

MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
CONTINUUM OF CARE PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 22, 2010

Members Attending

Theresa James, City of Tempe, Chair
Greg Boone, Labor's Community Service Agency
Robert Duvall, Community Information & Referral
Richard Geasland, Tumbleweed
Katie Hobbs, Sojourner Center
Tim Cole for Deanna Jonovich, City of Phoenix
*Nick Margiotta, Phoenix Police Department
Linda Mushkatel, Maricopa County
*Darlene Newsom, UMOM New Day Center
Amy Schwabenlender, Valley of the Sun United Way
*Laura Skotnicki, Save the Family
John Wall, Central Arizona Shelter Services
Lisa Wilson, City of Mesa
*Diana Yazzie Devine, Native American Connections

Others Present

Mattie Lord, Arizona Department of Economic Services
Tia Allen, Area Agency on Aging
Chris Bartz, Recovery Innovations of Arizona
Jenny Day, Basic Mission
Mike Bell, St. Vincent de Paul
Christina Soto, Catholic Charities
Nicky Stevens, ABC Housing
Jacki Taylor, Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness
Mike McQuaid, Human Services Campus

DeDe Gaisthea, MAG
Brande Mead, MAG
Rachel Brito, MAG

*Those members neither present nor represented by proxy.

+Present by audio or videoconference.

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Theresa James called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. Introductions ensued.

2. Call to the Audience

Audience members were given an opportunity to address the Planning Subcommittee. DeDe Gaisthea, MAG, Human Services Transportation Planner, announced the Section 5310 Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities Transportation Program grant application is now in process. Ms. Gaisthea gave an overview of the grant requirements noting the program provides capital equipment funding for accessible vehicles, communications equipment and for Mobility Management projects. The grant application process is available to nonprofit organizations, tribal governments and public agencies. Ms. Gaisthea provided the application handbook and resource materials noting the Section 5310 grant application deadline is noon on March 5, 2010. Ms. Gaisthea encouraged agencies who serve the elderly and persons with disabilities to apply and to contact her with any questions or requests for technical assistance.

3. Approval of September 21, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Chair James called for a motion to approve the September 21, 2009 meeting minutes. Greg Boone, Labor's Community Service Agency (LCSA), made a motion to approve the minutes.

Robert Duvall, Community Information and Referral (CI&R), seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. MAG Human Services Information Station Update and Continuum of Care Committee Website Recommendations

Chair James invited Brande Mead, MAG, to provide an update on the MAG Human Services Information Station (HSIS) and discuss recommended updates to the MAG Continuum of Care Website. Ms. Mead gave an overview of content available on the HSIS. She also advised anyone interested in submitting information to be included on the HSIS can complete and submit the Entries Request form available on the HSIS site.

The Subcommittee then reviewed the MAG Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness Web page to provide input and recommendations for updating the content. They also reviewed the Regional Domestic Violence Council Web page for comparison.

Recommendations include:

- Adding a page to provide resource information, such as the State Homeless Report, HMIS quarterly reports, and Annual Homeless Assessment Report
- Adding links to the Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness, (AzCEH), Community Information and Referral (CI&R), and Valley of the Sun United Way
- Adding a page to provide an overview of regional homelessness
- Adding links to training and volunteer opportunities
- Adding links to housing information such as for eviction and foreclosure prevention resources

Jacki Taylor, Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness, offered to provide specific links on the AzCEH Web site that would coordinate with updates recommended for the Continuum of Care Web site. Mr. Boone commented on the availability of resources noting the need for a clear concise page of resources. Ms. Mead asked for volunteers to create a list of resources that should be included on the updated Web page. She said the list would need to be compiled and presented at the next Subcommittee meeting scheduled for April. Mr. Boone agreed to compile a list of eviction prevention and foreclosure resources for the updated Web site.

John Wall, Arizona Housing, Inc. recommended the list also include non-government resources. Lisa Wilson, City of Mesa and Ms. Taylor offered to provide resources for City of Mesa and the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP) respectively. Mr. Duvall and Linda Mushkatel, Maricopa County Chief Resource Office, expressed concern regarding the depth of information provided for resources such as eligibility requirements. A recommendation was made to compare the resources to those available on the CI&R Web site.

Greg Boone said the CI&R Web site has the largest source of information available however; people need to be informed on how to access the information. Ms. Mead thanked everyone for their input; updates will be provided at the next scheduled meeting.

5. 2009 Regional Plan to End Homelessness Implementation Assessment

Chair James advised Ms. Mead would lead the group through an activity to develop next steps for implementation of goals in the plan. Ms. Mead referred the Subcommittee to the handouts in their packets. She recalled during the last Planning Subcommittee meeting, members reviewed some of the regional plan action steps that had not been worked on. Those action steps were grouped into three main categories as noted in the handout on Implementation Tasks and Activities. Ms. Mead advised the action steps correlate to the handout on Implementation Plan: Community Awareness and Collaboration.

