

MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS  
CONTINUUM OF CARE PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES

June 11, 2012

Members Attending

Theresa James, City of Tempe, Chair  
Billy Bridwell, U.S. Vets, Phoenix  
Donna Bleyle, Arizona Department of  
Economic Security  
Mary Berumen, City of Mesa  
Laura Peters, Labor's Community Service  
Agency  
Catherine Rae Dunning, Community  
Information and Referral  
Richard Geasland, Tumbleweed  
Connie Phillips, Sojourner Center  
\*Nick Margiotta, Phoenix Police  
Department  
\*Linda Mushkatel, Maricopa County  
Mattie Lord for Darlene Newsom,  
UMOM New Day Center  
Kim Van Nimwegen for Amy  
Schwabenlender, Valley of the Sun  
United Way  
Joan Serviss, Arizona Coalition to End  
Homelessness  
Jacki Taylor, Save the Family  
John Wall, Arizona Housing, Inc.  
\*Diana Yazzie Devine, Native American  
Connections

Others Present

Chris Bartz, Recovery Innovations of  
Arizona  
David Bridge, Human Services Campus,  
Inc.  
Tim Cole, City of Phoenix  
Billie Cawley, Central Arizona Shelter  
Services  
Margaret Finn, Southwest Behavioral  
Health  
Janeen Gaskin, City of Surprise  
Dan Greenleaf, NOVA Safe Haven  
Mark Holleran, Central Arizona Shelter  
Services  
Margaret Kilman, Arizona Department of  
Economic Security  
Karen Kurtz, Community Bridges, Inc.  
Nancy Marion, House of Refuge East  
Sean Price, Arizona Department of  
Veterans' Services  
Jacob Sedillo, Labor's Community  
Service Agency  
Nicky Stevens, Arizona Behavioral Health  
Corporation  
Michelle Thomas, Community  
Information and Referral  
Craig Tribken, Central Arizona Shelter  
Services

Brandee Mead, MAG

\*Those members neither present nor  
represented by proxy.

+Present by audio or videoconference.

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Brandee Mead, Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. She advised Theresa James, City of Tempe, Chair, was expected to arrive soon.

2. Call to the Audience

Audience members were given an opportunity to address the Planning Subcommittee. No comments were made.

3. Approval of April 16, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Ms. Mead requested approval of the April 16, 2012 meeting minutes. Catherine Rae Dunning, Community Information and Referral, made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Dick Geasland, Tumbleweed Center for Youth Development, seconded the motion. The motion passed.

4. Regional Homeless Data Overview Update

Ms. Mead acknowledged Margaret Kilman for her efforts on the Regional Homeless Data overview noting the project took much more work than was anticipated. Ms. Mead referred members to the reformatted version of the overview. Feedback was requested on the revised format and the facts presented in the overview. Ms. Mead noted previous requests to have media specific sound bites that could be used during other presentations. Ms. Mead noted the bolded facts within the document may be used as the sound bites. A recommendation was made to add the date and page numbers to the document.

Additional information was requested on the intent for the document. Ms. Mead advised the document would likely be posted on the MAG website and could be distributed as needed for use by Committee members' grant writing purposes; communication with the media; or as needed for various purposes.

Donna Bleyle, Arizona Department of Economic Security, advised the chronic homeless population average length of stay, appears short. She requested clarification that the report includes only those chronic individuals that are housed and noted this information should be noted in the document. Ms. Mead confirmed the document includes only sheltered individuals and noted the title can be revised to further clarify. She noted all data in the document is obtained from HMIS for those individuals housed in emergency, transitional or supportive housing programs. Ms. Bleyle suggested the data should reflect households versus individuals. She noted when data reflecting children is added, it appears that single adults are a very small portion of the homeless population. The document should represent single households and family households separately to prevent skewing the data.

Chair James expressed concerns for people with disabilities who are unable to access shelters due to lack of accessibility. She requested tracking the data reflecting this population. Ms. Mead commented the document is a good framework. She suggested however, including additional expert input and text to the various categories. As a next step, she recommended, distributing the document to the focus groups and requesting their input for further detail on the subpopulations.

Ms. Mead encouraged the Committee to share the document with other groups to seek further input. Her hope for the document is that it will be utilized to educate and inform. Any further input to improve the document is appreciated. A question was asked seeking clarification regarding job loss, evictions, and people doubled-up. It was noted "red flags" are occurring before individuals become part of the homeless system and these indicators are

not being detected. Ms. Mead advised the document may be used as a planning tool for new ESG funding such as to address those red flags and focus on prevention.

Ms. Mead requested feedback on the format. It was noted the document addresses aging veterans, but does not address the aging population as a whole. Dick Geasland, Tumbleweed, inquired whether or not data for all DES child welfare/child protective service shelters are included in the report. There was further discussion clarifying the differences noting the DES shelters are not included in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition of homelessness. Ms. Mead advised that only emergency and transitional shelters, as defined by HUD, are included in the shelter count. Mr. Geasland suggested adding a comment regarding children, who are sheltered and housed, but not in homes with families. Ms. Mead requested they work together to further clarify the section on youth.

