

The Chicago Alliance to End Homelessness
Service Providers Commission
April 21, 2009

I. Welcome and Introduction

Sol Flores welcomed the group. A brief explanation of the purpose of the group was provided for new members. Commission members introduced themselves.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the January 13, 2009, meeting were reviewed and approved as written.

III. Election of At-Large Alternate to SPC Executive Committee

The election for the At-Large Alternate was discussed and conducted. It was stated that this was important because the Executive Committee has a mandatory attendance requirement. Ballots were collected. Voting remains open through Wednesday, April 22nd and members can vote via e-mail to Sherise Alexander. Results of the election will be announced on Friday, April 24th.

IV. Report on 2009 Ranking Policies

The Planning Council directed the Executive Committee to develop ranking policies for HMV funds. The Executive Committee began working on this project in October. There was concern that the evaluation tool previously used to score renewals is also used to score new projects. Without APR data, new projects are at a disadvantage. Executive Committee came up with a panel review process for new projects, but needed direction regarding how much to set aside. Therefore, panel developed Ranking Policies which were submitted to the committee and will be voted on tomorrow. The Policies were distributed for comment on 03/26 and any amendments were to be submitted by 4/16. All amendments and ranking policies will be reviewed tomorrow.

An important threshold requirement is timeliness of application. Applications are due on 05/13/09 at 5:00 p.m.

A question was raised regarding whether supportive housing money is up for renewal.

A question was raised regarding how much would be delegated to HMIS. It was said that it would be the same amount as last year - \$300,000.

A question was raised regarding whether the Homeless Prevention Rapid Re-housing money would help in replacing funds for the system. It was clarified that it would not and that it would not be desirable because it might prevent us from getting funds from other sources. HPRP funds are not intended for replacement. Although CSBG money is coming in to DFSS that could replace some money.

It was discussed that the Homeless Prevention Rapid Re-housing fund is for new programs. 60% of the stimulus package is to be spent in two years and the remaining 40% in the following year.

It was suggested that we frame this money as one time funding.

The proposal for Ranking Policies was reviewed and discussed. The set aside may be reduced from \$800,000 to \$600,000. If it is passed at \$800,000, money will still be lost because of the money going to SHI. (Would need \$960,000)

The following issues were discussed in the Executive Committee: Rational for ranking (upheld), the course of decreasing service money to improve national score, cuts in service only programs based

upon performance, discussions around focusing on policy, the question of the fairness of having any models that are exempt from the threshold score, and the impact of cuts to the SSO.

It was discussed that there are six representatives from SPC on the Executive Committee but they did not have directions as to how to vote to represent the SPC.

A question was raised whether the application of the ranking criteria to historical rankings would result in an improvement in the balance between supportive vs. permanent housing. It was decided that the ratio would improve because new programs are limited to 10% of funding to services.

A question was raised regarding how many permanent housing programs were below the 50 point margin. It was stated that there were about five or six programs below the margin of mixed type.

It was stated that the scores were received yesterday and are being analyzed. There are some questions as to whether the scores will be good enough to be re-funded.

A question was raised regarding if the idea is to improve the score, will the actions being taken impact the score and create an increase? It was discussed that it will likely improve the score because adding new PH units with small amounts of services dollars will result in a higher score and that HMV felt the minimum score should be included in the system.

The results of the meeting will be available tomorrow afternoon. SSO's will be the most impacted by the changes. Are we prepared to manage significant reductions in SSO's?

Concern was expressed that supportive services continue to be cut due to HUD believing that their money should just go to housing. It was discussed that HUD hasn't clearly and directly stated this but it's indicated through their year (Nicole, do you understand this sentence?). The problem is others are taking similar steps to our steps and, therefore, everyone's scores are increasing similarly.

A White Paper from last year contained information regarding rural communities that had very high scores due to having very small amounts of dollars dedicated to support and that they primarily focus on permanent housing.

It was discussed that we need to advocate to legislators regarding the impact of losing SSO programs. It was pointed out that SSO's also serve as a method of bringing people into the system to obtain services and gain access to benefits. It was pointed out that we need to work with Health and Human Services, SAMHSA and other agencies that specialize in mental health issues to address service needs.

A question was raised whether the requirement that only 10% of funds are allocated to service is required of agencies in renewal as well. It was said that agencies are working on reducing the percentage of services dollars and last year agencies reduced service dollars by 10%. However, this is not a requirement and agencies are managing this on an individual basis.

It was discussed that we need to develop an organized strategy for advocating regarding supportive services. A question was raised regarding whether the Wrap Around Services constituency group was doing this already.

