

WMNEH Leadership Council Meeting – February 28, 2018 Summary Notes

In attendance: Jim Ayres, United Way of Pioneer Valley, John Bidwell, United Way of Hampshire County, Tim Brennan, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Kathryn Buckley-Brawner, Catholic Charities, Dave Christopolis, Three County CoC, Steve Connor, Veterans Services, Dawn DiStefano, Square One, Holly Florek, Center for Human Development, Doreen Fadus, Mercy Medical Center, David Gadaire, CareerPoint, Sharon Hall-Smith, Gandara Center, Lisa Goldsmith, DIAL/SELF, Dave Havens, Mental Health Association, Clare Higgins, Community Action, Steve Huntley, Valley Opportunity Council, Peg Keller, City of Northampton, Jennifer Kinsman, United Way of Pioneer Valley, Joanne LaCour, DTA, Ann Lentini, Domus, Inc., Jay Levy, Eliot CHS Homeless Services, Gerry McCafferty, Hampden County CoC, Michelle Michaelian, Behavioral Health Network, Peter Miller, City of Westfield, Rebecca Muller, Grant Works, Jay Sacchetti, ServiceNet, Pamela Schwartz, Network, Jim Seney, Veterans Administration, Joyce Tavon, Consultant, Lauren Voyer, Way Finders, Lynne Wallace, Way Finders

See attached – for revised version of the six recommendations document

Major Decisions

1. Voted to accept recommendations on Network scope (1-4) with revisions to #4 on legislative advocacy – see attached
2. Voted to shift Leadership Council to advisors and create a Steering Committee for oversight and decision-making
3. Agreed that the Steering Committee would:
 - a. Have seats by categories relevant to work of ending homelessness (e.g., individuals, families, veterans, youth, etc. – see list below)
 - b. Limited voting members to 15
 - c. Establish SC terms of 1-2 years
 - d. Seek to have representatives that reflect both diversity and consumer perspectives – will hinge on LC members to recruit
 - e. Seek to add slots beyond current Network stakeholders (e.g., law enforcement, municipalities) – will hinge on LC members to recruit

Summary Notes

Overview of process and recommendations – Joyce Tavon, consultant

- Gathered input from about 75 people via interviews and 2/12 Network meeting – focus of today's meeting – review and decide on the refined list of 6 recommendations
- Overarching goals for today:
 - What will the Network do going forward? (Decide on the scope of work)
 - Who will provide oversight? (Decide on decision-making structure)
 - Third question not to be addressed today: How will you fund it?
 - Consultant stressed that based on findings - Network resources will be more limited than in the past so need to reduce and focus
- Other key recommendations:
 - Fill gaps not filled by the CoCs – eliminate duplication
 - Be strategic and seek greatest impact of your limited resources

Comments on Network Scope (recommendations 1-4):

- Visibility of the issue: How does the Network raise visibility about the people we serve. Help the larger community understand the people we serve and the challenges
- Committees: Need flexibility for the steering committee to create other committees on issues/needs as they emerge
- Diversity: How do we get more diversity in our committee representation (see steering committee as well)
- Macro/Micro: We need to close gap and foster feedback between "big picture thinkers" and those working closer to the ground - the Network as a vehicle to continue to do this. Need feedback from committees to SC and from SC to committees
- Progress Report: (Raised during Structure discussion, but relevant for scope of work)
 - Create a twice/year progress report, that is interactive and dynamic with a feedback loop on how things are going, a report that "connects all the tissue" of the different committees and whole Network

Motion to approve recommendations on Scope, with the exception of legislative advocacy, which will not be addressed now due to the changing landscape among our Western MA legislators: Clare Higgins

Seconded: Charlie Knight

All those in favor: unanimous with one abstention (Joanne LaCour, DTA)

Comments on Network Structure (recommendations 5-6):

On Leadership Council shift away from decision making power:

- General agreement with the change - LC members time could be better spent in more targeted ways to support the Network
- The LC should be a body that reflects the community buy-in on this issue – to be called upon if needed.
- The LC could be called an LC or an Advisory Council - brief discussion and then agreement not to change the name
- Recommendation to get Housing Authorities and municipalities on the LC and engaged in the Network (Pamela noted the many attempts thus far)

