Homelessness and Housing Alliance of Racine County—Membership Meeting
Location: Zoom meeting link -
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88537732675?pwd=QzZOMjBpclczT00zSDljRFVtOEJwZz09

February 19, 2021

Present: (43) **Officers**: President: Teresa Reinders (CoC), Vice President: Sharen Pease (CVI), Sectary/Treasurer: MaryBeth Kallio (UWRC)

Membership:

Judith Barfetl	Kim Leslie (Ascension)
Michael Basford (WI Interagency Council on Homelessness)	Gai Lorenzen (HALO)
Tameka Brockman (Lutheran Social Services)	Derek Morann (LSS)
Chris Broslavick (Racine Dominicans)	Scott Metzel (HOPES Center)
Jori Chambers (Women's Resource Center)	Ed Miller (Revitalize Racine)
Kaylee Cuter (Racine Unified School District)	Seth Raymond (Hospitality Center)
Dale Darrow (HUD Miw. Field Office)	Hale Sargent (HUD Milwaukee Office)
Barb Farrar (LGBT Center of SEW)	Brendan Saunders (City of Racine)
Michelle Gehring (NAMI)	Vicky Selkow (City of Racine)
Claire Hackett (HUD Milwaukee Office)	Maurika Smith (SAFE Haven)
Pam Handrow (Bethany Apartments)	Ron Thomas (Community)
Delores Hernandez (Racine County Housing Authority)	
Auntaiva Jackson	
Chad Kline (LSS)	Traci Lang
Jeff Knott (HALO)	
Francisa Lassa (LAW	

The meeting was called to order by President, Teresa Reinders at 9:05 a.m. with welcome and introductions.

Reminders: *CoC website https://racinecoc.org and the Homeless & Housing Alliance of Racine County email address is homelesshousingalliance@gmail.com*

Consent Agenda: M/S/C to receive and file agenda; Motion by Sharon Pease, without the committee report
Committee Reports: n/a
New Business:

a. Treasurer's activities: Motion on the floor by Sharen: to remove former treasurer Lynn Hegeman from bank account. Add MaryBeth Kallio as the new treasurer, and Teresa Reinders as President, to signature cards. ***MSC***
b. January 2021 during COVID Point in Time update. Verbal update by Scoot Metzel, HOPES Center.

Point-in time, it is a HUD mandated estimated count of the number of people experiencing homelessness in each community around the country conducted in January and July. The numbers are used for service planning and for demonstrating the need for resources. In Racine, we also use it to raise public awareness of homelessness.

It has two components, an unsheltered count, and the sheltered count. The unsheltered count, or the street count, is when we actually go out on that night to see if we can locate people who are unsheltered and living in places not meant for human habitation. Sheltered count consists of the people who are experiencing homelessness and in shelter during that night including transitional housing at Bethany apartments and Union Grove.

On January 20th we had three teams out. Due to winter storm, teams stayed in Racine. Union Grove, Burlington count was conducted the next Monday and continued the count on Tuesday to complete the whole county. Expect this to be the lowest point ever in Racine. 168 in 2015, 2009 354 (highest count in Racine to date in the January Count), below 150 people due to COVID-19. The system group will meet in April.

Presentation:

Presentation: Vicky Selkowe, City of Racine, Major Office, Racine Financial Empowerment Center Program (FEC)

The Financial Empowerment Center with partnership with Housing Inc. and City of Racine, is the first Financial Empowerment Center in Wisconsin. There are more than 21 FEC in the nation. The average FEC client's income is $21,000. Nationwide clients saved $26 million in saving. Since December over 50 residents; 75% women, 23% Hispanic/Latino and 40%African American. We have the capacity to serve 400 residents in 2021. Racine residents who feel overwhelmed by debt, struggle to set and live within a budget, want to improve their credit score, or other financial issues with a local professional financial counselor. These services are completely free and confidential and all counseling is one-on-one, no income restrictions, sessions are offered virtually (video or phone) for now. City of Racine residents and over 18 years old, undocumented residents welcome. Currently, there are two counselors and one is bilingual in Spanish. First session is 90 minutes, client receives a free credit report and set goals. The FEC is designed to address disparities in income, wealth, financial stability, home ownership. It can help increase residents' financial stability, understand the financial lives of Racine residents, and enhance the work of partner organization/ boost outcomes that you're working with resident to achieve, help address pain point you might be experiencing with residents where money and finances are barriers to success, effective, local referral for participants, providing a free benefit and support staff. Partners referral system and once a month meeting, help promote program, no cost and low volume emails.

Questions:

What does it mean to be a partner? Help promote the center and inform your staff with the services to refer clients to the center.

What paperwork is needed for the first meeting; No paperwork is needed for the first meeting. Second meeting more details are covered and may need documentation.

What are the chances of FEC be able to match saving for homeownership? The center works with HRI, IDA programs which supplies matches.

How do we reach the financial empowerment center? Phone number for people to receive help is 262-200-0831. Website is racinefec.org.

NOTE: August 1, HUD new rule; any organization to receive HUD must be a certified housing agency and have a counselor. Certified Housing and they will have a partnership with FEC inhouse counseling could be outsource to the FEC.

