**MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS**
**CONTINUUM OF CARE REGIONAL COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS**
**NOVEMBER 21, 2011 MEETING MINUTES**

MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Catherine Rea Dunning, Community Information & Referral Services
*Shana Ellis, City of Tempe, Councilmember
Karia Basta, Arizona Department of Housing
*Kathryn Brown, Arizona Department of Corrections
*Kendra Cea, APS
Krista Cornish, Town of Buckeye
JoAnn Del-Colle, Phoenix Family Advocacy Center
*Steve Frate, City of Glendale, Vice Mayor
Kevin Hartke, City of Chandler, Councilmember
Theresa James, City of Tempe
*Michael Johnson, City of Phoenix, Councilmember
Stephanie Knox, Magellan Health Services of Arizona
Donna Bleyle, Arizona Department of Economic Security
Nick Margiotta, Phoenix Police Department
Michael McQuaid, Human Services Campus
Frank Migali, Arizona Department of Education
Linda Mushkatel, Maricopa County
Mattie Lord for Darlene Newsom, UMOM New Day Centers
Joanne Osborne, City of Goodyear, Councilmember, Chair
Sylvia Sheffield for Gina Ramos Montes, City of Avondale
*Brenda Robbins, Arizona Department of Health Services
Amy Schwabenlender, Valley of the Sun United Way
*Joan Serviss, Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness
Christina Soto, Catholic Charities
Jacki Taylor, Save the Family
Trish Georgeoff for Margaret Trujillo, MG Trujillo Associates
*Mary Rose Wilcox, Maricopa County, Supervisor
Nicky Stevens for Ted Williams, Arizona Behavioral Health Corporation
Diana Yazzie Devine, Native American Connections, Inc.

OTHERS PRESENT

Jonnie Arnold, U.S. Vets
Mike Bell, St. Vincent de Paul
Cynthia Brooks, NOVA Safe Haven
Dave Clitheroe, The Salvation Army
Tim Cole, City of Phoenix
Jenny Day, Basic Mission
Robert Duvall, Community Information and Referral
Margaret Finn, Southwest Behavioral Health Corporation
Anthony Irby, Veterans Administration
Isabel Larsen, Valle del Sol
Gilbert Lopez, City of Glendale
Greg Pereira, Central Arizona Shelter Services
Connie Phillips, Sojourner Center
Milon Pitts, Homeward Bound
Sean Price, Arizona Department of Veteran Services
Ted Taylor, Family Promise
+Matt White, Abt Associates
Chris Wudarski, Women In New Recovery

Brande Mead, MAG
Rachel Brito, MAG

*Those members neither present nor represented by proxy.
+Those members present by audio or videoconference.

1. Call to Order and Introductions
   Chair JoAnne Osborne, Vice Mayor, City of Goodyear, called the meeting to order at 2:09 p.m. Introductions ensued.

2. Call to the Audience
   Audience members were given an opportunity to address the Committee. No comments were made.

3. Approval of the October 24, 2011 Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness Meeting Minutes
   Chair Osborne requested a motion to approve the October 24, 2011 meeting minutes. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Theresa James, City of Tempe. The motion was seconded by Donna Bleyle, Arizona Department of Economic Security. The motion passed.

4. Continuum of Care Planning Subcommittee Report
   Chair Osborne invited Theresa James to offer a report on the Continuum of Care Planning Subcommittee activities. Ms. James indicated that the Planning Subcommittee met on November 7, 2011 and discussed the following items.

   HUD Family Options Study:
   Matt White, Abt Associates, called in and provided an update on the HUD Family Options Study. He indicated that the enrollment portion of the study is winding down and the study is going well in the Phoenix area. Ms. James indicated that Mr. White will provide a more detailed report later on in the meeting.

