

MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS (MAG)
CONTINUUM OF CARE REGIONAL COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS
May 19, 2014
MAG Office Building, Saguaro Room
Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Tammy Albright, City of Mesa
Karia Basta, Arizona Department of Housing
*Libby Bissa, City of Phoenix Family Advocacy
Center
Donna Bleyle, Arizona Department of Economic
Security (DES)
*Kathryn Brown, Arizona Department of
Corrections
Rick Buss, Town of Gila Bend, Town Manager
Steve Capobres, Catholic Charities
Kendra Cea, Arizona Public Service
*Michael Celaya, City of Surprise
*Krista Cornish, Town of Buckeye
*Shana Ellis, City of Tempe, Councilmember
Kevin Hartke, City of Chandler,
Councilmember, Chair
*Ian Hugh, City of Glendale, Councilmember
Theresa James, City of Tempe
*Stephanie Knox, Magellan Health Services
Melissa Kovacs, Maricopa County Justice
System Planning and Information
Bruce Liggett, Maricopa County Human
Services Department

Nick Margiotta, Phoenix Police Department
Michael McQuaid, Human Services Campus
Frank Migali, Arizona Department of Education
Chela Sullivan for Darlene Newsom, United
Methodist Outreach Ministries (UMOM)
New Day Center
Christina Plante, City of Goodyear
*Sean Price, Arizona Department of Veterans
Services
*Gina Ramos Montes, City of Avondale
Catherine Rea, Community Information &
Referral Services
Amy Schwabenlender, Valley of the Sun United
Way
Joan Serviss, Arizona Coalition to End
Homelessness
Jacki Taylor, Save the Family
Margaret Trujillo, MG Trujillo Associates
Ted Williams, Arizona Behavioral Health Corp.
*Thelda Williams, Councilmember, City of
Phoenix, Vice Chair
*Diana Yazzie Devine, Native American
Connections

*Neither present nor represented by proxy.

#Attended by telephone conference call.

+Attended by video conference.

OTHERS PRESENT

Brent Babb, Salvation Army
Tricia Cano, Community Information & Referral
Billy Cawley, Central Arizona Shelter Services
Justin Chase, Recovery Innovations of Arizona
Jenny Day, Basic Mission
Margaret Finn, Southwest Behavioral Health
Charlene Flaherty, CSH
Cherylann Galdi, Save the Family
Moises Gallegos, City of Phoenix
Kathy Gomez Lee, CPLC
Tad Gary, Maricopa
Dick Geasland, Sojourner Center
Maribel Gloria, CPLC
Tom Hutchinson, A New Leaf
Miranda Jilek, Lifewell Behavioral Wellness
#Tisha Jones, WINR Achievers
Margaret Kilman, Human Services Campus
Karen Kurtz, CBI Community Bridges
Mark Lewis, 2-1-1 Arizona
Gilbert Lopez, City of Glendale

#Mattie Lord, UMOM
Laura Skotnicki, Save The Family
Rachelle Smith, House of Refuge
Liz Smithhart, Recovery Innovations
Ruben Soliz, HSC
Sharon Light Stephenson, City of Scottsdale
Nicky Stevens, ABC Housing
Charles Sullivan, ABC Housing
Michelle Thomas, Community Information and Referral
Keith Thompson, Phoenix Shanti
#Carla Trepak, Chrysalis
Craig Tribkin, Central Arizona Shelter Services, and Arizona Housing Inc.
Will Vucurevich, A New Leaf
John Wall, Arizona Housing, Inc.

Brande Mead, MAG
Rachel Brito, MAG

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Councilmember Kevin Hartke, City of Chandler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m. Introductions of the Committee and audience ensued.

2. Call to the Audience

Audience members were given an opportunity to address the Committee on items that were not on the agenda that are within the jurisdiction of MAG, or non-action agenda items that are on the agenda for discussion or information only. There were no comments from the audience.

