

## **Hampden Individual Services Committee Meeting Minutes - 7/19/22**

*In attendance: Tanja Alessi, Friends of the Homeless/CSO; Kevin Cavanaugh, Samaratin Inn, Lynn Conway, Eliot Services, John Fisher, Way Finders, Kim Fontaine, Eliot Services, Jen Lucca, Samaratin Inn, Jeffrey McLeod, Eliot Services, Pamela Schwartz, WMNEH, Anna Smith, Friends of the Homeless/CSO, Kenyetta Wilson, FOH/CSO, Chris Zabik, DMH*

**Springfield HOME-ARP Funding:** special allocation of multi-year HOME funds to respond to COVID and to address homelessness. Must create a plan to allocate a little over \$6 million to spend from now through September, 2030 - long-term spending to specifically address housing and supportive services needs of people who are homeless, at risk, fleeing DV and "other" (including homeless and receiving short-term housing assistance). Funds can be used for developing affordable housing units, tenant based rental assistance, supportive services - rehousing, homelessness prevention services, housing counseling; and development of non-congregate shelter - replacement of hotel rooms. Seeking feedback on gaps in system, unmet needs, prioritizing funding

Feedback on needs:

- non-congregate shelter that would meet medical respite needs
- housing to meet the needs of DV survivors
- outreach challenges for people who refuse to come to shelter - when hotel resource ends, how to connect with this population - what are our outreach needs
- more affordable housing for people who don't have or make 3 times the income. And for people who don't have the credit or have never been on a lease for rental history
- referrals from people in the police departments (Westfield and Chicopee)- working on how to determine chronicity for people who live outdoors
- need more truly HOUSING FIRST housing, greater reduction of the barriers
- need to develop more housing, more site-based permanent supportive housing, as opposed to funding more vouchers - we have saturated the market for vouchers (can't find apartments in which to use them!) - we need more. Not fund tenant based rental services.
- need more non-congregate shelter with sufficient support services - no lease required, no barriers - for people who will not go to shelter or have high needs

DRAFT PLAN will be released by 8/3 - then an opportunity for feedback; final must be submitted by 9/2

**TOMORROW: Community meeting to further discuss this opportunity and collect input, 7/20/22, 1 pm on zoom - see link here:**  
**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81275450141?pwd=SjB1azBOQzV6VVo4N2hQTW5uUTVNQT09>**

**New HUD opportunity for unsheltered population** (not required to prove chronicity) - each CoC is assigned an amount it is able to apply for - for Hampden CoC that is \$5 million over 3 years but then it becomes renewable. It is funding typically for supportive housing and rapid rehousing; this allows for joint new projects for rapid rehousing and PSH but also allows for

projects that include support services and outreach for people living unsheltered. Right now working on a plan to identify gaps; then in August will go to providers for proposals; CoC will submit application. Due October 20. What should the mix be of outreach, services, and housing to address this population. **Stay tuned for more planning opportunities and for RFP coming out in late August.**

### **Shelter updates:**

Friends of the Homeless: communicating with other providers on shelter capacity - useful collaboration; currently not at maximum shelter capacity; currently beds available for men and women; a reflection of the extensive low-barrier housing that is happening - **housing more than 15 people each month (congratulations on such fantastic work!)**

on youth and young adults - 18-24 years old - more youth coming into shelter than in the past - seeing transgendered youth - hard time being accepted - youth shelters cis-gendered - may need to look at that and address housing needs for this population

a lot of good collaboration going on in community with youth and young adult population - case-conferencing meetings - being able to talk about availability at FOH

### **FY23 Budget Update:**

Conference Committee Budget released: the Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance has provided us with [this analysis](#). Very good news for individual homelessness!

Update on meeting with DHCD re: families/pregnant women arriving at individuals shelter: A good meeting was held between many DHCD leaders and staff and a couple of our providers. A protocol was named for addressing these situations. Below is a summary of take-aways from the meeting:

1. FOH (Anna) will reach out to Bonnie to arrange for a staff training on EA shelter eligibility and other guidelines. The training will be made available to other individual shelter providers and staff.
2. Reviewed protocol for when a family or pregnant woman seeks individual shelter:
  - first determine if family member has applied for EA and what they have learned about their application
  - if no application yet, first step is to APPLY by calling the EA Call Center at 1-866-584-0653 (open Mon-Friday 8 am - 5 pm)
  - if already applied and there is confusion or an emergency need, first email Bonnie Caldwell, Western MA Director at [bonnie.caldwell@mass.gov](mailto:bonnie.caldwell@mass.gov) with the [Release of Information](#) (this is the only way to talk about the situation). Bonnie's work cell: 413-276-5562
  - If Bonnie is not available, email/call Dolores DiFillipo, [dolores.j.difillipo@state.ma.us](mailto:dolores.j.difillipo@state.ma.us) or call work cell: 617-721-3511
  - If person shows up after 5 pm, a state response that evening is not possible; however, it is still worthwhile to email asap so that DHCD staff can attend very first thing in the morning

Gerry noted we should loop our youth providers into this as well. Will follow-up with Pamela with contacts.

**Next meeting 8/30, 1 pm**