

HOUSING FIRST SOLANO CoC BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, June 28, 2023 | 10:00 – 11:30 A.M.

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order

Kari Rader called the meeting to order at 10:03 A.M.

2. Roll Call

Present CoC Board Members:

Akon Walker, Solano County Office of Education

Amanda Russell, Caminar

Brandon Wirth, SHELTER, Inc.

Chris Sheridan, Nations Finest

DeAndre Richard, RCS

Don Hendershot, City of Dixon

Elizabeth Muniz-Palomera, Lived Experience Co-Chair

John Eckstrom, SHELTER, Inc.

Kari Rader, CAN-B

Katie Ward, Solano County Probation

Natalie Peterson, City of Vallejo

Miranda Ramirez, Solano County Behavioral Health

Yahaira Herrera, Eden Housing

Tamara Colden, City of Vacaville

Tara Beasley-Stansberry, Black Chamber of Commerce

3. Additions or Deletions

DeAndre Richard requested that a Public Comment item be added to the agenda to allow for reports from partner agencies, such as Solano County Behavioral Health.

4. Approval of the Agenda – ACTION

John Eckstrom made a motion to approve the agenda. DeAndre Richard seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. There were no abstentions or objections. The motion was approved.

5. Consent Calendar – ACTION

5.1 Approve May 24, 2023 HFS CoC Meeting Minutes

Chris Sheridan made a motion to approve the May 24, 2023 meeting minutes. John Eckstrom seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. There were no abstentions or objections. The motion was approved.

6. Old Business/Standing Agenda Items

6.1 Veterans Affairs Update

Chair Kari Rader reported that Jai De Lotto was out on vacation and would provide the Veteran Affairs Update at the July meeting.

6.2 Committee/Work Group Updates

6.2a Coordinated Entry System Committee

DeAndre Richard reported that the next CES Meeting would be held on August 2nd, 2023 and a case conferencing meeting for Lutheran Social Services' Crossroads PSH project would be held tomorrow, June 29th at 11:00 am. RCS has started working with pilot access point sites, Shelter Solano, Opportunity House, and Solano County Behavioral Health. RCS is scheduling Coordinated Entry System 101 presentations for the community to educate partners who may reach out to RCS if interested. RCS representatives went to Rio Vista to meet with the Sheriff, City Council members, and churches to discuss CE, shelter access and encampments.

6.2b Governance Committee

John Eckstrom reported that the following Representative Seats are open: Members-At-Large and Domestic Violence Service Organization/Provider Seat. Applications will be accepted after this meeting. There will also be an open Tribal Representative Seat if it is approved at this meeting. Additionally, the items reviewed at our last Governance Committee meeting on June 2 will be discussed later in today's meeting.

6.2c HMIS Users Committee

Bill Matson gave an update that the next HMIS Committee Meeting on July 18 is mandatory for all HMIS Users in Solano County and that an email went out to everyone asking for their input on Policies and Procedures edits as well as an invitation to the online meeting.

Bill also reported that work on Gotham initiative has been suspended temporarily while the new Clarity HMIS platform transition occurs. The system will need a data quality plan, which they will strive to make simple and easy to comply with. Pathways was also informed about 2 weeks ago that Service Point is releasing a new user interface at end of July. This will not change system functionality although screens will look different. Pathways will hold orientations once they have access to a test version so people can walk through it and are more comfortable when it comes out.

6.2d Lived Experience Committee

Elizabeth Muniz-Palomera gave an update that LEC Members attended the HOPE Event on June 7th and made connections with others with lived experience of homelessness and got some new applicants. Both LEC co-chairs, Elizabeth Muniz-Palomera and Antonio Pizano, provided trainings for Solano Employment and Eligibility department staff and participants in the Housing Support Program called Surviving to Thriving that included information on motivational interviewing for staff and information to assist community participants to establish housing stability and connections to resources. Elizabeth also reported that the last LEC meeting, held on June 13th, was an open meeting and included a presentation on CES from DeAndre Richard. Others who are not members of LEC attended this meeting and provided feedback. The next LEC member meeting will be held on July 11, 2023.