   Continuum of Care (CoC) Technical Assistance Action Plan:
   The Planning Subcommittee also discussed implementation of the CoC Technical Assistance Action Plan. The Subcommittee is going to focus attention to the 2nd goal in the plan, "c*larifying the role of and strengthening the performance of transitional housing programs"*. Ms. James said that the Planning Subcommittee discussed the evaluation process and reports used in Columbus, OH. Members of the Subcommittee are planning to review the Columbus model and consider recommending implementing it within the CoC as a way to evaluate program performance. Ms. James said that she will continue to update the Continuum on this process.

   Reduced-Fare Bus Ticket Presentation:
   Ms. James reported that representatives from the City of Phoenix, Public Transit, and Councilman Tom Simplot's office attended the meeting and discussed the reduced fare bus ticket program. They talked about the reasons for the change to their program, and asked for feedback from Subcommittee members regarding the changes. There was discussion about the impact of the changes and the City agreed to hold another meeting with providers to continue the dialogue. Councilman Simplot's office held another meeting the following week and indicated that they were appreciative of the feedback from providers.

   2012 Homeless Street Count:
   Ms. James continued her report indicating that the Subcommittee spent time discussing plans for the 2012 homeless street count, planned for Tuesday, January 24, 2012. The Subcommittee discussed ways to improve the street count based on feedback from the previous year. Ms. James explained that members questioned if the Street Count is

required by HUD each year or every other year. It was explained that HUD only requires the street count on a bi-annual basis. Ms. James went on to say that Subcommittee members discussed the possibility of not doing the count this year and moving to a bi-annual street count schedule. She added that members of the Subcommittee would like the Continuum to continue this discussion during the street count agenda item.

A motion to approve the Planning Subcommittee report was made by Nick Margiotta, Phoenix Police Department. The motion was seconded by Karia Basta, Arizona Department of Housing. The motion passed.

5. HUD Family Options Study Update

Chair Osborne invited Matt White, Abt Associates, to provide an update on the HUD Family Options Study. Mr. White thanked the Committee and reminded members that the study is being sponsored by HUD and is being conducted in 11 different communities across the country. He said the Phoenix/Maricopa region started enrolling families in the study last summer. The study is intended to provide a sound evidence-based analyses of which type of programs are most effective in addressing family homelessness. He added that there has been an influx of research on program interventions, but not specific research-based studies focused on families' characteristics and the interventions best suited for them.

Mr. White continued with a description of the study. He explained that the study involves four different intervention types. Families are assigned randomly to one of the four interventions. This process works the same in each community. The four interventions are rapid re-housing; project based transitional housing; section 8 housing choice vouchers, and usual care or the control group. Those in usual care follow the normal course of services provided.

He continued with his description of the study noting that families receive an initial screening at the family emergency shelter. If the family is a good fit for the study, they sign a consent form and are randomly assigned to one of the interventions. HUD will track families in each intervention over an 18-month period of time. The tracking process will be done through follow-up meetings in three month increments. Each time a family participates in a follow-up session, they will receive an incentive.

Mr. White said the goal is that each intervention will have at least 60 families assigned during the course of the study. Therefore, by the end of the study, approximately 260 families from this region will be enrolled in the study across all four interventions. The random assignment process requires that a rolling admission process be in place for the study throughout the course of the year. The study started in October of 2010 and is now near completion of the enrollment phase. Enrollment for all interventions has been completed except for the rapid re-housing intervention. Enrollment will continue until the openings for rapid re-housing have been filled.

Once enrollment is complete, the follow up process will begin. Data gathered from the study will be collected for 18-months and the results will be expected in approximately two to three years from now. Mr. White indicated that in previous discussions with the Continuum of

Care, providers discussed the enrollment process and how the community might be able to coordinate the process of identifying and enrolling families in programs. Discussion ensued on how the study might inform community practices around coordinating a more centralized intake system for the region.

Mr. White said he is planning for a site visit with participating providers in early January to share some insight and results of the enrollment process, to collect more feedback from participating providers, and to discuss how a more coordinated or centralized process might have applicability in the broader Continuum.

