

**Morris County Continuum of Care (CoC) Executive Committee Meeting  
August 10, 2017  
Meeting Notes**

**Meeting began at 10:08 a.m.**

**Voting Members Present:**

Mike Armstrong, Community Hope; Jeffrey Bashe, Community Rep.; Terry Connolly, Community Soup Kitchen; Joseph Gallo, Market Street Mission; Russ Hall, Housing Alliance of MC; Nancy Magee, Community Foundation of NJ; Jodi Miciak, United Way of NNJ; Kesha Moore, Drew University; Rebekka Zydel, Child & Family Resources, Inc.

**Ex-Officio Members Present:**

Jennifer Carpinteri, MCDHS; Dan McGuire, Homeless Solutions; Patty Sly, Jersey Battered Women's Service.

**Voting Members Absent:**

**Gwen Rippey**

**Ex-Officio Members Absent:**

Joann Bjornson, Family Promise; Meagan Quinn, OTA; Robert Davison, MHA.

**Staff and Consultants Present:**

Laurie Becker, Patricia Mocariski, Morris County Human Services; Jay Everett, Monarch Housing.

**Part 1: Updates and Open Items (for all attendees)**

**1. Welcome & Introductions**

Mr. Jeff Bashe, Chair, opened the meeting with welcomes and introductions.

**2. Approval of May 25, 2017 Minutes**

Mr. Bashe asked for the approval of the May 23 minutes. Mr. Mike Armstrong made a motion to approve the May 23 minutes and Ms. Nancy Magee seconded the motion. All were in favor with no opposition and no abstentions. Motion carried.

**Critical Open Items:**

- **Overview of Coordinated Entry status and implementation plans – (written report attached) – Ms. Miciak**

Ms. Miciak has been attending meetings of the sub-committee. The group has been meeting every two weeks. They anticipate startup in the fall. There is still a lot of work to do. Ms. Bjornson and Janice Kaniewski of NJ211 recently attended the National Alliance to End Homelessness conference and worked diligently on aspects of the Coordinated Entry. There will be a brief presentation of CE at the CAS meeting on Sept. 12 for public awareness and community feedback.

Coordinated Entry is a HUD mandate and will not increase the bed or housing capacity. Mr. Everett stated once this system is in place we will know exactly how many beds and how much housing is really needed. The prioritization is based on the length of homelessness and the severity of need. Thus, agencies may see clients that are harder to serve. In Sept., the sub-committee will look at their combined waiting lists and consolidate them. Ms. Bjornson scanned her agency waiting list to see if anyone can receive a voucher. There will be a master list: one for singles and one for families.

We need a policy and procedures manual and publicity. Mr. Everett stated that we need to increase public awareness and inform police and hospitals, etc. Ms. Becker suggested that Larry Ragonese (County PR person) also be involved and that we incorporate the Morris Stigma Free logo.

There will be two entry points. One will be 211 and the other will be the two drop in centers (Our Promise in Morristown and Edna's Haven in Dover.) All will need to work together to make improvements. When a person calls 211, the intake worker will find out if the caller is in crisis. Safety will always be first. After that is prevention and diversion. About 40% of homeless persons solve their homelessness and family problems within 8 days.

The assessment tool is being finalized. Mr. Armstrong says he hopes there will be one form/one tool for various areas. Ms. Miciak stated they talked to others that have used 211 and learned a lot from past models. Mr. Bashe said we have to get the word out about coordinated entry. At the Sept. 12 session of the CAS meeting the sub-committee will present an overview of the new system. Mr. Bashe stated this will be a special two-hour meeting from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Office of Temporary Assistance. Mr. Bashe suggested the CAS be involved with monitoring how it is going and what improvements are needed.

Ms. Becker suggested that information on the coordinated entry process be incorporated into Project Homeless Connect in November. Mr. Bashe asked Ms. Becker to work with MHA on this.

- **Proposed changes to the CAS role/attendance and plans for Sept. 12 meeting – Mr. Bashe**

The CAS has been struggling with their identity and having a meaningful concept. The group is unhappy. Last year a letter went out to members explaining their role. The letter requested senior representation at the CAS meetings. All said yes but not much has changed. Ms. Luisa Fieno was Chair and did a great job. The group and their subcommittees accomplished a lot. Unfortunately, after a while they lost their motivation.

The model laid out would give the CAS specific duties, including serving as a formal body for strategic planning in the community and a reviewer of system performance metrics. Their focus should be monitoring and strategic planning.

There are key players that do not come to meetings. Mr. Bashe will reach out to them. Mr. Wes Gaynor, Homeless Solutions, will be the Chair for this year. Family Promise designated Ms. Niamh Barker, Family Promise, as Vice Chair. Ms. Becker will try to get Legal Services to attend meetings. Mr. Bashe stated they plan to have meetings every other month with some ad hoc meetings.