3. Approval of the March 3, 2014, Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness Meeting Minutes

A motion was requested to approve the March 3, 2014, meeting minutes. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Donna Bleyle, Arizona Department of Economic Security. The motion was seconded by Steve Capobres, Catholic Charities. The motion passed.

4. 2014 Point-in-Time Homeless Street and Shelter Count

Chair Hartke welcomed Brande Mead to provide an overview of the results of the 2014 Point-in-Time (PIT) Street and Shelter Count. Committee members were referred to the meeting materials for the street and shelter count results. The PIT was conducted on January 28, 2014 using a similar methodology as in 2013. Some changes were made to the survey questionnaire to capture additional demographic data required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Overall, there were 5,918 people counted on January 28th including those sheltered and unsheltered. Ms. Mead provided a breakdown in number of people in emergency shelter, transitional housing, safe haven, and those who were unsheltered. Demographic data was also provided by gender and ethnicity. Subpopulations of sheltered and unsheltered were provided for veterans, chronically homeless, adults with serious mental illness, substance abuse disorder, HIV/AIDS, and victims of domestic violence. Ms. Mead noted the shelter count includes both homeless and domestic violence shelters.

There was a 33 percent decrease in the overall street count with a decline from 1,581 to 1,053. Further details were provided on the number of unsheltered veterans, chronically homeless, and chronically homeless veterans. The number of veterans decreased by 60 percent. Ms. Mead advised the number of chronically homeless veterans was not tracked in 2013 therefore a comparison was not available. She noted however that efforts to house veterans has made an impact in the community.

Ms. Mead reviewed the five year trends in unsheltered vs. sheltered totals noting that a count was not conducted in 2012 as work was underway to develop a new methodology. The new methodology, implemented last year and utilized this year, will allow the Continuum to begin tracking trends on a yearly basis with an “apples to apples” comparison.

Ms. Mead advised that the sheltered count includes emergency and transitional housing programs but does not include permanent supportive housing programs. Ms. Mead proceeded with statistics on unsheltered chronically homeless individuals noting that 30 percent of the total unsheltered are considered chronically homeless per HUD’s definition. Five percent of those counted on the street were Veterans, decreased from 123 last year to 48 this year.

Ms. Mead concluded the overview and informed the Committee that a report is being developed to offer greater detail on the survey question responses. Michelle Thomas, Community Information and Referral, addressed the Committee providing a PIT shelter count summary from data obtained through the HMIS. An overview was provided on emergency, transitional and safe haven shelter counts by age group. The overall total sheltered count was 4,865 persons. Data was provided by gender, ethnicity, and race.

Chronically homeless in shelter totaled 85; additional data was provided on homeless individuals with disabilities. A comment was noted on the increase in adults with serious mental illness. Ms. Thomas noted the 2013 data was not currently available to offer a comparison. A question was raised on why domestic violence is included in the homeless

with disabilities data. Ms. Thomas advised the data is directly from HDX and is how HUD categorizes domestic violence.

Ms. Thomas proceeded with data on sheltered households noting an increase in emergency and transitional households. The total number of individuals in 2013 was 4,308 compared to this year at 4,865; an increase of 557 persons sheltered in 2014. Ms. Thomas noted part of the increase is due to inclusion of the Central Arizona Shelter Services (CASS) parking lot count. Ms. Thomas concluded her presentation.

Ms. Mead requested input from the Committee on the overall results. Chair Hartke inquired what the additional increase was from the CASS parking lot count. Ms. Thomas offered to research the information as the 2013 count was not available. Michael McQuaid, Human Services Campus, advised the CASS parking lot averages nearly 300 individuals. It was further noted that in 2013, the CASS parking lot was not opened to individuals until April.

Mr. McQuaid noted that in spite of the work being done, and the improvement in the number of homeless veterans, the overall chronically homeless numbers have not decreased but have slightly increased. He noted the importance of continuing discussions at the city, county, and state level to continue to address the issues, but stressed the importance of not losing momentum on the efforts currently underway. He added that work clearly remains to address the full complement of chronically homelessness individuals.

