March 2016 Steering Committee Meeting

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AGENDA

I. Call to Order – Daphne Lemelle
   a) Roll Call

II. Approval of Minutes – Daphne Lemelle
    a) February 2016 CoC Steering Committee Meeting

III. Lead Agency Report -- Add to official minutes

IV. Vacant seats update – Daphne Lemelle (Resolution 1.2016)

V. Old Business
   a) Housing First Principles – Eva Thibaudeau (Resolution 2.2016)
   b) Tier 1 Funding Announcement FY2015 NOFA
   c) Project Management for Domestic Violence – Eva Thibaudeau
   d) Point in Time data progress – Eva Thibaudeau
   e) TDHCA ESG Funding Collaboratives – Eva Thibaudeau (Resolution 3.2016)

VI. New Business
   a) Montgomery County CoC merger – Eva Thibaudeau (Resolution 4.2016)
   b) FY2016 CoC NOFA Policies and Updates – Eva Thibaudeau
      • Rental Assistance vs. Leasing Policy
      • Underspent Funds Reallocation Policy

VII. Announcements

VIII. Public Comments

IX. Adjournment
Steering Committee Meeting

February 11, 2016

Minutes

Present: Barbara Dawson (MHMRA rep), Gerald Eckert (The Salvation Army), Heather Garza (City of Pasadena, Community Development), Tory Gunsolley (Houston Housing Authority), Marilynn Kindell (Ft Bend County Community Development), Kelli King-Jackson (Simmons Foundation), Daphne Lemelle (Harris County Community Services Dept.), Da”Quam Taylor (Consumer Representative), Eva Thibaudeau (Lead Agency Staff), Carl Wiley (Consumer Rep)

Absent: Laura Marsh (Michael E. DeBakey, VA Medical Center), Neal Rackleff (City of Houston, Housing and Community Development Department), Mike Temple (Houston Galveston Area Council)

The meeting of the Continuum of Care (CoC) Steering Committee was held on February 11, 2016 at 601 Sawyer St., 1st Floor Conference Room # 102, pursuant to proper notification of all Steering Committee members.

Welcome and Introductions
Daphne Lemelle called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. Barbara Dawson conducted roll call and Lemelle noted that there was a quorum.

Approval of Minutes
The minutes from the January CoC Steering Committee meeting were presented. Lemelle called for a motion to approve the September minutes as presented. ________ motioned, ________ seconded. The minutes were approved.

Lead Agency/HMIS Report
• Eva Thibaudeau introduced the Lead Agency and HMIS Lead Agency Reports to the Consent Agenda.
• The Steering Committee reviewed the Communications Dashboard.

Vacant Seats Update
• Nominating Committee was formed to recommend replacement for Provider seat and other open seats.
Old Business

- **The Way Home Workgroup and Activities Updates**
  - Presented for inclusion in minutes.

- **Priorities for State ESG**
  - Thibaudeau referenced that the priorities for ESG would remain similar to last year with the exception of including domestic violence emergency shelter.

- **Point in Time**
  - Thibaudeau shared success of PIT and shared that results should be available by May.

New Business

- **Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council Project Management Role**
  - Thibaudeau asked SC to confirm and formally acknowledge the HCDVCC as the system Project Manager for dv workgroup

Announcements

Public Comments

Adjournment

Upon approval, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted, 

________________________
Barbara Dawson, Secretary

Approved,

________________________
Daphne Lemelle, Chairman

_____________________
Date
AGENDA

I. Call to Order – Daphne Lemelle
   a) Roll Call

II. Approval of Minutes – Daphne Lemelle
    a) January 2016 CoC Steering Committee Meeting

III. Lead Agency -- Add to official minutes

IV. Vacant seats update – Daphne Lemelle

V. Old Business
   a) The Way Home Workgroup and Activities Updates – Add to official minutes
   b) Priorities for State ESG – Eva Thibaudeau
      • Discussed and agreed upon to move forward with competition process
   c) Point in Time – Eva Thibaudeau
      • Process discussed with emphasis on YYA survey activity.