Training

- (#25) Conduct quarterly SSI/SSDI training for Case Managers: Ms. Mead advised training is underway. Three trainings have occurred thus far with another scheduled for March 30, 2010. Training is expanding to include domestic violence shelter providers as well. Ms. Mead will follow-up with Ms. Taylor regarding web training on a statewide level.
- (#28) Provide cross-training at the ACEH Annual Conference to Homeless School Liaisons and Case Managers: Ms. Mead advised there is a liaison track at the Coalition's conference. She said there has been an increased focus on youth homelessness among leaders of the Continuum of Care since the numbers for homeless youth are increasing. She advised the Department of Education will have a focus group on April 6, 2010, for liaisons from across the valley to gather input on how the Continuum can partner with the liaisons to advance the goals in the Regional Plan. Ms. Mead said the goal in the plan for collaboration is not specific on the outcome. One suggestion was to create a resource guide for liaisons however some communities already provide guides while others do not. More detail on this action step will follow after the April meeting.
- (#29) Conduct financial management training for Case Managers: Ms. Mead advised she has been in contact with Arizona Saves to conduct training.

Research and Advocacy

- (#22) Identify, advocate and secure sources of funding for homeless providers. Develop a public relations campaign that educates the community on the importance of funding programs: Ms. Mead noted funding is a challenge for all. She said there are great organizations doing a lot of advocacy, and encouraged all to get involved. She suggested the Subcommittee focus on other tasks for the time being and consent to advocacy groups continuing in their efforts.
- (#16) Contact the Interagency and Community Council on Homelessness to discuss possible next steps for the discharge planning work: Ms. Mead said the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) is reconvening soon. She acknowledged Mattie Lord, Arizona Department of Economic Security, for her work in these efforts and invited her to report back on the new focus of ICH and how the Subcommittee can get involved.

Working Group Activities

Ms. Mead said there is a lot of work to be done on working group activities. She said a planning group is being developed to focus on this category with the intent of re-evaluating the process in April. She said these activities focus on updating the CI&R Web site and CI&R has agreed to take the lead. The Subcommittee discussed the following sub-categories for action step #11.

- (#6) Coordinate/compile Web-based press releases and events related to people experiencing homelessness: Ms. Mead advised press releases can be submitted to Mr. Duvall or a staff person for posting. Ms. Mushkatel asked if there is a current link from which to work. Mr. Duvall advised a link would have to be established. The Subcommittee questioned whether or not this information would be more appropriate on the MAG Web site. Amy Schwabenlender, Valley of the Sun United Way, suggested using Google Search as a way to subscribe to related press releases. Ms. Mead advised that information can be posted on the MAG Web site and suggested any additional press release information be emailed to MAG staff.
- (#13 & #14) Web-based resource page on housing stability and financial management programs: Ms. Mead said this task does not create new listings but provides listings of available community resources. She asked for a volunteer to take the lead. Subcommittee members suggested reviewing the Arizona Community Action Association (ACAA) Web site for available resource information. Mr. Duvall cautioned the use of mortgage foreclosure specialists offering to provide assistance, yet charging a fee. He recommended using HUD approved services.
- (#15) Web-based resource page on housing stability and financial management programs: Ms. Schwabenlender noted CAP offices are listed on the HSIS Web page. Mr. Duval noted DES also provided this type of assistance at one time. Ms. Mead advised one available program is Arizona Saves; she asked for input on other resources. Subcommittee members suggested CAP offices, banks, credit unions.

Ms. Mead asked for input on the best location for this type of information and whether or not a section related to financial management can be added to the CI&R Web site. Mr. Duvall will have to research this option further. Ms. Mead will follow-up to obtain further information from banks and credit unions and suggested the possibility of creating another category on the HSIS site for Financial Management resources.

Ms. Mead asked for input on housing stability resources. The group briefly discussed whether this topic refers to eviction and/or foreclosures. Ms. Taylor suggested a link to the Web site Social Serve (www.SocialServe.com) that allows users to input criteria for finding housing that meets their specific needs.

- (#22) Create a Web-based shelter provider network to share best practices: Ms. Mead advised this goal can refer to local best practices as well as national best practices and

include models other communities are implementing. She advised the MAG Continuum of Care site can include a link for sharing best practices.

Ms. Schwabenlender offered to partner with Ms. Mead on creating a spot where peers can share resources models, and ask questions.