Amy Schwabenlender, Valley of the Sun United Way, requested copies of a grid comparing municipalities and county data noting the information would be helpful in planning for the next steps. Ms. Mead offered to provide the requested information to the Committee.

Jacki Taylor, Save the Family, commented on domestic violence being counted under disability. She noted the same does not apply for a family with a child who has a disability. Ms. Mead clarified that domestic violence is reported as a subpopulation, but not considered a disabling condition. Ms. Bleye suggested being cautious of reporting by sub areas in small cities as they have not been conducting counts for as long as other cities, such as Phoenix that has many experienced counters. Chair Hartke noted the data would provide a good comparison for Phoenix itself.

Nick Margiotta, City of Phoenix Police Department, noted data quality is affected by many different factors. Additionally, he noted the Phoenix count is a random sampling and raised the question as to whether or not the same methodology is being used for extrapolation. While not surprised by the chronic numbers, Mr. Margiotta noted the results provide a greater opportunity to have conversations as to why. The Committee discussed fluctuations in the environment, such as the weather, will always effect on the count.

A question was raised as to why a Point-in-Time count was not conducted for rapid rehousing as those individuals would have been in transitional housing. Ms. Mead offered to check the data to verify whether or not rapid rehousing numbers were included in the transitional housing.

Ms. James noted the survey was too long and intrusive. She inquired whether there is an opportunity to provide feedback to HUD regarding the survey. Ms. Mead advised the Continuum can offer feedback to HUD as well as share feedback with the local HUD office. She noted the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) offers an opportunity to provide feedback on the methodology. Ms. Mead advised that the street count committee meets each year and can revisit the survey questions. She further clarified that the survey included questions required by HUD, as well as additional questions that were added by the community.

Mr. McQuaid questioned how to communicate the results and deliver a message to the community that shows the progress as well as the work yet to be done. Ms. Mead welcomed and requested input from the Committee on key points and messaging. She informed the Committee that no data has been released at this time. Ms. Taylor noted discussion at a previous meeting to vet the data through the Committee or a smaller group and inquired whether that would be done. She noted doing so would enable the Committee to be able to respond to questions about the data.

Ms. Mead offered to distribute key points and allow the Committee an opportunity to provide input on messaging. The information will be vetted through the Committee before a press release is completed. Chair Hartke noted information was previously presented at a regional level and suggested it continue to be presented in that manner. Ms. Taylor commented that soliciting fragmented information does not get to the core as directly as vetting the final document. She stressed the importance of vetting the information to either the whole group or a smaller body made up of Committee members to confirm the final outcome does in fact tell the story of what the Continuum is intending to communicate. Ms. Mead offered to convene a group of any Committee members who wish to participate for the purpose of vetting the information.

A recommendation was made to present only factual information and to avoid making assumptions about the data. Ms. Bleye noted HUD will also be releasing information to the public. She agreed with focusing on factual data and recommended looking at five-year trends. A question was raised on plans to distribute the report in conjunction with a media release. Ms. Mead advised a media release was not prepared last year due to implementation of the new methodology and a lack of comparable data to look at the trends. Presently, two-years of data using the new methodology are now available. Ms. Mead noted it would be helpful to have speaking points prepared to help answer questions raised. A recommendation was made to consider what title is used for the report as a correctly titled report will lead to a review of the data.

Chair Hartke recommended Committee members provide their comments to Ms. Mead. The Committee will then have an opportunity to review how the data will be presented prior to releasing a press release. Anyone interested in forming a group to work on these efforts is asked to contact Ms. Mead.

5. CoC Governance Charter Implementation – Update on the Membership Workgroup

Chair Hartke welcomed Ms. Mead to offer an update on membership workgroup and the process for recommending members to the CoC Board. Ms. Mead advised that volunteers were recruited in March to serve on the COC membership workgroup. The group would be responsible for moving the process forward to recommend members for the CoC Board. Ms. Mead acknowledged the following volunteers: Councilmember Hartke, Councilmember Thelda Williams; Mike McQuaid; Ryan Balch; Theresa James; Mattie Lord; and Jackie Taylor.

