



TOWN COUNCIL
Committee to Assess Homelessness in Hyannis
Selectmen's Conference Room

Monday November 7, 2016
MEETING MINUTES

I. BUSINESS

A. Roll Call:

Members present: Chair of Committee Councilor Jennifer Cullum, Councilor James Crocker Jr.; Deb Krau; Councilor Frederick Chirigotis; Councilor Debra Dagwan. **OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Paul MacDonald; LT. J. Challies; SGT. J. Ellis, Barnstable Police; Mark S. Ells, Town Manager; **ABSENT:** Councilor James Tinsley

Chair of the Committee Councilor Jennifer Cullum opened up the meeting at 6:05 with public comment. Paula Schnepf coordinated entry system is going to be implemented on December 1, 2016 and would be happy to report on it once it starts to this committee.

Deb Krau stated it will be interesting to see if the chronic homeless do come in and register and asked who is really getting registered; Ms. Schnepf stated it would benefit everyone here if she would be able to give an overview to everyone, because there is a criteria that we use, so it's not just for the chronic homeless, it incorporates a lot of others that may fall into the category of homelessness. Town Manager, Mark Ells asked if the school children are also counted in this number or coordinated entry system; Ms. Schnepf answered no, they are not counted in this; however there is a separate way to count those individuals that are homeless but attending public schools the ones the schools count come from an education prospective. Chair of the Committee thanked Ms. Schnepf for her comments and said it would be beneficial to come to a future meeting after the coordinated entry system starts and update us at that point.

Chair of the Committee Councilor Jennifer Cullum introduced Mark Ells, Town manager who presented an update to the Committee regarding the conversation with Rose Evans and Catholic Social Services; looking from the outside in is very optimistic about working with them to make this a success when they take over the NOAH Shelter as it is currently known now, but to be re - named St. Joseph's House when Catholic Social Services takes over. Mr. Ells asked them to please keep him informed as they move along so that the Town is aware of what is going on, there are numerous conversations taking place at the state level that we were not necessarily a part of, but he made it clear he would like to be a part of it. Town Manager Ells introduced the following communication letter he handed out to the committee and explained he wants the communications to continue with the respective social service agencies in and around the Hyannis area that have contact with these individuals so that we are all focusing our efforts on making the lives of these individuals better for them and also better for our community. (See communication below with information regarding the Regional Network of Homelessness and its members.)



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Mark S. Ells, Town Manager
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November 7, 2016

To: Committee to Assess Homelessness in Hyannis

From: Mark S. Ells, Town Manager

RE: Draft Town Manager Communications with Social Service Agencies

Dear Sir/Madam,

In our continued efforts to effectively manage the many issues surrounding social support services in our community, communication is imperative among those organizations who service this population to improve our collective efforts toward improving the lives of those affected by this effort. We have made great strides in addressing issues in this area and continued success is critical. We are reaching out to you and asking that you work with us on achieving this coordinated effort. Early and consistent communication with my office regarding planned efforts in and around our community is needed to insure that our collective vision to maintain a quality of life in Barnstable and the Village of Hyannis for all those who live, visit and do business is necessary.

We ask that you join us by communicating frequently and early in your planning processes so that we can better prepare for the many challenge that face a community. We are available at your convenience to discuss your efforts on this matter.