Mattie Lord, UMOM New Day Center, commented on the rejection numbers and percents from the handouts. She said she wanted to make it clear that they did not reject a single family in their program but rather families made the decision to reject their program. She asked that it be known that UMOM did not reject a single family in their program. Chair Osborne thanked Mr. White for his update and also thanked the participating providers. She said that she appreciates the participation in the study and looks forward to results.

6. <u>2012 Point-in-Time Street and Shelter Count</u>

Chair Osborne invited Brande Mead, MAG, to update the Committee on the plans for the 2012 Homeless Street Count. Ms. Mead summarized the street count discussion which took place at the Planning Subcommittee meeting on November 7, 2011. Ms. Mead indicated that she used feedback gathered from debriefing sessions earlier this year to make improvements to the process for the 2012 street count.

Ms. Mead said the count is planned for January 24, 2012. She indicated that feedback from the 2011 count suggested that the same methodology be used in 2012 so that a comparison from 2011 to 2012 results can be made. However, she suggested conducting additional outreach with youth and family providers in advance of the count to gather suggestions on places where unsheltered youth and families are located. In addition, Ms. Mead suggested bringing together a group of providers when the results are complete to assess the results and provide insight on important elements that may have impacted the results. She said that the key themes and analysis would be vetted through a working group prior to releasing the results of the count to the media. Ms. Mead added that work is currently being engaged in to develop a regional homeless data overview. The data overview will accompany the results from the point-in-time count as supplemental data in any media release of results. This was discussed during a debriefing session earlier this year and was suggested to provide a more complete picture of homelessness throughout the region.

Ms. Mead said it was also suggested that more training and technical assistance be offered to each of the municipalities if they need additional assistance in planning for the count in their jurisdiction. During those meetings, a homeless service provider could also present on how the homeless street count data has an impact at the local level.

Ms. Mead indicated that discussion ensued at the Planning Subcommittee meeting about whether or not the street count should be conducted in 2012. She noted HUD requires that the homeless shelter count take place on an annual basis but the street count is required by

HUD to take place every other year, during each odd-numbered year. Discussion ensued among members whether or not to continue the street count on an annual basis.

Mattie Lord, UMOM New Day Center, suggested not doing the count in 2012 and to instead use this year as a planning period to improve methodology. Linda Mushkatel, Maricopa County suggested that the homeless street count be done on a bi-annual basis at two points in time such as in the winter and during the summer. Jacki Taylor, Save the Family, agreed that taking a year off is a great idea. She said that it would be important to find ways to keep volunteers engaged if the count were to take place every other year. She added that organizations are doing more with less these days and that staff time should be considered. JoAnn Del-Colle, City of Phoenix, indicated that the city is fine with taking the year off as long as the time is spent on improving the process.

Diana Yazzie Devine, Native American Connections, added that there are other efforts in place to gather information about people on street such as Project H3, Project H3 Vets, and Project Connect events. She raised concerns about asking volunteers to conduct multiple counts or surveying of information and indicated it would be nice to take the year off if conducting a count is not required.

Donna Bleyle, Arizona Department of Economic Security, commented that the homeless street count is not meant to be stand alone data. Rather, it is meant to be coupled with shelter count data so that the community can look at the total homeless population on the streets and in shelter. She said the Continuum will not be able to get a whole representation of the homeless population if the street count is not conducted. Ms. Bleyle highly recommended that the street count be done in 2012. She continued that many people raised questions about the data from the street count last year and that she had hoped that last year could be a baseline year and that the street count in 2012 could be a comparison. Ms. Bleyle also voiced her concerns with moving to an every other year count and suggested that a count on an annual basis provides important data every year.

