Coulee Collaborative to End Homelessness

*Collaborative, diverse, and compassionate individuals working to eliminate homelessness in La Crosse, Vernon, Monroe, and Crawford Counties.*

**MEETING MINUTES**

**February 21, 2023**

Present: Randall Brown – CCEH Vice Chair, Liz Evans – Great Rivers United Way, Rick Hamilton, Anthony Larson - CVI, Sadie Nelson – ILR, Molly Betts – MHS Health WI, Kevin Hundt Coulee Tenants United, Kathy Thoen – La Crosse County Veterans Service Office, Megan Gruber – Couleecap/YWCA, Kristine Herold – La Crosse County Human Services, Kayla Ryan – TSA, Kristen Gran - TSA, Daniella Nelles - Couleecap, Theresa Keller - FSPA, Kristi Bechtel – Peace of Mind Counseling, Vie Matty – Head Start, Hannah Altimus Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, Sandy Brekke - Gundersen, Julie McDermid – Karuna Housing, Becky Koske – Couleecap, Stephanie Van Hulst - Institute for Community Alliances, Wesley Porter – La Crosse Vet Center, Larissa Tomczak – DHS Area Administration, Shannon Parker – Catholic Charities, Rosanne Northwood – YWCA-La Crosse/RHYMES, Michael Basford – State of Wisconsin, Stephanie Tourville - Inclusa, Desiree Parker-Tomah VAMC, Kael Clemmerson – New Beginnings, Meredith McCoy – WI Balance of State CoC, Alicia Place – School District of La Crosse, Brian Sampson – City of La Crosse, Nancy Parcher - YMCA, Jessica Thill – Cia Siab, Inc, Billie Wise - Couleecap, Abbie Jeffers Couleecap/YWCA, Lee Walraven – Families First of Monroe County, Isaac Hoffman – La Crosse Area Family Collaborative, Dave Konkol , Tina Tryggestad, Cassandra Robinson

**Call to Order and Attendance**

The meeting was called to order at 2:33pm. Liz requested everyone enter their name and organization in the chat for attendance.

**January Minutes**

January Meeting Minutes were reviewed – Hannah Altimus made a motion to approve the minutes. Sandy Brekke seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

**Wins**

Members were asked to share successes:

Anthony Larson shared that CVI raised income requirements from 50% of HUD limit to 80% HUD income limit. Additionally, they can now go 20% above standard Fair Market Rent. CVI will be able to help more veterans with this change.

Liz shared on behalf of Michael Fitzpatrick. Michael was unable to attend the meeting due to helping a client move into housing today.

Abbie Jeffers shared about a client who is now a year sober. She has maintained housing and been promoted to a manager at work. She went from suffering with mental health and AODA problems and is now stable!

From the chat:

Daniella Nelles – Win! I secured 2 leases this week for 2 different folx 🖤

Kevin Hundt (Coulee Tenants United) - We helped saved a guy $50 that a landlord was trying to rip off.

**Data Dashboard Update**

Stephanie Van Hulst presented a data dashboard that Julie McDermid built using data and reports from ICA. The first tab is a pie chart of the Prioritization List as of the end of the previous month. The households are broken down by intervention categories according to their VI-SPDAT scores. The chart can be filtered to specific household types, chronic homelessness, veterans, domestic violence fleeing or history, and youth under age 25.

Question from Dave: Can you give an example of how to compare one month's pie chart and the next month's pie chart to describe progress or lack of progress in housing outcomes?

Stephanie shared how monitoring the changes in the coordinated entry categories could help prove the need for grant funds for housing services. The month-to-month inflow and outflow will be more helpful in determining outcomes.

The second tab shows a monthly snapshot of the coordinated entry system. It shows household types, the percent who were category 1 homeless, and how many were chronically homeless. It also shows the inflow, outflow, and those that stayed on the prioritization list. The inflow is broken down by those who are new to the list, those who have returned from housing, and those who have returned from a different destination eg. exited to an unknown destination. The Outflow shows how many exited the coordinated entry system. The Outflow is broken down by those who were in and out in the same month and those who entered prior to the beginning of the month and have left the list. The Outflow is also broken down by destination. The Remained section shows who has remained on the list – far left are those who carried over from prior month to current month and remained in the month. The number in the middle are those who carried over from the prior month and did not exit as of the end of the month. The far right number remained are those who entered and have not exited as of the end of the month.

The third tab shows the housing placement rate. It is a count of those who exited to a permanent housing destination. The counts will be entered monthly.

The final tab has the definitions of the pie chart categories.

This is a starting point of a monthly data review. This is all from the coordinated entry data. We may want to also look at other data like the Point In Time monthly shelter count. Suggestions from the chat were to include the monthly shelter point in time count and other housing program numbers.