- (#24) Create a Web-based Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Toolkit for local providers. Ms. Mead reported this action step came from the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) Web Site; the thought was to create something similar on a local level. Ms. Schwabenlender advised CSH is no longer offering the web-based training on their site, but advised three sessions are being offered in May by a national organization called NeighborWorks America. Ms. Mead offered to contact NeighborWorks America for further information and resources.

Ms. Schwabenlender noted the City of Tempe and City of Phoenix are doing some scattered site permanent supportive housing efforts. She asked if there is a demand from providers for this type of training. She suggested a model, similar to what the City of Tempe project, be developed so other communities can then replicate. Ms. Mead suggested the City of Tempe pilot project can be posted as a best practice that can be used by the Continuum of Care leadership and other partners to develop similar projects in other communities.

Subcommittee members discussed having four to six working projects and documenting the work as the projects move forward. Ms. Mead noted this topic can be added to the March Continuum of Care agenda for further discussion and support.

- (#30) Create a Web-based resource page on employment and training opportunities: Ms. Mead advised the intent of this goal is a resource for case managers to use when working with clients on the verge of homelessness that are seeking employment and/or training opportunities. The Subcommittee discussed options such as jobing.com, AmeriCorps programs, VISTA, Public Allies, and AARP. Ms. Mead will gather more information from the AmeriCorps Program.

The Subcommittee also discussed providing training through volunteer opportunities. Mr. Boone advised LCSA does hire volunteers as does the City of Mesa and MAG. The group also briefly discussed volunteers opportunities geared towards students vs. non-students and the types of volunteer opportunities. Ms. Mead offered to check with other cities and towns to gather more information on their use of volunteer staff.

- (#26) Convene a Homeless Outreach Working Group to increase and enhance street outreach to persons experiencing homelessness: Ms. Mead advised Valley of the Sun United Way was listed as the lead on this goal. Ms. Schwabenlender said VSUW is still meeting monthly however attendance has been low and staff has also been eliminated. Tim Cole, City of Phoenix, advised the City of Phoenix conducts outreach teams two times per year. Ms. Schwabenlender and Mr. Cole agreed to work together on this goal.

Ms. Mead thanked everyone for their input. She recommended addressing another group of action steps once work has begun on this current set of steps.

6. Homeless and Domestic Violence Shelter Cross Training

Chair James said one of the goals in the Regional Plan is to provide cross-training between homeless and domestic violence shelter providers. This need for cross training also surfaced in the recent Shelter Capacity study. She advised MAG staff is going to coordinate the training but wants to hear from members on what the cross-training should focus on. Chair James asked members to provide feedback on topic areas for cross training between homeless and domestic violence shelter providers.

Areas recommended for cross-training include:

For Homeless Shelters

- Safety - from the homeless shelter perspective, there is no focus or training on domestic violence issues. Women are treated the same as anyone else, however it would be beneficial to have expertise in the area of domestic violence in terms of sensitivity, behaviors, and proper intervention.
- Obtaining orders of protection.
- Counseling support for women in shelters such as training on available resources, groups, and transportation options.
- The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act (HEARTH) implications and awareness.

For Domestic Violence Shelters

- Substance abuse and mental health issues.

Ms. Mead noted cross training opportunities will also benefit domestic violence shelters in dealing with issues that homeless shelters are more familiar with. She said the Arizona Coalition to End Domestic Violence has agreed to partner with MAG to provide some training. This feedback will provide input for the training they provide.

7. Request for Future Agenda Items

Chair James asked for input from Subcommittee members would like to have considered for discussion at a future meeting. The following recommendations were suggested:

- Discussion on heat relief efforts
- Updates on tax credit project
- House Bill 2008

8. Comments from the Subcommittee

Mr. Geasland advised as of October 1, 2010, Tumbleweed's outreach grant will not be renewed. He advised Tumbleweed has received this grant for the past 19 years.

Mr. Boone advised LCSA will be relocating in April to 3117 North 16th Street in Phoenix. This will be their first move in 26 years.

Ms. Wilson advised Councilmember Dina Higgins has been working to develop the I-HELP program. I-HELP is an intake program for single women which will begin at the end of March. She thanked Chair for her assistance with this program.

Ms. Schwabenlender advised Project Homeless Connect will take place at the Human Services Campus on Wednesday, February 24, 2020. Future events are scheduled for Avondale in March, Mesa in April and Glendale in May.

Amy Schwabenlender announced that Valley of the Sun United Way is issuing a RFP for partners to provide supportive services to clients in the housing first pilot project in Tempe. She added that the supportive services will be for individuals without a serious mental illness. The RFP will be issued in the next couple of days.

Ms. Taylor advised planning for next October's AzCEH conference has begun. Anyone interested in participating in the planning may contact Ms. Taylor.

9. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:31p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for April 26, 2010 at 2:00 p.m. in the MAG Cholla Room.