

Three County Individual Services Meeting Minutes - 11/9/20

In attendance: Steve Connor, Veterans Services, Shaundell Diaz, Three County CoC, John Fisher, Way Finders, Erin Forbush, ServiceNet, Jen Glover, Life Path, Hwei-Ling Greeney, Amherst Community Connections, John Hornik, Amherst Affordable Housing Trust, Jay Levy, Eliot Services, Michele Lafleur, Luis Martinez, CHD, Brooke Murphy, Stephanie Tonelli, Three County CoC, Stephanie Tonelli, Springfield Police Dept., Chris Zabik, DMH

Shelter Updates:

ServiceNet: overall, hopeful they will be able to maintain usual winter bed capacity in the region (while following social distancing protocol).

- **Pittsfield:** opened up winter shelter space at St. Joe's High School for next 6 months, can accommodate up to 50 people; access by showing up at shelter between 4-6 pm
- **Greenfield:** adding 10-15 additional beds (thanks to private funding to renovate 2nd floor) to the typical 20 beds year-round at Wells Street shelter for total of roughly 35 beds; access by calling Wells Street to get on wait list
- **Northampton:** working on an additional site (not quite public yet) which should be able to shelter 20-25 individuals; 25 are being sheltered right now in Grove Street and cot shelter; access by calling Grove Street - must first obtain covid-19 negative test - staff will help facilitate

Craig's Doors, Amherst: opened on Nov. 1 - Unitarian Society with 14 beds; hotel with 20 beds. The 20 hotel beds are through referral only - sheltering more vulnerable population. Pamela will confirm with Kevin process for accessing shelter.

Coordinated Entry Update:

Total 139 people on the by-names list; 4 new assessments since last month. 2 CoC placements into Permanent Supportive Housing; 1 unit open with CHD; DIAL/SElf has openings; ServiceNet has one referral-only opening; 3 people for whom a voucher has been earmarked.

Youth and Young Adult Coordinated Entry meetings have begun, primarily focused on Franklin County (due to YHDP funding) but if youth lives elsewhere and has some connection to Franklin, they can be eligible for services.

Western MA COVID-19 Task Force for Housing First: The Network convenes this Task Force, which meets bi-weekly and includes state legislators, mayors and other municipal leaders and shelter and housing providers, to address the homelessness crisis and winter shelter planning during COVID-19. Recently, 12 mayors/town managers sent a letter to the MA COVID-19 Command Center requesting a meeting to discuss the need for an Isolation and Quarantine site in Western MA (as of now, COVID-19 positive individuals are sent to a hotel in Everett, MA).

FY21 Budget Update; Post-eviction moratorium work

Pamela reported out: The House Ways and Means Committee released its proposed FY21 budget last week, which is now being debated this week (note: debate on housing provisions will continue on 11/12/20). This is for the budget that covers July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021 but was

delayed due to COVID-19 (partial budgets have been passed between 7/1 and now). The proposed budget contains several positive provisions to address homelessness (including a provision to prevent eviction if a tenant is in the process of applying for RAFT). You can read more about the [proposed House budget here](#) and the Network's priority budget amendments to it [here](#).

The Network organized an **Emergency Legislative Briefing on Nov. 9** to discuss the eviction crisis post the end of the eviction moratorium and its impact here (note at time of this meeting the Briefing had not happened yet, but these notes will provide a summary of the event). 9 Legislators/Offices attended along with 70 Network partners. Regional Housing Authority Directors presented on the overwhelming demand for RAFT homelessness prevention resources and advocates presented on the threat tenants are facing right now to their housing stability. [Click here](#) for the summary of the data presented.

The Network is advocating for adoption of [RAFT reforms](#) to streamline the process (in partnership with the regional housing authorities) and for adoption of the [Housing Stability bill](#) which will provide comprehensive protection for tenants, homeowners and small landlords. Pamela encouraged everyone to [join the Network blog](#) and be part of this advocacy effort.

Next meeting date: Monday, December 15, 1:30 pm. See Zoom link below.