Nick Margiotta, City of Phoenix, commented that in 2004, the City of Phoenix switched to a random sampling model and were allowed to do it every other year but decided to do it annually because it might be looked at by HUD in a negative way given the size of the Continuum. Mr. Margiotta continued that we should look into how moving to a bi-annual count would impact the Continuum in receiving HUD funding. Ms. Mead commented that although HUD doesn't require an annual street count, they encourage annual counts, especially for a continuum of this size. She added that HUD has suggested that it is possible they will require the street count be done annually in the future and that the Continuum should consider this.

Chair Osborne noted that she thinks the advantages of having annual street count figures are to the best interest of the Continuum for applying for and receiving grants. She asked about the possibility of doing the count in the summer of 2012 instead of in January. Ms. Mead responded that it is a possibility but the data from a summer count could not be reported to HUD because they require that it be done during the last ten days of January. Vice Chair

Hartke asked if other Continuums of similar size are doing annual counts. Ms. Mead responded that the majority of Continuums of our size are doing annual counts.

Ms. Bleyle indicated that the Arizona Commission on Homelessness and Housing is planning to do a homeless survey during the summer and on a statewide basis. She added that it is not a street count but a survey that will provide the Commission with data on a statewide basis. She added that Brian Spicker, Valley of the Sun United Way, is leading the subcommittee and they are looking for volunteers to participate. Jacki Taylor, Save the Family, asked if the Continuum would be working with the state this year to do a shelter count. Ms. Mead responded that the shelter count will be done through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) this year.

Linda Mushkatel, Maricopa County, asked if there was anything that could be done differently on the street count that would give the community a better result. Ms. Mead commented that she thought the major concerns raised last year were with the way the results were released to the media. Ms. Mead added that she does not believe that the region had a bad count in 2011.

Discussion ensued over changes in requirements from HUD for counts conducted in 2012. Ms. Mead said that HUD is now requiring that Continuums report on the number of households among homeless youth on their own. This is a new requirement. Ms. Bleyle added that HUD recently conducted a webinar and provided direction on timing and suggested that there may be some restrictions on time of day in which the street count can be conducted such as from dusk to dawn.

Frank Migali, Arizona Department of Education, indicated that there are different reasons for doing a count and not doing a count since the numbers seem to move around. He suggested that the driving factor behind the decision should be what the funder wants. Mr. Migali added that if not doing the count is going to hurt the score of the McKinney-Vento application then it doesn't make sense to not do it. Ms. Mead said that she would follow up with John Epler to see if not doing the count would have a negative impact on the funding application to HUD.

Nicky Stevens, Arizona Behavior Health Corporation, commented that there has been a lot of discussion about the street count methodology and asked if the methodology would be changing if the street count were to take place in 2012. Ms. Mead responded that the recommendation after debriefing on the 2011 count was to continue with the same methodology in 2012 so that the data could be compared to last year. Ms. Mead recommended using the same methodology if a count is conducted in 2012.

Greg Boone, Labor's Community Service Agency, suggested that a timeframe be placed on how often the count methodology can change. He indicated that adjusting the methodology every year makes it hard to compare results from one year to the next. Ms. Taylor suggested that the methodology used for Project H3 seems to be a best practice regarding the time the count is conducted. Chair Osborne summarized the discussion into three options. She said the Committee can decide to move forward with a street count in January; decide to take this

year off, or conduct a summer count this year instead of January. Chair Osborne said the Continuum needs to make a decision on how to proceed. Mr. Boone said the Planning Subcommittee also suggested taking this year off, adjusting methodology, and then go to an annual count again.

Mattie Lord, UMOM New Day Center, made a motion to take 2012 off and spend time planning for a better street count for future years. Vice Chair Hartke seconded the motion. Nick Margiotta, Phoenix Police Department, added a caveat to the motion that the decision should be contingent on input from Mr. Epler that the decision will not result in losing funding from HUD. Chair Osborne clarified that if Mr. Epler believes not doing a street count would drastically affect our HUD application score then we should move forward with conducting a count this January.