Respectfully,

Mark S. Ells
Town Manager



*Cape and Islands Regional Network on Homelessness
Policy Board 2015-2016*

*Convenor: Sheila Lyons, Barnstable County Commissioner
Beth Albert, Director, Barnstable County Department of Human Services
Jay Coburn, Executive Director, Community Development Partnership
Anne Colwell, CEO, Cape Cod Child Development
Kristina Dower, Executive Director, Community Action Committee of Cape & Islands
John Economos, District Manager, The Community Builders, Inc.
Mark Ells, Assistant Town Manager, Town of Barnstable
Lou Eppers, Protective Services, Elder Services of Cape Cod and Islands
Rose Evans, Deputy Undersecretary, Department of Housing and Community Development
Maggi Flanagan, Program Director, Homeless Prevention Council
Cathy Gibson, Acting Supervisor, Department of Transitional Assistance
Linell Grundman, Sandwich Human Services Advisory Committee
Beth Hardy-Wade, Executive Director, CHAMP Homes, Inc.
Lysetta Hurge-Putnam, Executive Director, Independence House
Gina Hurley, Director of Student Services, Barnstable School District
Marc Israel, HMIS Administrator, Housing Assistance Corporation
Steve Jochim, Area Director, Massachusetts Department of Mental Health
Erica Kay-Webster, Executive Director, Foundation for International Justice, Inc.
Cynthia Klopfer, Family Partner, Cape Cod Family Resource Center – Family Continuity
Tom Lacey, Executive Director, Falmouth Housing Authority
Robert McGillveary, Chief Operating Officer, Homeless Not Hopeless
Barbara Milligan, President & CEO, United Way of Cape & Islands
Heidi Nelson, CEO, Duffy Health Center
Edythe Nesmith, Interim Director, Cape Cod Council of Churches
Rick Presbrey, CEO, Housing Assistance Corp.
Greg Quilty, Director, Veteran's Outreach Center
Brenda Swain, Executive Director, Falmouth Service Center
David Vigneault, Executive Director, Dukes County Regional Housing Authority
David Willard, Vice President, Cape Cod Five Cents Saving Bank
Paula Schnepf, Coordinator, Regional Network on Homelessness

Approved September 28, 2015

Revised 3/28/16

CONTINUUM OF CARE POLICY BRIEF

Ending homelessness, improving efficiency: Recommendations for the HUD CoC program

What is the CoC Program?

As the primary federal resource to end homelessness, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) program competitively funds CoCs to impact homelessness at the local level to ensure an end to homelessness. CoCs apply for funds on behalf of community programs. Last year alone, HUD awarded almost \$2 billion for housing and services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness including people who were chronically homeless, disabled, veterans, and unaccompanied youth. CoC programs have contributed to impressive results: 113,000 PSH beds created since 2001, a 22% decline in chronic homelessness between 2010-2015, and reductions in homelessness among veterans and families. **HUD-funded CoC programs work and are necessary to end homelessness.**

The 2009 HEARTH Act intended to streamline the CoC program, improve community planning, and measure performance. In large part it did. As a result of the HEARTH Act, HUD has directed CoC dollars and local planning to:

- Advance strategies to end chronic homelessness and homelessness of other priority populations,
- Prioritize scarce CoC funds for permanent housing for the most chronic and vulnerable homeless persons,
- Reduce barriers to housing access by promoting Housing First,
- Focus on performance outcomes that end homelessness.

HEARTH Act implementation, while promoting this strategic approach, has also significantly increased the administrative burden at the local level which limits the ability of CoCs to effectively plan and efficiently end homelessness as Congress intended. **HUD is measurably ending homelessness with its strategic use of CoC funds, but CoC input could advance this goal even further.**

Continuum of Care Snapshot

405
Number of CoCs

\$1.9 billion
Annual HUD CoC funding

8,000+
Local homeless housing and
services programs across the
United States

What specific issues create challenges for CoCs?

HUD CoC NOFA Application:	HEARTH ACT Compliance:	Project Operations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application and prep require an average of 1,000 hours over four months for CoCs to complete. ▪ HUD policy directives and changes are often embedded in NOFA process. ▪ Schedule fluctuates year-to-year and is often simultaneous with other HUD CoC deadlines. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Streamlining and simplifying the application process would allow CoCs to concentrate on work to end homelessness. ➢ Setting consistent schedule for HUD deadlines would allow CoCs to plan better and use staff time more efficiently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HEARTH Act requirements (governance charter, planning board, increased project monitoring, etc.) add new layers of local governance and new costs not covered by HUD. ▪ Data requirements have grown, while funding has stayed level. Data systems are often not equipped to meet new HUD requirements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Streamlining would keep CoC efforts focused on ending homelessness rather than building governance systems. ➢ Prioritizing key data needs and better supporting CoCs with capacity would produce better data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual competition and tiering of renewals puts projects at-risk even when aligned with HUD priorities. ▪ Annual re-application and re-contracting and delayed awards drive up administrative costs for CoCs. ▪ Small admin % and limited data grants relative to mandated reporting leaves CoCs to cover much of these costs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Streamlining with multi-year grants for well-aligned projects would reduce CoC contracting burden and preserve priority projects. ➢ Targeting data needs to top priorities would further reduce CoC costs.

