

Hampden County Individual Services Committee Meeting - 2/15/22

In attendance: Farida Bature, Mercy Medical Center, Olivia Bernstein, MHA, Sandra Castillo, BHN, Kevin Cavanaugh, Samaratin Inn, Lynn Conway, Eliot Services, Kim Fontaine, Eliot Services, Dave Havens, Mental Health Association, Sarah Hills, Eliot Services, Janice Humason, FOH/CSO, Jay Levy, Eliot Services, Shalyn Kempema, Way Finders, Gerry McCafferty, City of Springfield/Hampden CoC, Earl Miller, DMH, Theresa Nicholson, CHD, Pamela Schwartz, Network, Stephanie Tonelli, Springfield Police Dept., Kathy West, Eliot Services

Point in Time Count - Taking place on Feb. 23; people shelter counted through HMIS; Dave Havens of MHA is coordinating street count; Eliot Services is participating in regional outreach through non-shelter locations and police; also a service-based count 2 weeks following to reach more individuals in non-shelter locations. Gerry is offering training events to describe this piece in more detail - contact Gerry at gmccafferty@springfieldcityhall.com for more info.

Also noted that Holyoke is working to organize a pop-up shelter on the night of the count to help identify new people (in addition to providing shelter).

New Requests for Proposals Out:

- **Permanent Supportive Housing units** for 30 units - this program is currently run by Viability but Viability has decided to not continue with it. This RFP seeks a new agency to run the program (to maintain continuity). Deadline is March 11. Go here: <https://www.cognitofrms.com/CityOfSpringfield1/PermanentSupportiveHousingProvider>
- **Youth Housing RFP:** These are state EOHHS funds allocated to the CoC, providing \$450,000 in capital funds to be used for acquisition or rehab, serving young adults 18-24 years old. Funds must be spent by 6/30 with housing ready by 12/31. Go here: <https://www.cognitofrms.com/CityOfSpringfield1/FundingAvailabilityHousingForHomelessYoungAdults>. Deadline March 11.
- Emergency Solutions Grant RFP for Springfield only. Go here: <https://www.cognitofrms.com/CityOfSpringfield1/EmergencySolutionsGrant>. Deadline March 8.

Racial Equity Work - Hampden and Three County CoCs are continuing to work with consultants at Racial Equity Partners. The two CoC's are working together to develop trainings for this Spring. One focus is to provide agency support to advance internal racial equity work, e.g., how to analyze your own agency's data; hiring and mentoring - how to encourage leadership and growth among all staff; how to examine policies and procedures. Another training related to working with landlords and helping to get people housed. All trainings will be on Wednesday afternoons in March. Stay tuned for additional notice. (

Shelter Updates:

- **Friends of the Homeless:** Noted good communication across all providers to exchange on open beds (includes Craig's Doors, Samaratin Inn, CHD, Catholic Charities, ServiceNet). Spending a lot of time at the front door with people seeking shelter on a day-to-day basis. FOH at contract (174) and overflow capacity. Fewer beds available for men than women. Difficult to manage when demand exceeds capacity.
- **Center for Human Development:** echoed the value of great communication across the region regarding empty beds. Motel shelter in Holyoke is always full - takes referrals when needed. ServiceNet has extended overflow in Northampton to address some of the demand. Pop-up shelter in Holyoke going great. Seen approx. 19-22 people who were not known before. First time connection. Biggest challenge is getting people to go into detox - biggest fear is having to return to the streets
- Samaratin Inn - full (with 30) - seeing the frustrating in finding available and affordable housing
- 23 individuals were rehoused from shelter in January.

Discussion of Safe Havens eligibility - in Boston, there is a practice of presumptive eligibility so as to reduce the barrier to access. We will be talking more about this in our Western MA group.

Youth shelter/re-housing work: The success of the youth coordinated entry system (a function of having a year to plan for the program) was noted, demonstrating the impact of having the opportunity to be very planful; and then to staff the system at an appropriate level. More to learn from this model to apply to individual adult coordinated entry..

Note: While the below items did not get discussed due to lack of time, I am including them for reference:

FY23 Budget Update: The Governor released his proposed FY23 budget last week. The Governor's Budget includes \$80 million for RAFT, which advocates immediately recognize will not be sufficient to meet the extraordinary demand as federal funds are depleted. The statewide advocacy request is likely to be \$250 million. The Network Steering Committee is meeting next week on its FY23 budget priorities and will bring these to our next meeting on 3/8. (and be sure you are subscribed to the [Network blog](#) to stay connected to related actions!).

Legislation Update: The Joint Rule 10 day was 2/2 - the date by which legislative committees needed to determine next steps of its bills - reported out favorably, extended, or "sent to study" (which means not in play for the remainder of this legislative session). [See here](#) for a quick snapshot of the Network priority bills and how they fared. Much more advocacy to come!

Announcement: The new Executive Director of the US Interagency Council on Homelessness is Jeff Olivet, a person this region knows very well as he has consulted with our two CoC's and trained many of our partners around racial equity work over these past 3 years. Read all about it

[here](#). Congratulations to Jeff, congratulations to all of us - he will serve our cause exceedingly well!

Network Annual Event, May 6! [Register HERE](#). DHCD Undersecretary Jennifer Maddox will be joining us, along with Jeff Olivet in his new capacity as Director of the US Interagency Council on Homelessness, and more. Please get it on your calendar now!

Next meeting date: Tuesday, March 22, 1 pm