The group met on April 16th to review the Governance Charter, current membership of the CoC, and to discuss the process for recommending members for the CoC board. Ms. Mead proceeded with an overview of the four-step process that is being recommended for approval.

- Send an e-mail to all distribution lists asking for letters of interest from individual's interested in serving on the CoC Board.
- Those who submit letters of interest would then receive and be required to submit an electronic application containing various questions such as the category of membership for which they are applying.
- Letters of interest and completed applications would then be presented to the CoC Planning Subcommittee. The Subcommittee will meet to review the letters of interest and applications and provide feedback.
- The Planning Subcommittee's feedback would then be presented to the membership work group to make recommendations to the CoC at the next meeting on July 21st.

Ms. Mead completed her overview and requested input on the recommendation being presented. Having neither questions nor comments, Chair Hartke requested a motion. A question was raised on when the email will be distributed and application due date. Ms. Mead advised the application would be distributed to the membership for review and feedback within the following week. Once approved, the email will be distributed and will include further information on the timeframe for responding and application due date.

Mr. Margiotta made a motion to approve the process to recommend members to the CoC Board. Mr. McQuaid seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

6. Maricopa Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Project Assessment

Ms. Mead advised the CoC requested technical assistance (TA) for the HMIS project as part of a statewide technical assistance request. The TA includes a detailed assessment of the effectiveness of the HMIS as there have been many changes since HMIS was implemented in 2002. The goal is to ensure HMIS is meeting the community needs and is the best system for the CoC and its users.

HUD contracted with technical assistance providers Matt White and Chris Pitcher to work with the CoC for a year-long contract. The Continuum is midway through the assessment process. Steps for TA included a stakeholder survey that was issued in April; review of

HMIS policies and procedures; and development of a formal report with recommendations to be presented to the CoC. Ms. Mead noted that the TA will continue beyond reporting to assist with implementation of items the CoC selects to move forward.

In April, a survey was distributed to the CoC members and all HMIS users resulting in 76 responses. Additional feedback was gathered from three different meetings, and one-on-one meetings held during the TA site visits. Ms. Mead proceeded with a brief overview sharing the positive outcomes, concerns, and possible recommendations based on the feedback and survey results to date. Ms. Mead acknowledged CI&R staff for their assistance during the assessment process.

Ms. Taylor commented on the recommendation that “*Ownership of the HMIS needs to be clearly defined and tied to the CoC.*” She noted Save the Family has been approached with the idea of signing onto the concept of data sharing with a broader community group that does not participate in the CoC. She stated, as an agency, she has taken that stance of unwillingness to make available Safe the Family’s client information and does not believe that just because people are poor that their information should be publicly vetted. Ms. Taylor added that if the CoC has control over HMIS, it then becomes a Continuum decision that needs to be vetted as a community with much thought given to who has the right to grant authorization for the system to be open to a broader community.

Catherine Rea, Community Information and Referral, advised that under the current HMIS partnering agreements, there is an addendum that no data share would occur on a CoC-wide basis without CoC approval.

Mr. Margiotta noted the issue of integrated care and suggested that as providers and as the Continuum, the CoC should figure out how to get opted in to have access and be a participant some manner.

Ms. Mead noted there have been many discussions about data sharing at the HMIS Advisory Committee and CoC meetings. She noted no changes are being proposed at this time as further discussion is needed to ensure everyone is in agreement. Additionally, no changes would be made without being presented to the HMIS Advisory Committee as well as the CoC. Ms. Bleyle noted the intent of centralizing ownership of the data is to protect the data and to prevent agreements from being made without the CoC being involved. This further prevents the CoC from losing ownership of the data should a provider no longer remain part of the CoC.

Chair Hartke noted there is still work to be done, particularly on the proprietary issues and how best to serve the community.