Motion to approve Recommendation #5: Steve Connor

Seconded: Charlie Knight

All those in favor: unanimous with one abstention (Joanne LaCour, DTA)

On creation of Steering Committee for oversight and decisions:

- We need representatives on the SC who don't have a direct stake as providers, have a broader vision; also who don't have conflict of interest when there are funding decisions
 - Agreement that should have a separate ad hoc committee to make funding decisions when this comes up

- Discussion about broadening the representation to cover categories, rather than by provider agency slots (see below).
- We should have flexibility around numbers on SC - but an awareness of not making it too large.
- LC representatives in the room are all white – danger of perpetuating this in selecting an SC. Need to work on diversifying the SC decision making group
- We should send SC meeting minutes out to larger LC so might stay informed and provide feedback. *(Pamela noted minutes would be on the WMNEH blog)*
- We need to keep in mind the broader picture, e.g., cuts in the PVTAs and the ballot initiative to cut the sales tax, costing the state \$1.3 billion in revenues. The ramifications for cuts to services and impact on homeless are huge – these are the kinds of things that Network needs to be able to address
- Point raised by consultant: Network has very limited staffing (approx. 17 hours/wk of Pamela's time and multiple committees and events to coordinate) – Efforts to broaden the SC, increase its diversity, involve consumers, etc. – hinge on LC members to do this

Proposed SC slots:

1. Hampden CoC
2. Three County CoC
3. Youth
4. Veterans
5. Family
6. Individuals
7. Domestic violence
8. Mental health
9. Hospital
10. Regional housing authority
11. Municipal rep
12. Community action agency
13. Employment
14. Lived experience
15. Law enforcement
16. County jails
17. Opioid task force and drug courts

Agreements about SC from the discussion, but not voted upon:

- A range in the number of seats would be good – not to exceed 15
- A single person could represent multiple categories
- Need to focus on diversity!
- LC members will help with recruitment to fill seats
- 1-2 year terms for service – to make it more doable for people to commit and to rotate
- Will meet quarterly, and will attempt online Zoom meetings possibly alternate between Zoom and in-person

Those interested in participating (or in recruiting others):

Lauren Voyer, Brad Gordon - regional housing authorities (Brad could not attend but had expressed interest) - Hampden, 3 County
Claire Higgins, Steve Huntley - community action agencies/families (for VOC) - Hampden, 3 County
Lisa Goldsmith, Sharon Hall-Smith, Rebecca Muller - youth providers - Hampden, 3 County
Kathryn Buckley-Brawner - individuals and families (RRH) - Hampden
Holly Florek - families - Hampden
Gerry McCafferty - CoC, municipality - Hampden
Steve Connor, Jim Seney - veterans (will recruit another person who they feel would serve well) - regional
Jay Sachetti - individuals, families - 3 county
Dave Havens, Bill Miller - individuals (Bill could not attend but expressed interest) - Hampden
Michelle Michaelian, Jay Levy - mental health - Hampden, 3 county
John Bidwell - funder (UWHC) - 3 county
Jim Ayres - funder (UWPV) - Hampden
Charlie Knight - former consumer - regional
Dave Gadaire (will find delegate) - employment services - regional?
Doreen Fadus (will find delegate) - hospital - regional?
Joanne LaCour - state agency (non-voting) - regional

Interim co-chairs to provide Network Director go-to people during this interim period:

Gerry McCafferty and Peg Keller

Agreed next steps:

Next steps – SC recruitment:

- Pamela will recruit domestic violence provider rep
- Dave Christopolis will discuss and determine CoC rep at upcoming CoC board meeting
- LC committed to recruiting reps for any seats that help broaden the SC
 - Claire will recruit sheriff rep
 - Peg will recruit Three-County municipal rep
 - Several people who volunteered committed that in place of themselves they'd help recruit reps to create greater diversity and consumer representation
- Pamela will schedule first online Zoom meeting for early April - 1.5 hours (with goal of shorter meetings in future).
- Pamela will be in touch with the volunteers above representing each sub-population to help determine who will fill SC "voting" seats.
- The LC agreed that being inclusive around participating in this group is in the interest of the Network goals; there may be a distinction between "voting authority" and participation (all are welcome). These are the types of questions that will be worked out in subsequent meetings.