VI. New Business
   a) Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council Project Management Role
      • Discussed and agreed upon by consent of SC

VII. Announcements

VIII. Public Comments

IX. Adjournment
The Way Home

Lead Agency Report
March 10, 2016

a. **Networks, Initiatives and Affinity Groups**
   
   i. **CoC Provider Input Forum**
      1. The First Quarter Provider Input Forum was held Tuesday, February 23, 2016 from 9am to 10:30am at Harris County CSD 8410 Lantern Point Drive, Houston, Texas. The next Provider Input Forum is scheduled for Tuesday, May 24th from 9am to 10:30am at Harris County CSD 8410 Lantern Point Drive, Houston, Texas.
   
   ii. **CoC Consumer Input Forum**
      1. The CoC Consumer Forum will be conducted during the 2nd quarter with focus on clients who have utilized Coordinated Access. The date is yet to be determined.
   
   iii. **Housing Houston’s Heroes**
      1. The SSVF RRH workgroup generally meets the second Thursday at US Vets from 11am-12:30pm. The 2016 SSVF Plan update was delivered on January 29th. The Coalition Staff represented the CoC on the Regional call on February 2nd.
   
   iv. **Youth/Young Adult Affinity Group**
      1. CoC members attended the NAEH Conference on ending family and youth homelessness February 18-19 including Eva Thibaudeau and James Gonzales from the Coalition.
      2. The CoC participated in the state wide Youth Count Initiative and hosted visitors from TDHCA and TNOYS on January 26, 2016 during the Count.
      3. The NEST Steering Committee will meet on February 24 from 2:30 TO 4:30 PM at Montrose Center.
      4. The Way Home YYA Workgroup met on Thursday, March 10 to approve the action plan and assign duties for progress.
   
   v. **RRH Workgroup**
      1. The RRH Expansion Workgroup meets weekly on Wednesday mornings while the FAI/CMI meeting is conducted Tuesdays from 12:30 to 1:30pm.
      2. The ESG Funders Collaborative workgroup meets monthly and is comprised of Cities of Houston and Pasadena, Counties of Fort Bend and Harris and the CoC Lead Agency representing the CoC.
      3. The RRH system is hosted a leasing event on February 18th from 9am to noon at St. Johns Baptist Church.
   
   vi. **Coordinated Access Workgroup**
      1. 1115 team meetings conducted weekly from 3-4 on Wednesdays.
      2. 1185 team meetings conducted weekly on Mondays from 3-4 pm.
      3. The Coordinated Access workgroup did not meet in the last quarter of 2015 however the plan to implement 4 additional CA Hubs moved forward. Two have been implemented. Staff have been trained and are currently observing assessments for the 3rd location. There was a slight delay in implementation of the 4th location due to the agency hiring.
      4. The Coordinated Access Team meets the first and third Tuesdays monthly from 12:00 noon to 1:30pm at the BEACON.
      5. The Permanent Supportive Housing Workgroup did not meet the last quarter of 2015. This group now meets as needed.
6. The Case Management Resource Exchange conducted on December 15th covered the new Point-In-Time methodology as well as provided training for all team captains. The 2016 PIT methodology will be utilizing a coordinated access method of surveying clients.
7. An additional CA Hub was added at Northwest Assistance Ministries.
8. Two additional Assessors were trained. This will lead to the addition of two new CA Hubs in March 2016.

vii. Income Now Workgroup
1. The Income Now Implementation Workgroup meets weekly on Tuesdays from 2:30pm to 4:00pm at SEARCH.
3. Income Now submitted its collaborative application to TWC on February 26, 2016 pursuant to RFP III.
4. The SOAR steering committee will meet March 11th. The Way Home CoC was awarded the SAMSHA SOAR TA grant and received the top score. The TA will be used to build capacity to assist Income Now clients receive benefits income.