7. HEARTH Act Implementation: Coordinated Assessment Update

Chair Hartke welcomed Ms. Mead to provide an update on implementation of the regional coordinated assessment. Ms. Mead referred the Committee to the Regional Coordinated Assessment System–Maricopa County Continuum document. Ms. Mead noted that the community adopted guiding principles to help guide the efforts of developing a coordinated

assessment system and proceeded with a review of the guiding principles, and progress made on regional implementation of coordinated assessment.

Ms. Mead referenced the Guiding Principles included in the handout noting that the principles are to ensure the system will be client focused. A brief overview of the implementation progress was shared including Decisions Approved by the Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness and the Coordinated Assessment Work Group Progress. Ms. Mead advised that coordinated assessment training has been provided to the community. Additional community training opportunities are also available for service providers on various topics. She welcomed David Bridge to present on Phase One of the Human Services Campus and Chela Sullivan to present on the UMOM access points.

David Bridge provided an update on the Human Services Campus coordinated assessment pilot. He noted the work began with the Homeless Engagement and Assessment Referral Tool (HEART). HEART included collaboration among 14 agencies that focused on data sharing, prioritization, and case conferencing. The HEART pilot resulted in 668 individuals being assessed. Of those, nearly 50 percent were housed through the collaborative efforts of many community partners.

The Campus has now been using the Service Prioritization Determination Assistance Tool (SPDAT) since November. More than 2,900 individuals have been assessed. He noted the Welcome Center pilot allows for a single point of entry on week days with seven agencies participating. Assessments were conducted through the welcome center, Lodestar Day Resource Center, Watkins Overflow Shelter, and other agencies. An overview of the welcome center coordinated assessment results was provided.

Other progress includes the HEART working group infrastructure, ongoing training on SPDAT and supportive training, the SPDAT Squad including four designated case managers; and grants to secure resources. Mr. Bridge proceeded with an overview of next steps for the campus pilot. He noted all work that has been done has been brought before the Continuum for approval. Mr. Bridge discussed next steps for the CoC process including setting the calendar for next steps and key community decisions on priorities, eligibility, access points and the process.

Chela Sullivan, UMOM, provided an update on the coordinated assessment pilot for homeless families. Family providers have formed *Standing Strong for Families*, a group consisting of ten participating agencies that have been meeting since 2010 on a monthly basis. Standing Strong for Families established the first data sharing agreement among emergency shelters in May 2011 with an amendment occurring in 2012 to include transitional housing providers. Ms. Sullivan gave a brief overview of the shared data elements. The group also developed eligibility criteria for the purpose of helping inform referrals among programs. She noted each program has been working to reduce their eligibility criteria to be able to serve a broader range of families. Most recently, the group is working on streamlining the documentation requirements for program entry to allow for consistency at the Family Housing Hub.

Ms. Sullivan provided an overview of coordinated emergency shelter including 156 units designated for families. She noted shelter is prioritized for families residing in unsafe circumstances accounting for 132 of the units. She noted next steps include onboarding the remaining 24 units of emergency shelter. Ms. Sullivan proceeded with an overview of F-SPDAT training. Training commenced January 2014 and occurs monthly at either UMOM or Save the Family. It was noted that each training session has yielded 5-12 trainees from both the homeless and DV provider agencies.

Ms. Sullivan noted as of May, all of the family agencies are using the F-SPDAT prescreening tool in some way such as collecting data and experimenting with the scoring ranges as part of the pilot. UMOM is exclusively using the F-SPDAT scoring ranges to triage to UMOM's inventory of RRH, TH and PSH. Ms. Sullivan advised several DV providers are also utilizing the F-SPDAT prescreening tool.

UMOM has been administering the full assessment since October 2013 as an official part of the intake process. All families are assessed within the first seven days in emergency shelter. Ms. Sullivan noted when comparing results from the prescreen to the full assessment, about 50 percent of the time, families are assessed as more vulnerable.

An overview of the Family Housing Hub was provided including updates on funding; website, logo and plan for opening in July 2014. Ms. Sullivan noted the group has drafted standards of excellence for emergency shelter, transitional housing, and rapid rehousing and are refining standards for permanent supportive housing. Final standards are pending approval. Ms. Sullivan concluded her presentation. Chair Hartke expressed gratitude to all of the partners involved in the Regional Coordinated Assessment efforts.

