

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

August 21, 2020, 1:00 P.M.

Lee County Human and Veteran Services

Virtual Meeting

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/958430549>

**Members Present:** Janet Bartos, Lee County Homeless Coalition  
Christine Lincoln, Community Cooperative  
Daleen O'Dell, Advocate  
Eduardo Gloria, Catholic Charites  
Keith Campbell, Celadon Recovery Campus  
Lue Richardson, Veterans Affairs  
Myra Fiory, Central Florida Behavioral Health Network  
Sheryl Soukup, ROOF  
Tony Ceresoli, Salvation Army  
Zania Ledwidge, ROOF  
Jennifer Nelson, City of Cape Coral

**Others Present:** Matt Visaggio, Visaggio & Co.  
Arthur Lerman, JFCS of the Suncoast

**Staff Present:** Jeannie Sutton, Lee County Human & Veteran Services  
Kim Hustad, Lee County Human & Veteran Services  
Roger Mercado, Lee County Human & Veteran Services  
Juan Albino, Lee County Human & Veteran Services

**I. Call to Order**

*Christine Lincoln, Chair*

- a. Welcome and Introductions
- b. Members Absent with and without excuse  
Daniel Kruse, excused absence

**Public Comment None**

**II. Governing Board Chair and Co-Chair Selections (August 2020 – August 2021)\***

*Christine Lincoln & Janet Bartos*

Jeannie Sutton explained Christine Lincoln and Janet Bartos can still lead today's meeting but their term is up. A new Chair and Co-Chair is needed to take them from August 2020 to August 2021. Christine Lincoln asked if there are any volunteers for Chair.

**ACTION:** Janet Bartos made a motion to nominate Jennifer Nelson for Chair. Matt Visaggio seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Christine Lincoln asked if anyone wanted to volunteer to be Co-Chair or if anyone had nominations. Keith Campbell volunteered.

**ACTION:** Christine Lincoln made a motion to nominate Keith Campbell for Co-Chair. Kim Hustad seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**III. 2020 Emergency Solutions Grant – CARES Funding Recommendations\***

*Performance Evaluation and Ranking Committee Chair*

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Jeannie Sutton stated the Performance Evaluations and Ranking Committee met yesterday, August 20, 2020, and scored the applications for Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funding that was put out in early August and due on the August 17, 2020 for just over 2.4 million dollars. Affordable Home ownership, Catholic Charities, Goodwill Industries SWFL, JFCS, Lee County Housing, ROOF and St. Vincent de Paul all submitted applications. The results of the scoring of the applications were; St. Vincent de Paul was first, Catholic Charities second, JFCS was third, Lee County Housing was fourth, and Goodwill was fifth, ROOF and Affordable Home Ownership tied for sixth place. The entire meeting will be available

The Ranking Committee recommended a vote to fund the top 3 ranked agencies for what they are requesting: St. Vincent De Paul asked for 2.4 million but they were not able to give them the entire amount. St. Vincent De Paul \$1,166,069, Catholic Charities \$879,237, Jewish Family and Children's Services \$385,973.

**ACTION:** Janet Bartos made a motion to approve what the Ranking Committee submitted. Christine Lincoln seconded the motion. Goodwill, JFCS, ROOF, Catholic Charities and St. Vincent de Paul sustained from voting. The motion passed unanimously.

The ESG State funding is working on contracts with the State. ESG round one Federal funding is all set up and is waiting on the line item to show up on the online system. ESG State round one will be available first. Federal round two will be available October 1, 2020. ESG State round 2 will be available sometime after October 2020.

**IV. Housing Surge Plan**

*Jeannie Sutton*

Jeannie Sutton presented the Housing Surge excel spreadsheet. It is a working document specifically aimed at taking an assessment of what funds currently are on hand, current capacity take on new clients to house and capacity in supportive services. The reason to collect this information is to execute a 100 day challenge. Doing four somewhat consecutive 100 day challenges, focusing on specific populations of individuals experiencing homelessness. The first 100 days could focus on people with severe and mental health issues and focus on taking 100 people off the list and getting them into housing. Then assessing the successes and challenges and making possible adjustments, then doing another 100 days with another subpopulation. The reason for collecting all this information is to write up a plan on how this can be done; what subpopulation to start with, where to house them and who can take on what clients. The projected start date for the 100 day challenge is November 1, 2020 or a little sooner when all the funding is in place. Some type of report will be created, such as; a dashboard, or a daily/weekly report to show the progress of the challenge. Presently we are in the state of gathering information on what agency resources are available to create a plan of action. Each agency should complete their information on the spreadsheet and return to Jeannie Sutton.

**V. Agency Updates**

Jeannie Sutton wanted to share; CASL is doing an awesome job with building a bunch of units off Winkler and Colonial. It is now the responsibility of the Continuum of Care (CoC) to fill them.

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Scott Eller Provided updates for CASL. They are hiring two extra Case Managers who will start coordinating with outreach in Lee County. They originally thought Cypress Village was going to open in May or June. The contractor gave a date of April 1st for an opening. They are starting to mobilize Case Managers to coordinate with different agencies in the area. In December 2020 or January 1, 2021 they will open up the application cycle. Cypress Village will have 18 units that are for people with 35% area minimum income (AMI), those are the chronically homeless beds. However, 50% of bed capacity are for people with homeless disabled conditions. He said they could go above the 50% but 50% is the minimum benchmark. However beyond the 18 units for 20% for chronically homeless at 35% ARI the other units will be for people at 60% area median income where the rent standards are tied too. The goal is to try to get up to 80% of the units funded. That would be roughly 120 beds which means 90-96 people that were once homeless or chronically homeless would be put in permanent supportive housing.