A request was made to add a brief methodology section describing what data was used and how it was collected. Mr. Geasland noted the report does not include the number of homeless children in schools. Ms. Mead recalled previous discussion was to focus on the HMIS shelter data for purposes of this overview. Mr. Geasland recommended adding text regarding other homeless populations that are not captured in the overview. Ms. Bleye noted the importance of describing single individuals' verses families to be able to detail information about the prevalence of mental illness among the single adult population.

Ms. Mead advised the document would be distributed via e-mail to the Planning Subcommittee as well as the work group. Input is requested by Friday, June 22, 2012.

5. Point-in-time Homeless Street Count Recommendations from Arizona State University (ASU) PAF 400, Senior Capstone Course Students

Vice Chair James invited Ms. Mead to present on the Point-in-Time Homeless Street Count Recommendations from ASU's Senior Capstone students. Ms. Mead acknowledged the partnership with the students and their efforts on the point-in-time count.

Ms. Mead referenced the handouts noting some minor discrepancies that she wished to clarify. The document states that the Point-in-Time count directly impacts the funding received by the community. Ms. Mead clarified the point-in-time is a requirement however funding is based on several factors. Additionally, the timing for conducting the street count and shelter count are incorrect and the document does not provide a thorough explanation of the Continuum of Care. Ms. Mead gave a brief summary of the document advising the document discusses three different models: Clark County, Nevada; Atlanta, Georgia; and Los Angeles County methodologies. All three models are very briefly described. Phoenix, Glendale and Scottsdale methodologies are also documented in the report. The document addresses decrease from 2010 to 2011 that is not well defined.

Ms. Mead referenced the handout noting there are four main recommendations. They include: a universal methodology; sponsorship; career field exploration credits; homeless task force. She advised the street count working group reviewed the recommendations and provided input. Input is also being sought from the Planning Subcommittee as the

recommendations will be presented to the Continuum of Care on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. An overview of the recommendations and discussion was offered.

**Universal Methodology:** the recommendation is to implement a Universal Methodology using the City of Phoenix methodology on a regional scale. Ms. Mead advised the “opt in” recommendation was recommended by the working group. The recommendation includes developing a methodology document and conducting regional training. Clarification was requested on the recommendation to model the universal methodology to the City of Phoenix model. Ms. Mead advised the working group discussed the practicality of applying the City of Phoenix model in smaller cities such as Goodyear. They recommended offering smaller cities the opportunity to “opt out” and utilize their own methodology that would still meet all of the requirements.

*Sponsorships:* The recommendation is to improve engagement of volunteers by asking for funding to provide some sponsorship such as gift cards to encourage volunteers to participate. Ms. Mead noted the street count coordinators did not feel getting volunteers would be challenging, so they didn’t think this would be necessary. However, they would like to consider sponsorship to offer gift cards or incentives to unsheltered individuals. Ms. Mead suggested these ties into the last recommendation to develop a task force to help identify those hard to find locations.

*Task Force:* The recommendation is to develop a task for that would meet for about a year. Ms. Mead advised the task force may not need to meet for that long a period. She noted Phoenix, in the past, has used homeless individuals, to go into an encampment. Ms. Bleye discussed utilizing DPS officers in outlying areas. Ms. Mead advised several law enforcement officers attended the last work group meeting. She said they are very engaged with individuals on the street and are interested in participating and identifying locations

*Career Field Exploration Credits:* The recommendation is to partner with ASU to obtain volunteers through students who need additional hours to complete their degrees. This would expand the number of people participating in the count on a regional scale. Ms. Mead noted a universal methodology would require many more volunteers than in previous years.

A member asked if the working group discussed adding additional survey questions to the street count questionnaire. Ms. Mead advised that the working group suggested keeping it as a point-in-time count and collecting the data for HUD rather than conducting a more lengthy survey. Tim Cole, City of Phoenix, addressed some of the discussion leading to this recommendation. He noted many small communities utilize law enforcement to conduct the count. The amount of time it would take for law enforcement to complete a one page survey would not be viable. However, he stressed the need for commonalities across all cities including those that opt-out of the universal methodology. Additionally, he said conduct a street survey, such as LA County’s would require a lot of strategic planning to be able to implement.

Ms. Mead addressed training issues noting one of the recommendations included enhanced training for volunteers. For example, in situations where someone appears to be homeless, but they say they are not, how do volunteers handle these situations to ensure everyone is responding in the same manner. Ms. Mead advised if there are pieces of information that the

CoC feels are important to include, or if additional information is needed, there is still an opportunity to incorporate these as the survey tool has not yet been developed.

Ms. Mead shared her concern that a universal methodology will be developed and in the end, every city will decide to opt out and utilize their own method. Mr. Cole agreed, he fears that next January, the process will be exactly the same as has been used. He said it's difficult to change cultures that have existed for some time. However, to establish a standardized way of doing things requires some flexibility.