Mr. Margiotta commented on the reports noting the great efforts taking place. He commented that he wished to remind the group the Continuum, and the community of the broader and bigger picture. He noted everything that the CoC is doing is touching the door of one of the organizations in the CoC. However, to have an impact on those individuals who are not engaged in one of the programs, it is important to assist these individuals through other existing portals such as police, park ranger, detox facility, prosecutor, jail, fire truck, etc. These are the other places where the most vulnerable, most challenging individuals, live, interact and cycle through time and again. Mr. Margiotta noted his intent is not to minimize any of the efforts taking place but to encourage the CoC not to lose sight of continuing to learn through the process, and working with the community to ensure those individuals who are not showing up at the agency for assistance are being still being reached.

Ms. Rae noted the 2-1-1 shelter hotline has transitioned to referring to the points of access rather than directly to the shelters participating. These transfers are going into a voicemail system. She inquired of Ms. Sullivan if the response time for responding to clients is being tracked and the sheltering time for those who have to wait. Ms. Sullivan advised sheltering time is about availability although families in unsafe places are being prioritized. Staff attempts to respond within 24-hours. She noted the goal is to have individuals answering the phones once the Family Housing Hub opens. A question was raised on whether the standards

of excellence were available for viewing. Ms. Sullivan advised they are still being developed and will be made available after the overall group has reviewed.

8. Community Initiatives Update

Chair Hartke advised the Street Outreach Collaborative and SOAR presentation will be deferred to the next meeting. Ms. Mead offered to distribute handouts available and reschedule for the next meeting.

9. Legislative and Conference Update

Chair Hartke welcomed Joan Serviss, Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness to offer a legislative and conference update. Ms. Serviss noted the State legislative session has ended. The Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness, the Arizona Housing Alliance, and many members of the CoC have convened a steering committee around efforts to restore the State Housing Trust Fund. The group was successful in introducing a bill; however the Legislature's focus remains on the Child Protective Services (CPS) reform efforts.

In terms of budget process, the DES coordinated line item remained the same flat funding with no reductions. There was a \$500,000 appropriation from the state general fund that will be administered by DES and distributed as a homeless capital grant to faith based facilities in Phoenix. Further information on when DES will release the proposal is pending.

Ms. Serviss advised there were no child care subsidies, but there is hope for further conversations on this issue during the CPS special session. Community advocates are working to create a preference for homeless and domestic violence children to have child care subsidies.

In terms of the Housing Trust Fund, efforts are ramping for the next legislative session. Ms. Serviss advised the Town Hall recently made a recommendation to restore the Housing Trust Fund and to make it an unsweepable fund. In terms of the Federal legislation, the House Appropriations Committee submitted their recommendation for \$300,000 less than last year. This indicates that a difficult decision making process will continue.

Ms. Serviss invited anyone interested in attending the National Alliance to End Homelessness conference in July to participate in Capitol Hill day. Both she and Margaret Kilman will serve as co-chairs for the conference. The statewide conference is scheduled for October 21 and 22nd.

10. Request for Future Agenda items

An opportunity was provided for Committee members to request future agenda items. No requests were submitted.

11. Comments from the Committee

An opportunity was provided for Committee members to present a brief summary of current events. The Committee is not allowed to propose, discuss, deliberate or take action at the meeting on any matter in the summary, unless the specific matter is properly noticed for legal action.

Karia Basta, Arizona Department of House advised that the ADOH applied for the recent 811 project under HUD. It was due on May 14th and was submitted on the 13th. She advised the purpose is for having a set aside of units in the low income housing tax credits. Additionally, On SOAR, SAMSA is going to online training which will offer 16 hours that can be completed in a 30-day time period. This will greatly improve having more people trained in SOAR and will offer CEUs and certifications. Ms. Basta advised the state is also developing a statewide steering committee due to the changes in how training will be offered.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:41 p.m. The next Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness is scheduled for July 21, 2014.