have an opportunity to work on diversion, what are some best practices and what techniques they can use to help ease the burden on the system. The diversion training will be sent to all their connect list meeting groups and to everybody on the call that is interested in participating.

#### **V. Report: CoC Strategic Plan Review Subcommittee**

*Strategic Plan Subcommittee (C. Johnson, J. Bartos, M. Visaggio, D. Kruse, M. Tesoro)*

The subcommittee has been meeting regularly. They are working through the Strategic Plan. Their group is thoroughly impressed with the Strategic Plan. It is extraordinary detailed to the point of almost becomes a little bit unwieldy to work through and revise an update. It was recommended at their last meeting to break it out by short-term versus long-term goals. They are in the process of having an idea of what is really a reoccurring goal and a reoccurring objectives as opposed to something that is new and short time goals.

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#### VI. **Report: Lee County 2021 Annual Action Plan**

*Jeannie Sutton*

They do an annual action plan every year for their Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Develop Block Grant, Emergency Solutions Grant and Home Grant Funding. This is a report telling Housing and Urban Development (HUD) what they are going to do with the funds every year. Part of the requirements for funding are, they consult with various different stakeholders including the Continuum of Care (CoC) Governing Board to get their thoughts on how funds should be used and what needs exist in the community. The purpose of this consultation is to ask a few questions and discuss what they think their needs are. They record all the input in the plan and if they have the ability to structure the funding to address some of those needs in the future.

##### The use of Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding

In the past years, they have received \$200,000 a year in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding. This upcoming year starting October 1, 2021, they will be getting \$275,000. They use this money for Outreach, Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Rapid Rehousing and 7.5% for Administration. Every year they take their flat rate for Administration, which is under 7.5%. They allocate a small portion for Rapid Rehousing, they administer at Human and Veteran Services. In the past, they have used funding for Street Outreach as well to support the operations at Bob Janes Triage Center. They recently switched their allocation from the Bob Janes Triage Center from Operations to Rapid Rehousing, so housing ties in directly to the shelter.

The plan this year is to allocate about \$55,000 to Street Outreach that will help support three Street Outreach staff they have in office. They are planning to allocate \$100,000 to Triage for Rapid Rehousing and another \$100,000 to be used in their office though their Case Management staff for Rapid Rehousing.

#### VII. **Update: Authentic Stakeholder Workshop/HRDC Peer Specialist**

*Mark Tesoro*

##### Authentic Stakeholder Workshop

They are in the process of going though it. It refers to having individuals with lived experiences to be in a Continuum of Care (CoC) leadership representation and creating an action plan based on their knowledge verse practice.

They are thinking about forming a subcommittee or some kind of representational body with lived experienced individuals. They feel this is an important piece to educate themselves on. They will try to get that kind of participation included in the Continuum of Care (CoC).

##### Peer Specialist

There is a Peer Specialist they are trying to get established at the Homeless Resource Day Center. That person would be part of that effort with lived experience representation. They can help individuals through the process of navigating the system, helping them with the more detailed oriented things that need to occur, get the process moving forward for them and keep moving forward.

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They have a Peer Mentor Program going on with the reentry of individuals at the prison and jail system. There will be someone working with clients prior to their release from prison, who are on the path to housing so they are not release to homelessness.

**VIII. Report: Funded Agencies**

*Service Providers*

Tony Ceresoli with The Salvation Army reports they have been busy with the Rapid Rehousing program. Their Homeless Resource Day Center is growing exponentially with the weather triage.

Kim Hustad with Human and Veteran Services reports they have one new Rapid Rehousing case manager that joined her team and they have another case manager joining their team soon. They are caught up on the applications for their Homelessness Prevention Program.

Mark Tesoro with Human and Veteran Services reports he hired a new Coordinated Entry Specialist.

Sylvia Jackson Taylor with Jewish Family & Children Services (JFCS) reports they are taking on new clients where they have availability and housing them as soon as possible. She has a high need family of six that she is trying to find housing for that has children with special needs.

**IX. Adjourn -1:51 Next CoC Board Meeting July 28<sup>th</sup>**

*Jennifer Nelson, Chair*

**\*Item Needing Action**

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](mailto: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>**