CONTINUUM OF CARE POLICY BRIEF

What solutions do we recommend?

- 1** Listen and learn from local communities as partners in ending homelessness, by establishing a CoC Advisory Committee to HUD comprised of a cross section of CoCs from across the country.
- 2** Switch to a multi-year application and simplified annual updates, like the Consolidated Plan. A multi-year funding cycle would allow communities to focus on strategies to end homelessness rather than on the development of annual applications.
- 3** Reward higher performing CoCs by granting five-year renewals, subject to appropriation, and target poor performers with technical assistance and project changes.
- 4** Support better strategic planning at the CoC level with multi-year planning grants. Good planning processes to end and prevent homelessness require more time to implement than is possible through one-year grants.
- 5** Set a consistent schedule for the release of HUD's CoC NOFA and application deadlines, during a timeframe separate from other HUD required deadlines and field office monitoring visits.
- 6** Simplify and streamline data reporting to measure CoC performance and homeless trends, keeping in mind available HUD funding, realistic data system capabilities, and staffing.

Continuum of Care programs work and they are necessary to end homelessness. Without these resources, the nation will see dramatic increases in the homeless population. **The six simple program fixes described here will allow CoCs to focus on HUD's priorities—better planning and outcome-driven programs that end homelessness.**

The Continuum of Care (CoC) Policy Brief was originally written and endorsed by the 16 CoCs in Massachusetts. It has been expanded and endorsed by numerous CoCs in New England.

Questions?

Please contact: Joyce Tavon – jtavonconsulting@gmail.com or Cullen Ryan – cullen@chomhousing.org

August 2016



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HUD AWARDS OVER \$1.6 MILLION FOR CAPE AND ISLANDS HOMELESS PROGRAMS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE. March 10, 2016 – The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced the 2015 Continuum of Care (CoC) competition funding awards. The **Cape and Islands** received \$1,682,047 million dollars in funding to support twelve renewals programs that provide housing to over 140 formerly homeless individuals. The region also received grants to support CoC Planning and the Homeless Information Management System (HMIS). This year's award is a 12% increase over last year's CoC funding. A second round of CoC funding for new and tier two projects is expected to be announced in the near future.

This year's grants are being awarded in the most competitive environment HUD has experienced in the Continuum of Care grant program. To compete most effectively, communities made very challenging decisions, often shifting funds from existing projects to create new ones that will have a more substantial and lasting impact on homeless populations.

Nationally, HUD provides \$1.6 billion in grants to provide funding to 6,400 local homeless housing and service programs across the U.S., Puerto Rico, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. To view Massachusetts Homeless Assistance Awards visit "[State and Local Homeless Projects Award Funding](https://www.hudexchange.info/onecpd/assets/File/2015-massachusetts-coc-grants.pdf)" (<https://www.hudexchange.info/onecpd/assets/File/2015-massachusetts-coc-grants.pdf>)

HUD estimates there were 564,708 persons experiencing homelessness on a single night in 2015. Since 2010 local communities around the country reported a decline by more than 72,000 persons, an 11 percent reduction. In addition, veteran homelessness fell by 36 percent, chronic homelessness declined 22 percent and between 2010 and January 2015, family homelessness declined by 19 percent, while the estimated number of unaccompanied homeless youth and children was 36,097.

On January 27, 2016 the Cape Cod and Islands CoC organized volunteers to help count the number of persons located in emergency shelters, transitional housing programs and living unsheltered on the streets. Barnstable County Department of Human Services which acts as the Collaborative Applicant for the Cape and Islands' CoC will report these one-night 'point-in-time counts' later in the spring.

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Town Manager Mark S. Ells said that he wants to reach out in a positive way to keep the lines of communication open. In the communication with these Social Service Agencies he made it clear that moving forward it was imperative that the communications are positive and that we keep a presence at all times at these meetings, let them know that we are serious in being a part of these meetings. Chair of the committee stated that it is not that we do not want to help these individuals, but Hyannis has reached a saturation point and we are overflowing and can't take in anymore and need help.