Mr. Bashe will send out another notice asking both senior staff and regular committee members to attend the Sept. meeting. This meeting will serve as the kick-off for the Coordinated Entry. They will explain what the Coordinated Entry is and what it means to the community. Mr. Hall suggested Mr. Bashe prepare a one page summary explaining the purpose of the CAS to go along with the meeting invitation. Mr. Bashe stated they will work on the revitalization of CAS.

Ms. Miciak believes there is a missing piece. Perhaps there needs to be more of a personal touch rather than just emails to those who are not at the meetings. Ms. Connolly suggested the Chair reach out to folks before each meeting. Ms. Zydel stated that maybe some attending the CAS would be better off attending the Provider group and should be invited to Provider meetings.

Ms. Becker mentioned that the Cross Systems group meets monthly – perhaps the groups can be combined. Mr. Everett said that the CAS functions under the HSAC and there needs to be a CAS or CEAS committee. This group needs to be reinvigorated with purpose.

- **Feedback on the CoC Review process to-date and plans/timetable to complete the CoC submission –Mr. Bashe**

Mr. Bashe thought the review process as a whole went smoothly and the Technical Assistance Session was good. He asked if the agencies thought it went well. Mr. McGuire and Ms. Sly both attended and thought the session went well. However, they feel it would be helpful to get the performance reports earlier.

- **2017 PIT Report discussion on out of county origin homeless – Mr. McGuire**

They have been looking at the out of county issue. More folks come into our county that out of our county. Mr. McGuire stated we are a net importer of homeless folks along with Somerset and Hunterdon counties. These three counties have the highest number of homeless coming from out of county. Mr. Armstrong stated that in Somerset that is partially due to the 95 homeless veterans living at the VA. It was agreed that each agency would analyze reasons why their clients migrate to Morris from out of county.

Mr. Bashe stated the question is what we do about it. Is it something we need to be concerned with or address? Ms. Miciak stated that perhaps we could adjust the questions in the PIT survey tool to get information that is more accurate. Ms. Becker said perhaps we can ask if the person has been in Greystone or another hospital or jail.

Discussion ensued about whether we can talk to HUD about why we are serving more people. Perhaps we can explain that we don't feel these incoming people should have an impact on our score. Ms. Sly stated that JBWS does not care if they are serving folks from out of county. Most of us feel we are here to serve all the homeless.

Ms. Carpinteri said our CoC is not turning people away. She believes some counties do turn people away and do not take in out of county people. There is a correlation to net influx and that is why we are not making as good progress in reducing numbers.

Mr. Everett stated that in the NOFA HUD gives points for merging with another county. Some counties do not have men's shelters/and some have less shelters. We need to figure out what we can do to tell our story. Do we understand the dynamics of our neighbors and how to track patterns? What can we do to help success in our neighboring counties? Perhaps we can add some questions to the PIT to help us find out more information. Mr. Hall stated that "No one in Morris County goes Hungry" and that is a big draw!

Mr. Everett stated that in Oct. they will be building the PIT survey and already have had some conversation about questions to add. It is good they get feedback from the CAS. How can we access why people came from another county. Perhaps an ad hoc committee or the CAS can work on this. Mr. Bashe asked who wants to work with Mr. Everett on revising the PIT questionnaire. Ms. Connolly, Ms. Moore and Mr. McGuire offered to work with Mr. Everett on this.

- **Project Homeless Connect – Mr. Bashe**

Now planned for November 16, it was agreed that MHA and MCDHS will have a plan for PHC to present at the CAS meeting on September 12.

Mr. Bashe also noted that November 16 is a meeting date for the EC, and he recommended delaying that meeting until after Thanksgiving.

## **Part 2: Approval of the CoC proposal ranking and allocations - closed session for voting members only**

The voting members met to finalize the ranking and funding recommendations of the Program Review Committee.

Some discussion ensued. Some concerns were raised that the rank list and tier placement was not totally in line with program scores and with HUD priorities for this funding stream, and that we needed to do more strategic planning to better understand our needs. It was explained that some modification of the rank list has been done for the past few years in order to address critical needs in the community and in order to achieve increased CoC funding, and we have been successful. We have reduced CoC funding to lower prioritized programs. We are also migrating toward HUD priorities for the CoC by moving aggressively into Coordinated Entry. It was felt

that we do not have the benefit of comprehensive strategic planning to eliminate certain lower-scoring programs at this time.

Nevertheless, it was agreed to initiate discussions about alternative funding approaches and potential program modifications with Homeless Solutions and Mental Health Assn. regarding their Safe Havens Program, and to continue similar discussions with Homeless Solutions regarding their Transitional Housing Program.

Motion made by Mr. Bashe to approve the ranking on the scoring sheets as distributed. All were in favor with no opposition and no abstentions. Motion carried and the scoring sheets and rank list and budget were approved.

Mr. Bashe made a motion to close the meeting at 11:50 p.m. All were in favor with no opposition and no abstention. Meeting closed.