

### **3 County Individual Services Committee Meeting Minutes - 4/10/22**

*In attendance: Julissa Colon, Wells Street, Elyse Cooper, CSO, Katie Dwan, Three County CoC, Cory Flood, CSO, Erin Forbush, ServiceNet, Hwei-Ling Greeney, ACC, Andy Klatka, Eliot Services, Michele LaFleur, Three County CoC, Jay Levy, Eliot Services, Deb McLaughlin, Opioid Task Force of Franklin County and North Quabbin Region, Gilad Meron, Resiliency Hub, Anna Mitkevicius, CSO, Megan O'Connor, Craig's Doors, Lizzy Ortiz, C3 ACO, Tina Rockwood, Salasin Project, Jessica Sastre, CHD, Andrea Schmid, Resiliency Hub, Pamela Schwartz, WMNEH, Sam Shanky, Craig's Doors, Lisa Sirabella, Craig's Doors, Dan Sontag, DMH, Chris Zabik, DMH, Brianna Zimmerman, Stavros*

**Good news in the news:** Make sure to check out the [article in the Daily Hampshire Gazette](#) on Craig's Doors innovative transportation program that provides free bus passes to shelter guests and community residents in need. Thank you, Craig's Doors!

#### **Shelter Updates**

**Pittsfield (ServiceNet):** moving into new shelter in a couple months located in a church that is being renovated - work due to finish soon. One unanticipated challenge is that the new shelter has bed capacity of 45 while the temporary shelter at St. Joe's High School has capacity for 60. ServiceNet will be looking at alternatives for expansion for the winter season. high school is larger than new shelter (60 beds vs. 45). Will need to look for alternatives for winter.

Shelter management for Northampton and Greenfield officially transferred from ServiceNet to CSO as of April 1. Big thanks to both partners for a smooth transition and big thanks to ServiceNet for their 30-odd years of sheltering work in these two communities.

**Greenfield (CSO):** Welcomed Julissa Colon, manager at Wells Street (now with CSO). She reported the shelter was at capacity.

**Northampton (CSO):** Smooth transition; working on getting fully staffed.

**Amherst (Craig's Doors)** - Shelter at fully capacity. Noted the new contract with DHCD allows for Craig's Doors to stay open all year - we celebrated this progress!

#### **Low-threshold housing update**

**Jennifer Haelstrom from DPH who oversees the Low-Threshold Housing program will attend our May 8 meeting to provide a more global perspective and answer any questions about the low threshold housing program.**

**Holyoke** - CHD is still waiting on the Certificate of Occupancy for their 42 units. Hopefully any day!

**Northampton** - Independent Housing Solutions (IHS) is now almost full (16 units). Jay noted they are now housing 6 or 7 very long-time chronically homeless individuals. Also noted the need for more staff which they are working on.

**Greenfield** - CSO has hired a new program supervisor for their Franklin County LTH, Cory Flood. In the process of looking for new apartments and likely to have some openings. Discussed connecting with the 3 County CoC. Katie and Anna will follow-up. In total, CSO has 115 LTH units from Springfield to Greenfield (divided in 3 geographic teams).

### **New funding for new Permanent Supportive Housing**

Good news on Western MA's share of new funding for new PSH units - [check out the blog post here](#) for more detail.

### **Shelter safety discussion**

We acknowledged the tragic death of a shelter worker in Brattleboro. We discussed the challenge of balancing safety (always first) while creating trauma informed, compassionate spaces. Some ideas were shared (e.g., flare buttons in case a worker feels endangered). We discussed whether there was a role for this committee to play in supporting further conversation. One proposal is to advocate to the state for more safety measures (we need to gain more clarity about what that would look like). Pamela will bring the topic to the Network's next meeting with a small group at DMH (bi-monthly meetings with the DMH Western MA Director and others at DMH) to gain their insight. Will circle back with providers to discuss possible next steps.

### **State budget update**

The House Ways and Means Committee is releasing its FY24 budget this Wed., 4/12. Currently, the Network is advocating for these [FY24 budget priorities](#). After the Ways and Means budget is released, Reps will be introducing a series of amendments (to get our priorities in the budget) and this will be the key time to contact our legislators. Please stay connected to the Network blog posts for action steps - and if you're not subscribed now, [please go here!](#) Let's be sure our voices are heard!

**Federal Plan and ending homelessness:** If you want to connect to the US Interagency Council on Homelessness' Plan to End Homelessness - and how it intersects with MA policy - please see this upcoming [webinar series here](#).

The [Network Annual Gathering](#) is coming soon! May 12 - be sure to [RSVP here](#). We've got 15 state legislators, 6 mayors and 130 of US - don't miss out on the great energy and great gratitude for your work!

**Next meeting date: Monday, May 8, 2 pm.**