viii. Point-In-Time
1. The Coalition conducted the annual Point-in-Time (PIT) over a 3 day period from January 26-28, 2016. Over 200 volunteers participated each day. Preliminary results show a decrease in the unsheltered count compared to 2015.
2. The CoC received a waiver from HUD to change this year’s homeless count methodology. Instead of an observational count, a Coordinated Access approach was used. All unsheltered homeless will be surveyed. In addition, the count took place between the hours of 6 am – 4 pm over a three day period from January 26 – 28, 2016.

B. Other CoC Items
a. The Way Home communications consultant has drafted a basic template of communications protocol procedures. Marilyn will reach out to those Steering Committee members who expressed an interest in being a part of this project to begin to customize it for our needs.
b. The Downtown Transition meetings are occurring bi-weekly with the most recent one held earlier this afternoon.
c. The Collaborative Communications Committee met on Thursday, March 3, at the United Way of Greater Houston. There was a guided conversation about tools needed by The Way Home partner agencies for effective and accurate communication. The Committee also received a review of 2015 highlights, successes, and numbers; as well as a preview of 2016 work with a focus on Youth/Young Adult Homelessness.
d. The March 17th Lunch & Learn at United Way will provide an update of the CoC plan to prevent and end youth homelessness. The event is hosted by the Coalition at United Way from 11:30am to 1pm. Advanced registration is required.
e. The Case Manager Resource Exchange will be hosted by the Coalition on April 7, 2016 from 2:30pm to 4pm at Harris County CSD, 8410 Lantern Point. The presentation is featuring safety screening for persons fleeing domestic violence and how to advocate for victims of domestic violence.
Housing First Principles

Purpose: The Way Home CoC has adopted the Housing First practice as the permanent housing practice for all providers. This paper is to assist providers with understanding the principles and practices of this housing approach.

Housing First is a programmatic and systems approach that centers on providing homeless people with housing quickly and then providing services as needed using a low barrier approach that emphasizes community integration, stable tenancy, recovery and individual choice.

Low barrier approach to entry:

- Housing First offers individuals and families experiencing homelessness immediate access to permanent supportive housing without unnecessary prerequisites. For example:
  
  a. Admission/tenant screening and selection practices do not require abstinence from substances, completion of or compliance with treatment, or participation in services.
  
  b. Applicants are not rejected on the basis of poor or lack of credit or income, poor or lack of rental history, minor criminal convictions, or other factors that might indicate a lack of "housing readiness."
  
  c. Blanket exclusionary criteria based on more serious criminal convictions are not applied, though programs may consider such convictions on a case by case basis as necessary to ensure the safety of other residents and staff.
  
  d. Generally, only those admission criteria that are required by funders are applied, though programs may also consider additional criteria on a case by case basis as necessary to ensure the safety of tenants and staff. Application of such additional criteria should be rare, and may include, for example, denial of an applicant who is a high risk registered sex offender by a project serving children, or denial of an applicant who has a history of domestic violence involving a current participant.

Community integration and recovery:

- Housing is integrated into the community and tenants have ample opportunity and are supported to form connections outside of the project.
a. Housing is located in neighborhoods that are accessible to community resources and services such as schools, libraries, houses of worship, grocery stores, laundromats, doctors, dentists, parks, and other recreation facilities.

b. Efforts are made to make the housing look and feel similar to other types of housing in the community and to avoid distinguishing the housing as a program that serves people with special needs.

c. Services are designed to help tenants build supportive relationships, engage in personally meaningful activities, and regain or develop new roles in their families and communities.

d. Services are recovery-based and designed to help tenants gain control of their own lives, define their personal values, preferences, and visions for the future, establish meaningful individual short and long-term goals, and build hope that the things they want out of life are attainable. Services are focused on helping tenants achieve the things that are important to them and goals are not driven by staff priorities or selected from a pre-determined menu of options.