The Chair of the Committee said that what is happening in Hyannis does not happen in any other village in Barnstable or any other Community on the Cape, they all come to Hyannis because the majority of agencies that are designed to help these individuals are here in Hyannis, but there has to be a way to say come to us and talk to us before another agency sets up shop in Hyannis. Our economy is tipping in the wrong way and Hyannis is being made to carry the weight and we are sinking, we need others to step up and help us.

Councilor James Crocker Jr. said we need to focus our discussions on Rose Evans; she ultimately is the trigger person with regards to money, and has the power to do something with the vouchers and the housing situation. Or at the very least centralize the services.

Deb Krau also mentioned that some of these individuals may not be from the Hyannis area or even the surrounding Community; it would be interesting to see who really is from our Town and who is here because the services are here.

Mark Ells, Town Manager asked about regionalizing the services, there are a lot of other projects happening in Hyannis that is not focused on homelessness. The Sheriff has a release program, and is buying up homes to house these individuals that are getting released. He believes that the communication needs to at the very least involve all the social service programs, and be part of the discussion.

Chair of the Committee said that it is not that we do not want these programs, however they need to be spread out over other towns and villages, they are all concentrated in Hyannis, we need to be able to hear about these before they are here and having an open house, why do we not know about these?

Councilor James Crocker Jr. stated we need to look at the zoning and the areas that these programs are being established and find out if it can even happen.

Part of the challenge is the shrinking of rentals stated Paula Schnepf. The vouchers coming out are not enough for the rental market. The pricing for vouchers is based on 110% for the fair market value of rentals.

Mark Ells, Town Manager said he needs to understand where all the agencies are going and if we are out of sync, then we need to align all the different revenue sources and get them in sync, and then find out what each individual social service agency receives for funding, and then how it is distributed, or why it is broken up the way it is, and why some communities receive more than others, he does not know why, but intends to understand the funding and the dividing of those funds.

Councilor James Crocker Jr. stated that the voucher program is a Federal Funding and has no limitation as to where that voucher is used; because of the fact it is Federal Funding source. There are vouchers in Dennis being issued for \$1,600, but the voucher issued in Barnstable Housing is only 1,200, so the individual from Dennis is able to use the voucher in Barnstable because their voucher will cover the rent in Barnstable.

Chair of Committee agreed with Councilor Crocker who would like to see the state money be spread out into other communities. They would also like a cherry sheet of distribution of monies to these communities so that we can understand the formula used to determine the release of these funds and the amount of the vouchers issued.

Chair of the committee asked SGT J. Ellis of the Barnstable Police Department to briefly go over her conversation with Karen Reddy, who is the coordinator at the NOAH Shelter and also coordinates the Taunton shelter; there was some mixed feelings on the shelter going back to a wet shelter, but in the observation and conversations she has had the clients are given an opportunity if they come to the shelter under the influence of anything, Karen calls them into the office and explains to them that they have only two options, get help or move along, she is very strict with the clients, and they all know what is expected of them, they have shipped some individuals out that did not want to comply with the rules, however they also will allow individuals to come in from the cold and sleep in the lobby instead of the streets if they come to the shelter under the influence of anything, but then they have to agree to the program and get help. The shelter was very clean, it even smelled clean, the showers and bathrooms were clean and fresh paint was added. SGT. J. Ellis said it is the best she has ever seen it. There were individuals in the dayroom playing cards and board games which is something you did not see there

before, so there is a change since the new management took this facility over. There was a serious list of health violations from the Board of Health that have been addressed already. There have been a lot of positive changes in just 1 week of taking over.

Chair of the Committee would like to see the communications start again with the Transitional Living Center individuals.

Chief Paul MacDonald stated the main focus of the TLC individuals was focused on moving the shelter, so if that is not a focus now, then what would they meet on was their thought process.

ADJOURN: 7:11pm

NEXT MEETING: December 1, 2016 at 6pm Selectmen's Conference Room