Ms. Mead indicated that there is a regional Street Count Coordinator meeting planned for Monday, November 28, 2011 and recommended that it still be conducted as feedback from the Coordinators would be important. Ms. Bleyle asked what taking the year off is going to change and said she thinks it is a mistake if the Continuum is not able to show improvement to the process. Ms. Taylor said that taking a year off would provide an opportunity to perfect the street count process and agreed that there needs to be progress made over the year to support improvements to methodology. Chair Osborne asked if timing is an issue since we have a motion to take a year off, a second, and a caveat based on feedback from John Epler.

Ms. James said that checking in with Mr. Epler is a good suggestion and thinks that would keep the Continuum in line with HUD. She said her concern with the street count is that every city within the region conducts the count in a different way. She continued that Phoenix uses a sampling methodology for example and others do not. The inconsistent approach causes her to question the results.

Chair Osborne clarified the motion on the table to not conduct a street count in 2012, it was seconded and a caveat is in place to follow up with Mr. Epler to see if the decision will have a negative impact on the HUD application. She asked for a vote to approve the motion. The motion passed with opposition from Donna Bleyle, Arizona Department of Economic Security, and Karia Basta, Arizona Department of Housing.

Ms. Mead indicated that Ms. Bleyle has information to share with the Continuum regarding the 2012 shelter count. Ms. Bleyle said that the shelter count will not be coordinated by the Arizona Department of Economic Security in 2012 but will rather be coordinated by each Continuum in the state and done through HMIS. Ms. Bleyle added that she has met with staff from each Continuum and all are in agreement that conducting the shelter count through HMIS is the right direction to be taking.

Ms. Bleyle continued that she is still meeting with the Continuum staff to work out the details but data for the night of January 24 will need to be entered into HMIS as soon as possible. Shelter staff will have about a week to finalize data in HMIS before the shelter count report is run. She added that she will be working with HMIS and CoC staff to get a list of the providers currently in HMIS and those who are not. Another type of survey will need

to be conducted for those who are not in HMIS. Ms. Bleyle ended her comments indicating that she thinks conducting the shelter count through HMIS will lead to quicker and more reliable results.

Chair Osborne thanked Ms. Bleyle and asked if there were any questions. Stephanie Knox, Magellan, commented that it is important to ensure that data is collected for providers in HMIS and also for those who are not.

7. Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Partnership Agreement

Chair Osborne invited Robert Duvall, Community Information and Referral, to provide a report on the HMIS Partnership Agreement. Mr. Duvall said that the original Partnership Agreement was approved by the Continuum in 2001 and predated the HUD data standards that exist today. He said that at the time of the original agreement, there was not a software provider in place and clients could opt out of the system. He added that many HUD standards are now in place and the new partnership agreement before the Continuum today is now in alignment with HUD data standards.

Mr. Duvall reviewed the significant changes in the agreement:

- The agency will now own the data together with the Continuum of Care.
- Allows for implied consent to enter data into HMIS.
- Requires a signed release from the client for agencies to share client-level data.

Ms. Devine said she has concerns with the implied consent being based on case manager explanation. She added that a consistent consent form would help to protect the agencies and ensure a consistent process is followed. Ms. Devine also raised concerns about information being used by the Continuum.

Ms. Mead asked if there is consent template that could be provided to the agencies as a way to standardize the consent process across the board. Mr. Duvall confirmed there is a common consent form that has been in place since the HMIS project started. He commented that the requirement may need to be revisited after the HEARTH Act requirements are in place. Mr. Duvall said that data must be entered on each client but that each individual record can be locked so others are not able to view it. He continued that this is discussed with staff at HMIS training.