**Lease compliance and housing retention**

- Tenants are expected to comply with a standard lease agreement and are provided with services and supports to help maintain housing and prevent eviction. Visitors are expected to comply with requirements in the lease agreement.
  
  a. Leases do not include stipulations beyond those that are customary, legal, and enforceable under Texas law.
  
  b. No program rules beyond those that are customary, legal, and enforceable through a lease are applied (e.g., visitor policies should be equivalent to those in other types of permanent, lease-based housing in the community). Housing providers may ask for identification from visitors.
  
  c. Services are designed to identify and reduce risks to stable tenancy and to overall health and well-being.

- Retention in housing is contingent only on lease compliance and is not contingent on abstinence from substances or compliance with services, treatment or other clinical requirements. For example:
  
  a. Tenants are not terminated involuntarily from housing for refusal to participate in services or for violating program rules that are not stipulated in the lease.
  
  b. Transitional housing programs offer participants due process to resolve issues that may result in involuntary discharge (unless immediate risk to health and safety)
  
  c. PH providers only terminate occupancy of housing in cases of noncompliance with the lease or failure of a tenant to carry out obligations under the lease. In order to terminate housing, PH providers are required to use the legal court eviction process.
Separation of housing and services

- Projects are designed in such a manner that the roles of property management (e.g., housing application, rent collection, repairs, and eviction) and supportive services staff are clearly defined and distinct.
  
  a. Property management and support service functions are provided either by separate legal entities or by staff members whose roles do not overlap.
  
  b. There are defined processes for communication and coordination across the two functions to support stable tenancy.
  
  c. Those processes are designed to protect client confidentiality and share confidential information on a need to know basis only.

Tenant Choice

- Efforts are made to maximize tenant choice, including type, frequency, timing, location and intensity of services and whenever possible choice of neighborhoods, apartments, furniture, and décor.

- Staff accepts tenant choices as a matter of fact without judgment and provides services that are non-coercive to help people achieve their personal goals.

- Staff accepts that risk is part of the human experience and helps tenants to understand risks and reduce harm caused to themselves and others by risky behavior.
  
  o Staff understands the clinical and legal limits to choice and intervenes as necessary when someone presents a danger to self or others.
  
  o Staff helps tenants to understand the legal obligations of tenancy and to reduce risk of eviction.
  
  o Projects provide meaningful opportunities for tenant input and involvement when designing programs, planning activities and determining policies.
### Texas

#### CoC Name

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<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Awarded Amount</th>
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**TX-607 Total:** $7,523,962

#### TX-611 - Amarillo CoC

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**TX-611 Total:** $401,148

#### TX-700 - Houston, Pasadena/Harris, Fort Bend Counties CoC

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3/2/2016
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3/2/2016
SUBJECT: TDHCA ESG Update
DATE: 3/10/2016

This Memorandum is to inform The Way Home Continuum of Care Steering Committee about the current status of the TDHCA ESG funds allocated to our geographic jurisdiction.

On January 13, 2016 The Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County submitted a pre-application to act as the ESG Coordinator for TX-700 The Way Home CoC. We were approved to act as the Coordinator on February 8, 2016 and the ESG NOFA was released February 18, 2016. Our community has $1,623,261 available in State ESG; this funding is limited to no more than 60% ($973,957) going to Emergency Shelter and Street Outreach Activities. Other eligible activities with this funding are: Homelessness Prevention, RRH, HMIS, and Administration. The Coalition for the Homeless held a Bidder’s Conference on February 25, 2016 to discuss the competition details, explain collaborative applicants and ensure the community understood the timeline. To aid agencies in their application and form collaborations with each other, Letters of Intent were due by Monday, February 29 at 5PM. At that point, five collaborations sent us information surrounding their collaborations. They are as follows, please note the relationship of lead applicant, collaborative applicant and contractor:

- **SEARCH Collaborative**
  - SEARCH – Lead Applicant
  - Beacon – Collaborative Applicant
  - HACS - Contractor

- **ACAM Collaborative**
  - ACAM – Lead Applicant
  - Wesley CC – Collaborative Applicant
  - HAAM- Contractor
  - MAM- Contractor

- **Catholic Charities Collaborative**
  - Catholic Charities – Lead Applicant
  - HACS – Collaborative Applicant
  - MAM – Collaborative Applicant
  - HAAM – Collaborative Applicant

- **Salvation Army Collaborative**
  - Salvation Army – Lead Applicant
  - Covenant House – Collaborative Applicant

- **Bridge Over Troubled Waters Collaborative**
  - Bridge Over Troubled Waters – Lead Applicant
  - Bay Area Turning Point – Collaborative Applicant
  - Houston Area Women’s Center – Collaborative Applicant

It is the recommendation of the CoC Lead Agency that all collaboratives be accepted by this committee. In accordance with TDHCA guidelines, final recommended funding amounts will be submitted based on recommendations of the ESG Funders Collaborative Review and Scoring Team. The CoC Lead Agency will work with submitting agencies to determine final award amounts.

Applications are due on March 26, 2016 to CFTH offices, and on April 6, 2016 (possibly sooner) a funding breakout will be sent for approval prior to submittal to TDHCA for review and final approval. Announcement to the community will not occur until after confirmation from TDHCA about the recommended agencies eligibility to apply for this funding.
This Memorandum is to inform The Way Home Continuum of Care Steering Committee about the request of the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless and the Texas Balance of State to merge Montgomery County into the TX-700 CoC (The Way Home CoC of Houston and Pasadena/Harris and Fort Bend).

HUD has been encouraging larger CoC’s across the country to merge with surrounding counties and form larger CoC’s. To facilitate this, HUD provided technical assistance to the Texas Balance of State CoC (Texas Homeless Network) and identified Montgomery County as an interested and willing county to merge with the TX-700 CoC.

The technical assistance provider (Housing Innovations), Texas Balance of State Lead Agency (Texas Homeless Network), The Montgomery County Homeless Coalition and The Way Home CoC Lead Agency (Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris Co) met on Tuesday, March 8, 2016 to discuss this merger and timing.

All parties are in favor of the merger and realize that there are pros and cons for all parties. For example:

- Balance of State loses a new bonus project awarded in the FY2015 CoC NOFA in the amount of $2.1M
- Balance of State decreases the number of counties for which it is responsible for, which is positive
- Montgomery County Homeless Coalition relinquishes local decision-making authority
- Montgomery County benefits from the strengths of The Way Home CoC including HMIS, training and technical assistance
- The Way Home CoC has increased territory and municipalities in its portfolio
- The Way Home CoC can better respond to the problem of homelessness that occurs on the border of Harris County and Montgomery County through data analysis, funding partnerships and information sharing

It is recommended that The Way Home CoC Steering Committee approve the merger of Montgomery County into the TX-700 CoC, pending the approval by the boards of both the Montgomery County Homeless Coalition and the Texas Balance of State. If all approve, the three entities will move forward with requesting HUD approval in advance of the FY2016 CoC NOFA registration process.
Continuum of Care (CoC)
Policy on Rental Assistance in Housing First

Purpose:
To align the use of CoC resources with the goals of the CoC. The CoC supports the principles of Housing First which emphasize that program participants should be accorded the same rights and expectations of any other tenant in the rental market and that housing and supportive services are separate activities.

Policy:

Rental assistance is more closely aligned to the rental market experience than ‘leasing.’ Rental assistance is based on a standard lease agreement between the program participant and property owner. Property owners are responsible for enforcement of lease provisions; supportive services providers assist residents in addressing issues that can impede housing stability.