CASL worked with the housing authority in Sarasota with some assistance money they had themselves and opened during the pandemic on March 15, 2020. Between March 15<sup>th</sup> and April 30<sup>th</sup>, they moved in 100 individuals. Originally they were looking at housing 60 people in 60 days. They housed 100 individuals in 45 days. With the system in place in Lee County, he can see housing 90-100 homeless individuals by this program within 30 days. There are 80 one bedroom units and 15 two bedroom units.

Scott Eller mentioned on Broadway they engaged the architect to do the design for the last three duplexes they want to build there. Each duplex will be a three bedroom unit at approximately 2300 sq. ft. The goal for those units is a homeless mother with children, a mother with a mental health conditions with children or people that live together in a family atmosphere. This additional capacity should be available in the next couple of years.

Roger Mercado provided updates for Human and Veteran Services. In a past meeting, it was mentioned about establishing a HOT team. He met with a consultant from Tampa Bay, Florida that is a Police Officer who has been a consultant for starting HOT teams in the State and out of the State of Florida. He has a meeting in place for next week to talk about the next steps, protocol and policies to set up. Things are moving forward with the HOT teams. Part of this is behavior health component that will be partnered with law enforcement. He is excited for this to take place and as it evolves he plans on involving some of the Stakeholders as conversations continue to move forward.

Roger Mercado brought up Housing Counseling Services. He has put out a proposal to five of the local HUD approved Housing Counseling Service agencies in Fort Myers. He has received two proposals back and his Contracts team is working with the two entities to contract them to provide eviction and foreclosing counseling for residents of Lee County that are facing either challenges with their mortgage or rental eviction.

They are also working through contracting with a local housing resource provider to help locate units in the community. Salvation Army has found it to be very successful working with a team that has relationships with some of the local Realtors in getting some safe and secure sanitary housing. He reached out and encouraged 6 different entities in town to partner with them for funding to help get this kicked off the ground. He had one entity respond and he's now working through the logistics of that group to help them identify housing in the community.

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In the last 45 days he had conversations with County Admin even some of the Commissioners were there and are interested in creating what they are calling a Homelessness Resource Center. It's a day Center where homeless individuals can stop in and charge their phone, laundry, take showers, access for behavior health, rapid rehousing, and coordinated entry services. He has another meeting scheduled at the end of the month with County Admin and a local provider to talk about what it would look like financially to get that kicked off the ground.

Roger Mercado spoke to council member, Jennifer Nelson, that there has been some efforts in movement in Cape Coral to do something similar. If they can create this successfully in Fort Myers, they might be able to use it as a templet for success in Cape Coral. More to come on this as the conversation moves forward with Administration and some providers.

The last thing Roger Mercado wanted to talk about is he had the opportunity to hire some Coordinated Entry Specialist and also to create Coordinated Entry Management position. He extended an offer and it was accepted by Mark Tesoro to be our new CoC Manager. Mark Tesoro worked at John Hopkins Hospital doing a lot of grant and research work. He has a lot of technical skills, research and publishing experience. The creation of a CoC unit will take some of the work off Jeannie Sutton's shoulders and help support Jennifer Nelson as she takes over as Chair of this group.

Eduardo Gloria provided updates for Catholic Charites. Catholic Charites was just awarded by the Department of Justice \$500,000 for Human Trafficking. It is an expansion of their existing program which offers transitional housing with rapid rehousing to persons who are victims of human trafficking. He also wanted to thank board for including Catholic Charites and everyone involved in the scoring. He is very grateful and excited to be selected. He will bring his resources into the Surge Plan to help this process and looks forward to working with everyone to quickly house people. He feels as an organization they need to be involved more in Lee County and this is the step in the right direction.

Jennifer Nelson, City of Cape Coral, wanted to echo Roger Mercado's conversation earlier about a Homeless Resource Center in Cape Coral. She received a call from St. Matthews House in Naples, from Mr. Bruter. He heard from the city of Fort Myers she was trying to do something in Cape Coral. She wanted to clarify to him and everyone they are in the very infant stages in Cape Coral. She developed a homelessness task force and she asked several of the members on the call to sit in with her to figure out what would be the best solution. Her best experience she had was a week ago she went with some of the group to look at the Bob Janes Triage Center for the first time. She expressed it was very impressive and fascinating all at the same time. Jennifer said they would like to put something in Cape Coral but something on a much smaller scale. Twenty-four years with Goodwill taught her a lot. The City of Cape Coral can possibly come up with building opportunities but are not in the homeless business to run services. They would need to look for someone who has that experience to assist them. She currently has her eye on Fire station 2 which is near City Hall next to the Police Station. She had a couple conversations with the fire chief and he thinks it will be a good fit. Jennifer Nelson would like to find a location to serve the homeless because it is becoming a lot more apparent in Cape Coral.

Adina Bridges provided updates for Centerstone of Florida. They were awarded the contracts for Mental Health Court and Veterans Court which has started. They gained the AOT contract and intend to begin taking on clients toward the middle of October 2020. Presently they are in meetings with the

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State and Public Defender to work through the Civil Commitment Process and referrals coming in and then should be ready to start.

**VI. Adjourn**

*Jennifer Nelson, Chair*

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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>**