



The Journey Home Board Meeting

Thursday, May 28, 2015

3:00-5:00pm

The Shelter Group, Inc.

218 N. Charles Street, Suite 220

Baltimore, MD 21202

Attendees: Damien Haussling, Kevin Lindamood, Vidia Dhanraj, Antonia Fasanelli, Lucienne Parsley, John Schiavone, Dr. Jacquelyn Duval-Harvey, Bernard McBride, Amy Klein, Michael Seipp, Sister Helen Amos, Provost Joseph Wood, Commissioner Paul Graziano, Adrienne Breidenstine, Traci Kodek, F.T. Burden, Lt. Colonel Melvin Russell, Jeff Hettleman, Bill McLennan, Christopher Buser

Absent: Judge David Aldouby, Allison Buchalter, David Clements, Tina Hike-Hubbard, Bill McCarthy, Dominique Moore, Karen Webber-Ndour, Andrea Jackson, Yngvild Olsen, Jason Perkins-Cohen, Sandi Timmins, Cindy Williams

Guest Speakers: Sister Mary Scallion and Laura Weinbaum (Project HOME)

I. Approve Minutes from February Journey Home Board meeting

The Board approved the minutes from the February Board meeting.

II. Strategies for Developing Permanent Supportive Housing: The ProjectHOME Experience

Sister Mary Scallion and Laura Weinbaum presented their work with ProjectHOME, a Philadelphia-based nonprofit focused on increasing affordable housing and comprehensive services to persons currently and formerly experiencing homelessness (see included presentation slides).

After the presentation, the floor opened for Board member questions and discussion. The Board inquired about how Project HOME finances their supportive services for their permanent supportive housing. Project HOME staff shared that they are just now starting to bill Medicaid for psychiatric rehabilitation, but they are finding that the billable expenses they can be reimbursed for is not nearly enough to cover the expenses associated with full-time case management. Project HOME staff noted that most of their supportive services funding comes from grants for addiction and mental health treatment through the local behavioral health system.

Board members then discussed with Project HOME staff the timeline and costs for property acquisition to opening. Project HOME shared that it is typically at least 3 years from property acquisition to opening, but the work starts several years prior in order to line up the funding. Their projects are typically funded through a mix of vouchers, market rate (helped by tax credits

to keep rents lower), and senior housing resources. They also complete economic impact studies to show the need for the project in that community, and often establish their new programs in mixed-income or gentrified areas.

Board member Michael Seipp asked Commissioner Graziano about the availability of service funding to match vouchers. The Commissioner stated HABC is open to exploring all the available options, but noted that HUD is moving to not provide supportive services through the Community Development Block Grants and Moving to Work Funds.

III. Journey Home Fiscal Year 2016 Budget

Fiscal Year 2016 marks the first year the Journey Home Board has set an annual budget for anticipated revenues and expenditures. Historically, the Board has evaluated individual requests for funding on an ad-hoc basis. Going forward, the funding principles established by the Resource Allocation Workgroup and the annual budget will help inform grantmaking and resource development. These new processes will enable the Board to utilize a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to select projects and agencies for pre-approved budget line items.

The Board reviewed the budget and accompanying narrative for Fiscal Year 2016, which includes anticipated funding for projects not yet received. Items in black are confirmed funding amounts and expenses. Items on the budget narrative in red are funds not yet received by the Board or allocated to projects. The Board did receive the Carefirst grant, which funds the Convalescent Care program operated by Healthcare for the Homeless at the Weinberg Housing and Resource Center. New budget items this year include professional development funds to increase the skills and capacity of Baltimore City service providers, as well as an eviction prevention pilot program that will be done in partnership with the Mayor's Office of Human Services Community Action Centers.

The Board voted to approve the Journey Home Fiscal Year 2016 budget with no changes.

IV. Executive Director's Report

Coordinated Access – At each future Board meeting, members will receive a comprehensive report that includes system-wide metrics for clients screened with the Baltimore Decision Assistance Tool (BDAT), aggregate demographic information, and housing outcomes. Additionally, the report will include progress updates on goals set by the Coordinated Access workgroup. Continual progress is being made with getting homeless vouchers through the Housing Authority of Baltimore City leased up more quickly. The Coordinated Access system has increased the pace of referrals made to the voucher program. Board members expressed concern that there is limited data on the length of time it takes to get clients housed after their initial BDAT has been completed, and that it is difficult to know whether the delays and long length of time can be attributed directly to inefficiencies with the Coordinated Access system, a deficit of permanent supportive housing, or in engagement and followup with clients to obtain the appropriate documentation for housing. Kevin Lindamood (Healthcare for the Homeless) and Traci Kodek (HealthCare Access Maryland) recommended doing a time study to determine the average length of time from BDAT to housing and to pinpoint areas of potential

improvement. Both Kevin and Traci agreed to help participate by evaluating clients accessing services through their agencies.