Community updates

Alliance – Teresa Reinders – Our group has a Constant Contact account. Check your emails for future correspondence from this group. The first newsletter went out regarding the warming centers and warming shelters in Racine County. Theses communications are meant to be shared with agencies and their staff along with the media. Teresa is working on a YouTube channel. Recorded meeting will be uploaded to the YouTube channel. There is an Instagram account and Facebook account. If you find a Constant Contact in SPAM, Junk, or Conversation folder, you can click on it and direct it to the inbox folder where you will be able to read the message.

Thank you for those who sent letters to encourage vaccines in the homeless shelter. We want to use are voices together to represent the homelessness and this type of advocacy worked. Shelter staff and clients are now part of the first group to receive vaccines. Teresa will reach out to the health centers to learn more about how the vaccines will be rolled out. Residents that are on the streets are not included in the first round of vaccines.

Hospitality Center – Seth Raymond, reported on the progress of the strategy planning that started in May 2000. Hospitality needs and mission is a place where people can gather. The site is currently at St. Luke's Episcopal

Church, 614 Main Street, Racine. The organization is very thankful for current location; however, services are growing and there is a need to expand. The organization is currently researching new locations and what future services may look like. The research includes best practices. They have looked at other models: Higher Ground in MN and the Beacon in Madison. Racine County has been helpful and including organization in conversations regarding community vision, coordinating of services. There appears to be a growing consensus of an idea of having a center. A possibility of the Hospitality Center becoming an agency host and inviting partners to join them to offer one-stop services, coordinating services.

Center for Veterans Issues (CVI) – CVI has created the CVIHelp APP for veterans and community neighbors across the state. This will help the services veterans need in a few clicks. CVI is looking for agencies willing to be on the app. The link is www.cvihelp.com

CVI will be managing The Milwaukee Soldiers Home. These unites have been preserved and rehabilitated into unites for veterans and their families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The Milwaukee Soldiers Home are on the grounds of the Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center.

Union Grove has a new director: Chad Kline. Chad is almost a month into the job and is a veteran of the US Army.

Ascension – Kimberly Leslie, informed that group that Ascension is looking to sponsoring mobile units to dispense vaccines. If you know of seniors in need of vaccines have them call their primary care. If they are within 5 minutes of the hospital they can be added to the emergency list so if there are vaccine doses that need to be used before they expire for the day. Currently they are vaccine 75 years and older 200-300 per day. If you are interested in hosting a site contact Kimberly Leslie.

United Way of Racine County – Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA). VITA's tax preparation and filing services have gone virtual for 2021. Chose between two free tax filing options: IRS-certified volunteers can file taxes for the clients or access 100% free, no-fee TaxSlayer, software to file your own taxes. UnitedWayRacine.org/VITA to start the tax process.

Cardinal Capital Management – AJAX II Apartments, 1316 16th Street, Racine will open in March. There are 1 and 2 bedrooms, utilities include heat and water, in-unit washer and dryer, pet-friendly. There are units dedicated to homeless, supportive services and disabilities persons. There are over 100 people on the waiting list. Terri Wilson direct line twilson@cardinalcapital.us 2624983623 Website ajaxapts.com

Lutheran Social Services (LSS) –LSS will support potential rentals with rent and/utilize.

Here to Help – Contact information is 262.638.6400 HereToHelp@racinecounty.com

Interagency Council on Homelessness – Michael Basford, director Interagency Council on Homelessness, (608) 266-3633, mike.basford@wisconsin.gov. Mike shared the governor announced the 2021-23 budget and there are a few items regarding homelessness. Evers' proposals, including $11.5 million in new annual spending, deliver increased or new funding for prevention of homelessness, diversion from shelter, shelter support, housing assistance, case management and more to address a serious challenge that's only gotten worse during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Update: proposing for each fiscal year:

- $1 million for the Homelessness Prevention Program.
- $500,000 for the creation of a new diversion program.
- $700,000 for the State Shelter Subsidy Grant.
- $5 million for the Housing Assistance Program.
- $500,000 for the Homeless Case Management Services Grant.
- $250,000 for the Skills Enhancement Grant at the Department of Children and Families.

- $2 million to create a new housing quality standard grant to increase the availability of quality affordable housing.
- $600,000 to create a grant for housing navigation.
- $1 million for a new "Wisconsin Housing for Heroes" rental assistance program for homeless veterans.

Mike encourage group to contact our local state representatives to support the budget for homelessness. Teresa was very vocal within the vaccine issue, which was a big victory.

The organization is also working on a report that will share eviction data month by month and by county reporting eviction notices. Data will be broken down by zip code to be able to see where in Racine County evictions are happening. The new stimulus bill, if it passes, we expect to see a greater amount of funds in emergency and rental assistance.

City of Racine, Care Act Funds – to help with homeowner to get catch up for mortgage and utilize assistance. https://www.racinecoronavirus.org/city-of-racine-launches-mortgage-assistance-program/ Mat Rejec reminded us to promote the rental and energy assistance and the Here to Help programs.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30
Respectfully submitted,
MaryBeth Kallio