A motion was made to develop a Task Force of the SPC Council be formed to look at the impact to service provision in Chicago of reducing SSO dollars and to develop an advocacy strategy around this issue. This motion passed. One person opposed due to concern about lack of discussion. The concern was raised that advocacy for SSO would conflict with the needs of permanent housing.

V. Update on 2009 NOFA Process

An evaluation instrument was e-mailed to all agencies. Training sessions were held last week. About half of the agencies sent a representative. All information regarding new and bonus projects is on the website. Included with the tool is a FAQ page.

There is an early bird special being offered where HMV committee volunteers will review the application attachments and provide feedback. These will be held on May 7th and 8th. Agencies can sign up for a 30 minute time slot.

Applications due May 13th by 5:00 p.m.

HMIS direct users should have received an e-mail yesterday with the report that is needed to clean up data for HMIS reporting for the evaluation instrument. This will help agencies clean up their clients' data in order to improve the score on the tool.

The evaluation is a word document that has to be printed out.

VI. Report on Supportive Services Funding

The alliance work plan is in support of this being treated separately as a key issue. Frustration was expressed over HUD's lack of support for these programs as they are proven to be effective.

HUD McKinney-Vento is going to be re-authorized for the first time in ten years. It passed the house last July. It is being introduced to both the house and the senate this year. It is expected to pass. As it is written, it allows off-line renewal for permanent housing. This would free up \$10 million which may create opportunities for the Alliance to expand programs. Since this would introduce new money into the system, it would mean that service dollars would not need to be decreased to increase Permanent Housing.

This also may give more local control to priority setting.

In addition, ESG money cannot be used for homeless prevention.

Also, will be able to use 10% of money for housing for the non-disabled.

The new HUD McKinney-Vento would not be fully implemented for 18 months after the bill is passed.

Senator Durbin is an original sponsor of the bill. We should talk to our legislators about the bill. The Alliance will send an e-update regarding this issue.

There was an increase in Federal Appropriation levels.

SAMHSA money was increased last year. There is more money for programs for the homeless. If we don't apply for it, they will assume it's not needed.

The Alliance intends to push for another increase in HUD McKinney-Vento and in SAMHSA dollars.

There is a member appropriation for \$500,000 for housing and services for the chronically homeless families for services and housing. The intention is to create a state of the art program that could be duplicated across the country. To get it approved, the proposal needs to be in the top five.

The new HUD secretary mentioned getting HHS to fund homeless services. The Alliance wants to pressure him to make this happen. There is a committee that meets quarterly to coordinate shared projects among federal agencies.

The state may launch a demonstration with the Department of Mental Health around the issue of the homeless population being chronically under-funded by Medicaid. It was proposed to DMH that they come together to provide housing and get services. A small project is being conducted to get Medicaid funding for services.

Supportive services line item advocacy – agencies got state support for rental housing support.

Alliance is working in the private sector with foundations and corporations. Boeing and People's Gas held a breakfast. Alliance has also met with grant groups.

The Chicago Community Trust is considering providing \$400,000 to replace 10% of funding. Trust sets priorities as to who would be funded and how much. The Trust has expressed concerned that this may be duplicate money to the CSBG money.

The Alliance works to provide input to the Mayor regarding the prioritization of service funding any time that there is a transfer of assets such as with the Midway deal and with parking meters. There is a rumor that \$100 million is being set aside for supportive services.

There needs to be a multilevel strategy to raise awareness that affordable housing without supportive housing is the same as the CHA, a failed experiment (in the Mayor's words).

A question was raised about the decisions HUD makes to fund projects not in fundable decisions and how agencies would go about advocating for this. It was said that this is not an advisable strategy, that agencies that have done this have been de-funded.

VII. Advocacy Team Sign-Up

The Advocacy Committee decided to form an Advocacy Team that would extent the committee's working members so that, when an Alert comes out, the team can take immediate action. Each agency was asked to identify and designate a staff person and a consumer to be on this team. These individuals will be directly contacted for action when an Alert comes out. Agencies are to e-mail contact information for team members to Nicole Sauler by May 1st.

A question was raised regarding the membership structure of the Advocacy Committee. It was explained that it is comprised of representatives from every constituency group, three at large members from the SPC, and three at large members from the consumers group. The composition of the committee is being reviewed by the Executive Committee.

Lists of the constituency groups are on the Alliance website.

VIII. Announcement

Next Wednesday, April 29th, at St. Leonard's there will be a meeting to discuss outreach and engagement efforts.

April 30th from 10:00 – 12:00 at Deborah’s Place there will be a Town Hall meeting to provide feedback on HRPR. The goal is to leave the meeting with the top five comments to present to DFSS.

IX. Adjourn