It is the CoC policy that projects following Housing First will preferentially use rental assistance as the form of housing assistance. Leasing is allowable in circumstances where due to the prior credit or other background history of the participant, it is not possible to secure a lease in their name and the failure to provide leasing assistance could prolong their homelessness.

Grantees must provide a justification for the continued use of leasing assistance or convert the project to rental assistance in the next NOFA competition.

Effective Date:

2016 NOFA Registration will require providers of permanent supportive housing to convert to rental assistance or request a waiver to continue use of leasing.
Purpose:
To address the negative effect on the CoC caused by grantees failing to fully expend grant funds. These funds are returned to HUD and cannot be used to prevent and end homelessness in the CoC.

Policy:
All grants funded with CoC funds will have an expenditure threshold of ten percent (10%) of total grant funds or in the case of grants with total funding of $500,000 or greater, the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars ($50,000).

Grantees with an unexpended balance that meets or exceeds the threshold specified above, shall be subjected to a reduction in renewal grant amount with the unspent funds being added to the pool of funds available for reallocation.

Grantees may appeal this determination and provide support for the need for funds and a demonstration of improved expenditure performance. An exception to this policy may be made for new projects that could not expend funds due to implementation barriers.

Effective Date:
Start of registration process for 2016 NOFA
Request for CoC Steering Committee Agenda Item

1. **Brief Description of Proposed Item**

   Acceptance of Recommendation by Nominating Committee to name Mike Puccio (Interim Executive Director) of The Beacon to the vacated Crisis Provider Representative seat, to The Way Home CoC Steering Committee. This acceptance will fill the seat that was vacated by past Executive Director and elected Provider Representative, Charly Weldon.

2. **Date of Steering Committee Meeting:**  
   March 10, 2016

3. **Proposed Committee Resolution:**

   **Resolution:** That the CoC Steering Committee hereby accepts, in accordance with the CoC Charter, the appointment of Mike Puccio of The Beacon, to the CoC Steering Committee to fill the remaining term of the past Executive Director of The Beacon.

4. **Approval of CoC Steering Committee Chair**

   Signature: _______________________________ Date: ____________________
Request for CoC Steering Committee Agenda Item

1. Brief Description of Proposed Item

Adoption of Housing First Principles as guiding document for all permanent housing projects within our CoC.

2. Date of Steering Committee Meeting: March 10, 2016

3. Proposed Committee Resolution:

Resolution: That the CoC Steering Committee hereby accepts, the Housing First Principles document as a standard for all permanent housing within the CoC.

4. Approval of CoC Steering Committee Chair

Signature:_________________________ Date:_________________________
Request for CoC Steering Committee Agenda Item

1. **Brief Description of Proposed Item**

   Approval of the presented TDHCA ESG funds collaborations and activities as eligible recipients with authorization to the ESG Funders Collaborative to review, score and submit recommendations to TDHCA.

2. **Date of Steering Committee Meeting:** March 10, 2016

3. **Proposed Committee Resolution:**

   **Resolution:** That the CoC Steering Committee hereby accepts the recommended recipient collaboratives for TDHCA ESG funds and authorizes the ESG Funders Collaborative to submit final recommendations to TDHCA through the CoC Lead Agency.

4. **Approval of CoC Steering Committee Chair**

   Signature:_________________________ Date:_________________________
Request for CoC Steering Committee Agenda Item

1. Brief Description of Proposed Item
   
   Acceptance of TX Balance of State Continuum of Care request to merge Montgomery County in the TX-700 Continuum of Care, as supported by Montgomery County Homeless Coalition.

2. Date of Steering Committee Meeting:            March 10, 2016

3. Proposed Committee Resolution:

   Resolution: That the CoC Steering Committee hereby accepts the TX Balance of State Continuum of Care request to merge Montgomery County in the TX-700 Continuum of Care, as supported by Montgomery County Homeless Coalition.

4. Approval of CoC Steering Committee Chair

   Signature:_____________________________ Date:________________________