6.2e Youth Advisory Board Core Planning Work Group

Akon Walker reported that the next planning meeting will be later today, June 28, 2023 at 2:00 pm. The YAB Planning Work Group is also on the agenda to provide a presentation to the CoC.

6.2f CA REAL Core Team

Miranda Ramirez reviewed what the CA Racial Equity Action Lab initiative is and who is represented on the CA REAL Core Team. They are participating in State sponsored technical assistance which includes monthly Community of Practice sessions and setting racial equity goals. Miranda shared that the CA REAL Core Team is working on another training for CoC members to deepen understanding of disparities within housing and homelessness, which they hope to offer in September. Kari Rader stated that this has been an interesting experience and there is a lot of rich, deep information being presented.

7. Presentations

7.1 First 5 Center/Head Start – DISCUSSION

Nina Diaz with the First 5 Center presented on their programs for families with children age 0 to 5 years. Nina reviewed First 5 programming, including drop-in classes, an open play space, community events, parenting education and support, resources and referrals, and a food pantry. Nina also shared the contact information for their Community Resource Specialist, Veronica Ledesma (vlledesma@bacr.org), who can assist families with connections to services they need both at the resource center and within the community. They also have spaces for community partners and do

outreach and event partnerships. Nina stated that anyone interested in partnering with them can email her at nina.diaz@bacr.org.

Katie Ward requested the First 5 Center class schedule, which Nina Diaz shared in chat, in both English and Spanish. Adrianna Ames also shared a brochure from Fair Housing Advocates of Northern California. These documents are saved in the public folder for the meeting.

Andrea Calderon with ChildStart, Inc. presented about the Head Start program, which serves families who are most in need, prioritizing families experiencing homelessness. Andrea Calderon shared that a referral from community partners indicating that a family is experiencing homelessness counts in determining priority for families. ChildStart is developing MOUs with organizations in the community to partner in supporting families. Andrea encouraged agencies to contact her about partnership at andrea@childstartinc.org. They are also offering classes for families to go back to school. The presentation slides and Community Partner Referral Form may be found in the public folder for the meeting and more information may be found on the ChildStart website.

8. New Business

8.1 Governance Committee – DISCUSSION and ACTION

Maya Spark of Homebase presented proposed revisions to the Housing First Solano CoC Governance Charter and Written Standards from the Governance Committee meeting held on Jun 2nd, 2023. The revised documents with changes tracked may be found in the public folder for the meeting.

Changes to the Governance Charter include the addition of a Board member seat for Indian Tribes and Tribally Designated Housing Entities, increasing the total seats from 25 to 26. Tribal organization representatives expressed a desire to join the CoC Board at trainings.

Changes to the Written Standards include policies and procedures for CoC & ESG funded projects, as well as other projects, general operating standards, and policies to be compliant with HUD. The definition of homelessness related to Domestic Violence and eligibility was changed under 2022 VAWA reauthorization. Other updates were made related to the emergency transfer plan and infectious disease policies, for which we worked with Solano County Public Health (SCPH) to add policies and links to best practices documents from Shelter, Inc. regarding prevention of respiratory illness in congregate settings such as emergency shelter. Thank you to SCPH for working with us

on those policies. The Written Standards also include recommended updates regarding State ESG prevention funding, including defining prevention services to be offered, specific compliance language from the State, a triage plan, and appropriate staffing patterns to be established. The Coordinated Entry Committee also decided on language to add regarding the process that a defunded project should follow, such as notifying clients, transferring to other housing, and who does what and within what timelines. Guidance from the local HUD office re: Permanent Housing to Permanent Housing transfers has also been memorialized in the Written Standards. Maya noted that most of the updates are compliance updates.

