

Continuum of Care Action Group Minutes

January 23, 2006, LLRC

3:00 – 5:00 pm

Attendees: Michael Appel, Jennifer Sells, Dana Ramus, Dina Cooke, Efrion Smith, Kamala Massey, Ellen Schulmeister, Glynis Anderson, Gary Bell, Mary Beth Lampe, Jimena Loveluck, Kate Warner, Susan Hornfeld, Latasha Mcgee, Julie Steiner, Mary Jo Callan, Charles Coleman, Barbara Neiss

Staff Present: Stacy Ebron, Regina Keskes, Mike Scholl, Amy Klinke, Mark Roby

I. Welcome/Introductions

- Ellen Schulmeister opened the meeting.

II. Announcements

- Kamela Massey reported that MSHDA is offering a nine-week financial workshop to begin on February 4

III. Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan – Dr. Liz Gerber, Robin Phinney, Sarah Haradon

- The Ford School conducted an analysis of the Point in Time count information collected by the Continuum in 2005
- Results included the following: 57% male, 43% female (consistent with national average); 117 children were counted; half of those counted were white; 80% had no children
- Concerns regarding the study include the fact that veterans were underrepresented in survey responses and the question of how "family" is defined and whether there is enough discussion in the report about the difference between how Washtenaw County defines homeless versus HUD definition

IV. Housing Choice Voucher – Dana Ramus, Jennifer Sells, Kamala Massey and Barbara Tolbert

- The waitlist for Washtenaw County has 1,900 persons; the list is currently closed, and it is unclear when it will be opened again
- In order to check whether a person is still on the waitlist, individuals must send a written request; individuals must be residents of Washtenaw County at the time of application or be employed in Washtenaw County and had provided written verification of this
- If there are concerns about how a Housing Choice Voucher was handled please contact one of the local MSHDA agents – Dana, Jennifer, or Kamala and they will look into it. MSHDA is working

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to reduce errors and miscommunication that may have occurred when a previous MSHDA agent was terminated

- If people are not residents of Washtenaw County or employed within Washtenaw County, they can still apply to the waitlist when it is accepting names but they are likely to not receive assistance because residents are always prioritized first, according to MSHDA guidelines
- Information is available on a recorded message by calling: 517-467-3793
- Participants receive assistance with financial management and career development; participants who are interested in receiving financial management and career development can participate in a special program for up to 5 years where money that they save or increase their income by can be matched and does not count against benefits, they may stay with the program for up to 5 years and at the end are encouraged to use the funds for educational or homeownership purposes—this program is for those with earned (work) income
- Families already holding a Housing Choice Voucher may participate in the “Keys to Own” program, which allows participants to keep vouchers for up to 10 years (participants who have a disability may keep vouchers for up to 30 years) and the voucher helps pay toward the families’ mortgage
- The Keys to Own voucher may also be used to pay educational expenses
- Ellen Schulmeister and Jennifer Sells will be looking into the status of the Homeless Pilot Preference Housing Choice Voucher information – this was started several years ago thru the Continuum and MSHDA reports that they are now using a similar format in other counties
- Information on the Housing Choice Program is available at the following website: http://www.michigan.gov/mshda/0,1607,7-141-5555_23634-22036--,00.html
- Information on Keys to Own is available at the following website: http://www.michigan.gov/mshda/0,1607,7-141-5555_23634-87997--,00.html

V. Approval of ESG Grant

- The 2006 ESG Funding Resolution was passed unanimously

VI. Update on Scoring Workgroup

- The Scoring Workgroup will have its scoring debriefing with the HUD field office on Friday, January 27

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VII. HMIS Update

- The group discussed the need to create a broad-based, integrated HMIS system; this issue was referred to the HMIS Steering Committee for further discussion and decision-making

VIII. Blueprint Update

- Charles Coleman, Kate Warner, and Mary Beth Lampe volunteered to participate in ranking of programs for the CoC renewal application. Mary Beth Lampe agreed to check with CSTS regarding participation. Regina Keskes, Ellen Schulmeister, and a member of the Human Services Community Collaborative Steering Committee (TBD) will also participate.

IX. Adjournment and Final Comments

- Adjourned 5:00 pm

***Next Continuum of Care Board Meeting is
February 27, 2006, from 3:00-5:00 PM at the LLRC***