Ms. Lord asked if the Partnership Agreement has been vetted through the HMIS User Group. Mr. Duvall responded that the Partnership Agreement did go before the User Group and was approved by the HMIS Advisory Board on November 2, 2011. Ms. Lord commented that the changes in the Partnership Agreement are important and she has concerns over approving the document when she is seeing it for the first time today. Mr. Duvall responded that it was provided to the HMIS User Group, Advisory Group, and in advance of today's meeting. Ms. Lord asked if approval of the Partnership Agreement is time sensitive and if it needs to be approved today. Chair Osborne asked members if this item should be tabled until the next meeting.

Ms. Bleyle commented that many of the changes reflected in the new agreement are in response to changes in the HEARTH Act. She indicated that the new agreement would be in alignment with things such as sharing information and tracking data. Catherine Rea Dunning, Community Information and Referral, reiterated that the Partnership Agreement was sent out to all providers in HMIS prior to the User Group meeting and was discussed both at the User Group and Advisory Board meeting. The agreement was passed by the Advisory Board on November 2nd. She suggested that if there are specific concerns in document, staff would be happy to address those concerns.

Jacki Taylor, Save the Family, made a motion to postpone action on this item until the next meeting. Mattie Lord, UMOM New Day Center, seconded the motion. The motion passed.

8. Agency Spotlight

Chair Osborne invited Dick Geasland to provide an agency spotlight on Tumbleweed. Mr. Geasland thanked members of the Committee and provided an overview on their programs. He said that the mission of Tumbleweed is to serve abused, abandoned, and troubled, and neglected youth in our community. Mr. Geasland described their programs:

- Drop in Centers Phoenix and Tempe: Street outreach for youth ages 12-25. They receive case management, meals, showers, and other services.
- Learning Center: Provides educational and vocational assistance, job development, for clients in Tumbleweed programs and in the Phoenix community. Workforce development programs through Goodwill and Valley of the Sun United Way.
- Open Hands: Ten short term crisis shelter beds.
- Green House Project: Transitional housing program for homeless gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) ages 18-24.
- Housing Arizona Youth: Rapid re-housing for street dependent youth ages 18-25.
- Young Adult Program: A 15 unit apartment complex for co-ed supervised independent living program for ages 16-18 (accommodates up to five pregnant or parenting teens).
- Casa de Sueños: Shelter and family unification for 30 boys, ages 12-18 admitted through immigration services.

Chair Osborne thanked Mr. Geasland for his report and for the great work being done at his agency. Next, Chair Osborne invited Nicky Stevens to provide an agency spotlight on Arizona Behavioral Health Corporation (ABC).

Ms. Stevens thanked the Chair and members of the Committee. She said the mission of ABC is to provide quality affordable housing for people with behavioral health issues. She said ABC provides housing for 1,600 households throughout Maricopa County. They work with housing providers such as HOM Inc. They have a variety of programs such as Section Eight housing and Supportive Housing Programs through HUD. She also discussed the Safe Haven program which provides 25 beds for persons with a serious mental illness.

Ms. Stevens discussed their partnership with the Human Services Campus indicating that they provide permanent housing programs for people exiting the Campus. She also discussed

their partnership with Wal-Mart which provides furnishings for persons in their housing programs.

Chair Osborne thanked Ms. Stevens for her report and for the great work they are doing. She said that agency spotlights will continue to be an item on the agenda and she encouraged agencies to contact Brande Mead if they are interested in presenting.

9. Request for Future Agenda Items
Chair Osborne asked for input from the Committee on any requested topics or issues of interest to consider for future agendas. Catherine Rea Dunning, Community Information and Referral, asked for an opportunity to provide an update on 211 Arizona. Mattie Lord, UMOM New Day Center, asked that the HMIS Partnership Agreement be on the next agenda.

10. Announcements
Chair Osborne asked for announcements from Committee members. Mike McQuaid, Human Services Campus, asked that the Committee not only consider improvements to the street count methodology but that the way the results of the count are communicated to the public.

Adjourn
The meeting adjourned at 3:31 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness is scheduled for January 23, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. in the Saguaro Room.