

Continuum of Care for the City and County of Racine, U.A.

General Meeting Minutes

United Way of Racine County, 2000 Domanik Drive, Racine, Wisconsin

April 11, 2014

Present Ilana Avital (LAW), Mark Boatwright (RVM), Cristen Chaffee (TLC), Kevin Cookman (HALO), Brian Dean (RKCAA), Cherie Griffin (WRC), Pam Handrow (Safe Haven), Sherry Hartog (WRC), AJ Jelks (HALO), Zeke Leo (RKCAA), Gai Lorenzen (LAW), Frannie Murillo (LAW), Cheryl O'Brien (HOPES), Mitchell Parchem (Love, Inc.), Sharen Pease (CVI), Debbie Peterson (HOPES), Kris Redmer (HOPES), Martice Scales (HOPES), Adam Smith (ICA), Julia Stark (DOC), Melissa Taggart (VAF), Ron Thomas (UWRC), Jen Toth (WRC), Demetri Vincze (CoC), Carol Wester (HOPES and Racine Dominicans), Jerold Wright (CVI).

Call to Order

President, Gai Lorenzen called the meeting to order at 9:08 AM and gave a brief overview of the agenda.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Pam Handrow moved and Sharen Pease seconded that the Minutes of the March 21, 2014 meeting be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Ron Thomas reported that the current balance is \$2,157.29. Cherie Griffin moved and Brian Dean seconded the motion that the Treasurer's Report be approved. Mark Boatwright suggested that we could save some trees with printing fewer copies. The motion passed unanimously.

Gai Lorenzen explained that the CoC account will be used for the upcoming SOAR training; registrations will be deposited into the CoC account and expenditures will be reimbursed from this account. Agencies should make checks payable to CoC.

Introductions

At the chair's invitation all attending the meeting introduced themselves and the organization they represented.

Grants

1. HUD CoC Grant. CoC renewal awards were announced this week. CVI's Supportive Services Only application was not funded by HUD but the reason wasn't clear. In response to a question it was noted that Bethany's new RRH application also was not approved by HUD but it may be considered in Tier 2 because it is a new project. In response to a question, Cherie Griffin stated that the Purple Ribbon Project is the name of Women's Resource Center permanent supportive housing programs.

Gai Lorenzen stated that HUD may be moving up the application date for the FY2014 applications to as early as July.

2. SAMHSA Grant. Demetri Vincze gave an update of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant application. This year's application is due April 25, 2014 so it is not feasible for us to apply at this time around. Demetri will work on a concept paper to enable the CoC to consider a future application. Racine County has expressed an interest in pursuing this as well.

3. Other Grants. Gai Lorenzen noted that other grants are available for housing for AODA and mental health populations and urged everyone to keep eyes out for these opportunities. Adam Smith told the group that he is able to provide specialized reports if data is needed to apply for some group grants but that if data from ICA is needed a 30 days' notice is necessary to ensure that the information is available.

Trauma Informed Care

As a continuation of last month's discussion in relation to the ETH grant, Cherie Griffin provided an overview of Trauma Informed Care (TIC), which is a commitment to recognizing that when a person experiences trauma part of the brain shuts down and responses may be involuntary and beyond the traumatized person's control. Domestic violence, poverty, and homelessness are all traumatic experiences.

TIC is an approach that emphasizes the need to be aware of the effects of trauma and the importance of understanding that some behaviors may be the result of the person being traumatized. Knowing this we can resist from trying to command and control the client or insisting that they comply with our expectations or rules. Often the very nature of our programs may trigger a traumatic response.

Adverse childhood experiences lead to a biological response, not an emotional one. The earlier the traumatic experiences, the more severe the response and the more difficult to ameliorate. Coping mechanisms are easily learned, but very difficult to unlearn.

Understanding the physical and biological results of trauma is only the first step in a needed organizational change. Step 2 is an organizational commitment to adopting TIC as the culture of the organization is perhaps more difficult and time consuming. It involves reviewing all aspects of an organization—policies and practices, environment, training and orientation, language, etc.

A number of participants noted examples of how TIC can be manifested but also stated that it is difficult to be consistent and persistent in using this approach. Lack of resources and time are often stumbling blocks for organizations that value this approach and wish to be more consistent in operating in this manner.

Cherie summed up by emphasizing that our client's agenda, not ours, is central. She stated that the four shelters must work together to find a response to clients who are not "shelter ready." It is our responsibility and we should not rely on the Hospitality Center to deal with this population. The very way in which we conduct our initial intake needs to be reviewed with an emphasis on the client's needs, not on our rules. This is not easy and requires other partners to adopt this same approach.

Upcoming Events/Reminders

An allocation meeting for ETH funds will be held on Wednesday, April 16, 2014 at 9 AM. Allocations will be made by the Resource Development Committee of CoC and will have five components: street outreach, rapid rehousing, prevention, HMIS and emergency shelters.

Participants were encouraged to attend the Balance of State (BOS) meeting in Madison on May 21-22. The registration deadline is May 9.

The next meeting of CoC will be Friday, May 16, 2014 at 9:00 AM.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:06 AM.