In regard to the Emergency Transfer Plan for people experiencing DV, HUD suggested that it be more robust, with a seamless process to transfer to a new CoC or ESG funded unit. Homebase worked with the DV-CE system to make edits and can provide training on it upon request. The Written Standards also clarify anti-discrimination policies, including equal access and gender identify, with an updated section on shelter access for people who identify as non-binary. There are also attachments with links to HUD's translated forms.

Kari Rader asked if the Board is comfortable voting on the revisions to the Written Standards, considering that there was a lot of information. Maya Spark told people that generally there is not enough time to cover the revisions in detail at this meeting and that the best way to fully understand the proposed revisions is to attend the Governance Committee meetings or review the documents which are placed in the public folder in advance. Maya stated that there is not urgency if Board members wish to have another month to review. Kari Rader asked if any Board members have comments on how they would like to proceed. Brandon Wirth stated that for healthy process all Board members should review documents in the public folder prior to the meeting. He stated that given the size of the Board, if members fail to do so the Board will always be slowed down for these big decisions. Brandon stated that he reviewed the documents and feels comfortable calling a vote. Other Board members stated agreement and Kari Rader called for a motion. Brandon Wirth made the motion. Don Hendershot seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Akon Walker abstained. There were no objections. All others voted aye. The motion was approved.

8.2 Youth Advisory Board Planning – DISCUSSION

Antonio Pizano requested that this item be postponed to the July meeting due to lack of time, Kari Rader agreed and stated that this item would be postponed.

8.3 HMIS Clarity Transition – DISCUSSION

Megan Richard reported that the CAP Solano JPA approved allocations of funding toward Bitfocus to support the transition of HMIS to Clarity

software, and to Pathways to help manage that transition. JPA staff will be working on the transition from Clarity over the next six months, with the goal to complete it by February 2024, when the current contract ends. Megan noted that database transitions can be difficult but this will be good in the long-run. In regard to concerns expressed by the community regarding increased license costs, the JPA decided to use funds from their HHAP and HHIP contracts to cover the increase in license cost so that the cost won't go up over the next 5 years. They will also need to do some training on the new system and may be reaching out to providers about data cleanup, training, etc. Megan stated that they want to be sure that the new data system will support processes and to work with providers to help adjust workflows and be flexible about how we go about the transition.

Brandon Wirth asked who will be managing the JPA relationship with the project coordinator. Megan answered that at this point she is the point of contact and that they are working with counsel to look at the master services agreement and are in contact with Pathways.

9. Staff Updates

9.1 Staff Communications

Devra Edelman, Homebase staff, thanked everyone who participated in the community input and development process for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Community Needs Assessment and Action Plan (CAN/CAP). The CAN/CAP was completed and will be submitted to the State by the June 30th due date. The CNA/CAP will also be posted on the CAP Solano JPA website and shared via the CoC and JPA listservs.

Devra also stated that we are expecting the HUD Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO for Continuum of Care (CoC) funding to be released soon and that Homebase is preparing for that process. Devra also stated that the renewal competition process was announced and started today. She also stated there may be a special CoC Board meeting related to the NOFO and that about 2 weeks after the NOFO is released Homebase will hold a bidder's conference for programs interested in applying. Devra stated that there will be training on Serving Survivors of Domestic Violence at the next scheduled CoC meeting, on July 26, 2023.

9.2 Funding Opportunities

Devra Edelman stated that we are working on getting a presentation on funding opportunities from the CalAim project, which was announced at the last meeting.

9.3 Public Comment (added)

Kari Rader asked if anyone had public comment. There were none. Kari Rader reported that VOICES Youth Center recently requested a letter of support from the CoC and that she asked Antonio Pizano, a Program

Coordinator with VOICES, to share about that. Antonio Pizano shared information about VOICES and their programs for youth in the community. That they are applying for funding from the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for workforce programming which will support a cohort of youth to build skills, including a training program, resume writing, cover letters, and a paid internship. Antonio stated that they also hiring someone to be project manager. Kenya Rawls posted a link to further information on WIOA in the chat: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/wioa>

10. Adjourn

John Eckstrom made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 am. The meeting was adjourned.