The goal is to generate more conversation and use data to drive conversations around solutions to homelessness. This will help us with evaluating trends and capacity. We could add a month over month tab to see any changes over time.

Link to the tableau:

<https://public.tableau.com/views/January2023CouleeCOCHomelessData/January2023?:language=en-US&publish=yes&:display_count=n&:origin=viz_share_link>

**Balance of State Update**

Kristi provided an update for the WI Balance of State Continuum of Care. They are gathering and compiling the Point-In-Time data. Trainings are continuing. Meredith added that the website has been updated. There are lots of trainings coming up that you can find of the website: <https://www.wiboscoc.org/trainings.html>

**Action Plan Discussion**

Kristi shared that a requirement of the WI Balance of State CoC our local coalition needs to pick action items we want to work on. The purpose is to help with WIBOSCOC application for CoC funding. We need to show actions and steps taken to earn points on the application and earn grant funds. Prior to COVID there was an action plan committee led by Kim Cable. The team broke down during COVID and the work has been on one person. Would like to have team involvement again.

The two things Balance of State is doing is changing from 3 month progress reports to 6 month reports. One goal must be promoting DEI in homeless services. Every year we lost points on the DEI requirements. We could choose to conduct an assessment and identify disparities. Meredith offered to assist by pulling data by race and helping with an evaluation. Meredith can present the assessment data at a future meeting. The group would then come up with plans for addressing disparities.

Meredith recommended the formation of a subcommittee or work group for DEI.

Kristi – questioned whether we should form a committee or work on action plans or as a whole body. She stated concern about committees breaking up in the past and the work has been left on one person. If we form committees, we need to make sure folks are committed.

Randall – not sure about the process to pick a goal.

For the second goal, there a many options to choose from. Liz could send out a survey for us to vote on what we think our focus should be. We need to submit the goal selection by March 1. We can ask for an extension.

Randall – don’t want to just take the easy way out and do a DEI assessment and have no action.

Kristi reviewed the document that was sent out that explains the action plan.

Brian – agrees we should form a subcommittee. And bring recommendations for focus at the March meeting. Lee suggested creating a Zoom poll to do the vote at the next CCEH meeting.

Volunteers for the DEI subcommittee were Brian Sampson, Meredith McCoy, Becky Koske, Lee Walraven, and Randall Brown. Kristi will get the subcommittee organized and running but she does not wish to remain as the leader.

**WERA End Discussion**

Kevin at Coulee Tenants United brought forth the issue he is seeing where people are facing eviction with very little resources to help. For example, a single mother who owes $2,000 in back rent and doesn’t have many resources. Coulee Tenants has seen a surge in evictions since October from 30/mo to 40/mo. If anyone has ideas for direct financial assistance, please share. Most people he’s seen need $1k-$2k to catch up.

Resources recommended verbally in chat:

* Wisconsin Rural Housing https://www.wisconsinruralhousing.org/our-programs
* Anthony would like to discuss veteran resources: Anthony.Larson@Cvivet.org
* REACH is still doing winter family intake. Tuesdays and Fridays from 10am – noon.
* The La Crosse Area Family Collaborative has rental assistance available, case management, mediation assistance/prevention supports, and housing navigation for families who reside in certain La Crosse neighborhoods. You/they can contact Isaac Hoffman, 792-1617, to see if we can help.
* https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ea
* https://www.workforceconnections.org/emergency-assistance-ea/
* Veterans who need WERA-like rental assistance may qualify for the Veterans Rental Assistance Program - https://vrapwi.com/

If you have ideas on resources, contact Kevin at couleetenantsunited@gmail.com

Dana at Couleecap can provide more information on data and the current situation.

**Homeless Connect**

Becky Koske reminded the group that Homeless Connect is July 27, 2023. Homeless Connect pairs up with the summer Point-in-Time Count. It brings services and resources to individuals who are either currently homeless or facing homelessness to get help. Please think about what you or your organization can bring to the event. Do you have applications for programs, brochures, items to hand out, etc.

**Nominations for Chair**

Liz requested anyone interested in running for the open CCEH Chair position please send their nomination form. The vote will be held in one week on Tuesday, February 28.

**Agency Updates**

Mike Basford – State Interagency Council on Homelessness – last Wednesday Governor Evers released the executive budget for 2023-2025. In it is the largest investment in housing and homeless in WI history. Recommendations from Welcome WI Home plan and 23 additional items adjacent to housing issues like investments in low income and affordable housing, grants for municipalities for maintenance of affordable workforce housing.

Kevin at Coulee Tenants Center – they had a case where an individual with a severe mental health issue was evicted. The situation looks like tenant may have been served eviction papers, but he may not have understood what he was looking at. Seems like there is a major gap in understanding for folks.

Meeting adjourn at 3:52pm.

Next Meeting: March 21, 2023

Minutes respectfully submitted by Liz Evans on February 24, 2023