Chair James inquired about how training is conducted. Mr. Cole commented that as the largest city in the Continuum, he believes it would be the City of Phoenix's responsibility to conduct training. He clarified that a third party evaluated the City's process and identified it as the best method. As for training, the challenge would be to geographically strategizing where and when to conduct the training. Conducting the training in itself is not a challenge. He expressed concern noting the use of volunteers. Mr. Cole added each city would have to take ownership of the process even though they may be utilizing volunteers to conduct the street count. He stressed the importance of having all parties involved at the table to identify a strategy for moving forward.

One of the members asked if the ASU recommendations are being presented to the Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness for approval. Ms. Mead advised the recommendations are being presented to the Planning Subcommittee today for feedback. Final recommendations will be presented to the Continuum of Care for approval in July. Input and feedback from the Street Count Working Group and Planning Subcommittee will be incorporated prior to presenting the recommendations to the Continuum of Care Committee. Ms. Lord indicated that she would like to recommend that a brief survey be incorporated as part of the street count. Ms. Mead inquired what type of information the Planning Subcommittee wishes to obtain through the street count.

Discussion ensued on the possibility of incorporating a brief survey within the street count methodology. Members suggested that a survey of around five questions could be implemented given the structure of the point-in-time count.

An inquiry was made as to whether every city would do the survey. Ms. Mead advised the survey, if implemented, could be part of the universal methodology and survey tool, and would therefore be conducted by all municipalities conducting a point-in-time count.

Discussing shifted to the time of day in which the count will be conducted. Ms. Bleyle commented that in her experience, the count appears to be more productive when conducted in the early morning hours as opposed to at night. She added that Tucson was extremely successful with their early morning count and would recommend changing the Maricopa County hours to early morning, possibly 3:00 to 8:00 a.m. Several members indicated that there are many people out during the hours of 8:00 to 11:00 p.m. it is very hard to determine if someone on the street is homeless.

Mr. Cole expressed concern for the safety of street count volunteers during early morning hours. He also expressed concern in getting enough volunteers to participate in an early morning count. He added the City of Phoenix is willing to change according to the consensus however, he noted changing the culture of how it has been done for several years will be the challenging part. Ms. Bleyle noted Tucson conducted the regular point-in-time count. She said it was much easier to identify homeless individuals during the morning hours as they were up and moving about.

Chair James advised the City of Tempe has conducted the count very early and had a very difficult time. Ms. Mead advised the City of Chandler had also changed the time and it had an impact on the number of people counted as well. However, a set timeframe for the universal methodology would need to be agreed upon. There was discussion to present 3:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. to the working group prior to the Continuum meeting.

#### 6. HUD McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Program Monitoring Methodology

Ms. Mead presented the draft HUD McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Program Monitoring Methodology plan to the Planning Subcommittee members. Members reviewed the draft monitoring plan. Discussion ensued on which of the performance standards indicated in the plan outcomes were HUD outcome measures. Ms. Mead indicated that all of the items included in the draft performance standards relate to the HEARTH Act outcomes in some way. The HUD Annual Performance Report (APR) outcome measures are:

- At least 77 percent of homeless persons in permanent housing stay over six months.
- At least 65 percent of homeless persons in transitional housing move to permanent housing.
- At least 20 percent of persons obtain employment at program exit.

There were questions asked about what performance measures would be considered “not applicable”. Ms. Mead explained that performance standards would only be “not applicable” if it didn’t apply to the program type. For example, a permanent housing program would not need to report on transitional housing outcomes and vice versa. Discussion ensued on ways to incorporate a risk adjustment for clients with high needs such as those who are chronically homeless and dealing with a serious mental illness.

Mattie Lord suggested adding a peer review component to the monitoring team. The peer would be part of the monitoring team during their site visit. Peers could learn from each other by being part of the monitoring team and program evaluation process. Another suggestion offered was to provide a Continuum-wide report that would compare like programs to like programs.

There was consensus from the group that adding a peer review component as well as a reporting comparison would be beneficial to the process. It was determined that there would be further review about the peer review idea at the next meeting.

#### 7. Request for Future Agenda Items

Ms. Mead asked for additional items to be considered for future agendas. Chair James suggested that the next meeting be focused on developing questions for the street count survey and fleshing out the peer review methodology.

8. Comments from the Subcommittee

Ms. Mead asked for comments from Subcommittee members. Mary Berumen, City of Mesa, announced that Mesa is hosting a Fair Housing Expo on June 26, 2012 and she invited members to attend.

Joan Serviss, Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness (AZCEH), announced that the Coalition is accepting nominations for awards as well as proposals for conference sessions. She referred members to the AZCEH website for additional information.

Kim Van Nimwegen, Valley of the Sun United Way, announced that there will be a Project Connect event on June 28, 2012 in Phoenix at North Hills Church.

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.