National Housing Trust Fund – Dan McCarthy and the Housing Development Workgroup are working to schedule a meeting with the State of Maryland Secretary of Housing and Community Development to determine eligible potential projects if the National Housing Trust Fund is funded by the Federal government.

Corporation for Supportive Housing Analysis – CSH conducted a housing and financial modeling analysis for Baltimore City. Their analysis projects that Baltimore City needs to produce 564 permanent supportive housing units (50/50 leased and developed) and 2,127 rapid re-housing slots in order to make homelessness rare and brief. The analysis utilized local data on homeless housing stock availability, turnover rates, and construction costs to produce the recommended unit development. The Executive Director noted that while the permanent supportive housing unit figures appeared to be an accurate reflection of the local need for increased units, the recommended number of rapid re-housing slots was shockingly high. Antonia Fasanelli (Homeless Persons Representation Project) inquired as to how the figures were calculated and whether the RRH figures take into account client income and earning potential, and how that may impact utilization of RRH. Adrienne suggested that Mayor’s Office of Human Services staff could look into pulling data to analyze income potential/resources for people to remain stable in RRH. John Schiavone (St. Vincent de Paul) seconded the idea and proposed further exploration of how the numbers could be more localized to Baltimore and take into account RRH best practices as well as rent subsidy determinations.

2015 Point in Time Count and Housing Inventory Count Report – In previous years, the results of the Point in Time Count and Housing Inventory Count have been shared with the community in a standalone written report. Due to the limitations of the PIT Count methodology in capturing only one night of data for a very transient population, the PIT Count is largely seen as an undercount and lacks the additional context and data to make informed policy. For 2015, the detailed data available from the PIT and HIC will be incorporated into the first Journey Home Outcomes report, which will provide annualized, comprehensive data on homelessness in Baltimore. Additionally, service providers and the community at-large can learn about the results of the PIT Count by participating in a webinar on July 15th at 10am. Participants can register for the webinar at <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4025401497178708225>.

V. Mayor’s Veteran Homelessness Challenge

In May 2015, The Journey Home, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, and VA Maryland Director Adam Robinson launched the Baltimore Veteran Homelessness Challenge as part of a nationwide effort to make homelessness rare and brief for veterans by the end of 2015.

Adrienne gave an overview of the Challenge goals to have no veterans unsheltered, reduce stays in emergency shelters to 60 days or less, and rapidly move veterans into permanent housing.

Chris Buser, the Chief of Social Work at the VA, gave an overview of the VA’s commitment to the Challenge and the shared the background and experience of the new VA Director, Dr. Adam Robinson. Chris shared that Dr. Robinson is focused on breaking down barriers for veterans that have difficulty accessing services and for working with community partners – his tagline is “Don’t say no, ask how.”

Board member Michael Seipp expressed frustration and concern that the VA was diverting resources from the Grant-per-Diem program, which reimburses transitional housing providers for the daily operation of veteran-dedicated beds, to increase the availability of VASH vouchers, which are permanent supportive housing. He requested that the Board take action to advocate with the VA not to cut Grant-Per-Diem funding, which funds veteran-dedicated transitional housing beds at several local providers.

Antonia Fasanelli (HPRP) and Amy Kleine (Weinberg Foundation) requested that an objective and comprehensive presentation of the facts surrounding the VA's recent funding changes be given at the next board meeting prior to the Board taking action.

VI. Updates and Announcements

Journey Home Financial Report – United Way of Central Maryland provided the financial report. There are no major updates to this report.

HB 852—Homeless Shelters Best Practices and Models – Last year the Maryland General Assembly passed HB 852—Homeless Shelters Best Practices and Models bill. The State Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) will explore best practices and program models. Several Journey Home Board members are represented on the ICH.

Reminder: The Journey Home's annual benefit will take place on Saturday, October 24th. More information to come at a later date.

Next Board Meeting

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 19 from 3:00-5:00pm at University of Baltimore Student Center, 21 W. Mt. Royal Avenue, Bogomolny Room, Baltimore, MD 21202.