



Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2019

Salvation Army – 1110 S Puget Sound Ave, Tacoma, WA 98406

Members Present

Amanda DeShazo, Aff. Housing Consortium
James Pogue, Comprehensive Life Resources
Andy Rohr, TPC Health Dept.
Audrey Goulart, Rebuilding Hope!
Dana Orr, Pierce County AIDS Foundation
Dr. Eric Jackson, Bethlehem Baptist Church
Erica Azcueta, City of Tacoma
Jeff Rodgers, Pierce County Human Services
Marilee Hill-Anderson, Sumner School District
Martha Sheppard, Salvation Army
Nick Bayard, The REACH Center (rep, Devon)
Rachel Silis, Dept. of Veterans Affairs
Tiffany Spier, City of Lakewood
Tonya Tunnell-Thornhill, Exodus Housing

Members Absent

Cacey Hanauer, Tacoma Housing Authority
Diane Powers, City of Tacoma
Ellie Ottey, Pierce County Housing Authority
Kari Haugen, Workforce-Central
Keith Galbraith, Family Renewal Shelter
Neal Rogers, Community Representative
Patti Spaulding-Klewin, CCS
Sean Raybell, WSD of Corrections
Valorie Crout, Associated Ministries

Staff

Valeri Knight
Vy Yun

Call Meeting to Order and Approve Minutes

- James called the meeting to order at 9:12 am.
- No quorum to approve minutes.
- Changes to agenda
 - Racial Equity Plan Finalized – removed.
 - Review of ranking of CoC funding – added.

Introductions

- Introductions were made with name, agency, and pronouns for CoC members and guests.

Public Comment Period

- Al asks of the people who attended the community meetings, how many were customers and how many providers. James responds there was least one person experiencing homelessness. Jeff says he will cover that in the Community Meetings Update.
- Al asks how the Human Services Study recommendations impact the Strategic Plan.
- Jeff responds the recommendations will not impact this plan; the recommendations are more of a restructure of the Human Service department. The nine recommendations were presented, they are now being discussed about how best to implement them.
- Al reports Elevated Health has hired a Director, and this will have some impact on housing resources.

Update on 5-Year Strategic Plan Community Meetings, Jeff Rodgers

- 6 community meetings

- 92 attendees (not counting individuals who attended more than 1 meeting)
- Attendees include direct service homeless providers, systems of care, and portion were community members/citizens, some who identified as being formally homeless.
- Feedback
 - Transportation and childcare not included in the plan.
 - Not to identify agencies in the plan (i.e. Goodwill, Vadis).
 - 1406 funding.
 - 1/10 of 1% mental health tax.
 - Not identify specific fund sources.
- Martha shares there were a lot of good comments and feels good that many of the comments and questions made were answered. There were statistics that proved what the PowerPoint said. Also pleased things we hadn't thought of were put on the board. She thinks it is a good comprehensive plan. She adds it is a strategic plan, which doesn't go into the weeds, but it gives a pretty good framework, without leaving out too many target populations.
- Al adds there was a comment made of the potential negative impact of the new Tacoma City rules to protect renters.
- James says a comment made was to have the plan provided to attendees to review prior to attending the meeting.
- Rachel adds to have more time for discussion and receiving feedback.

General CoC Report Out, James Pogue

- Tiffany, Application Evaluation Committee (AEC), reports on the prioritizing and voting of the ranking list:
 - Members of the CoC that were not applying for funding were asked to participate in reviewing the applications.
 - Discussion on whether to change the order of the rankings, but that was not needed the way each project scored, it naturally occurred.
 - 1 renewal project in Tier 2, conversation was had to reallocate Helping Hand House – Bright Futures. HHH had a score low enough that the group felt it was unlikely to be funded and it was decided to reallocate the funds for the hope that by doing so, we would receive additional points, which would help us be eligible for Domestic Violence and Bonus funding.
 - Tiffany pointed out the service type was a good mix of RRH and PSH.
 - Jeff adds there were projects funded for the first-time last year. Those 4 projects have not started yet, so we had to place those projects into Tier 1 per instructions from HUD.
 - Share & Care House – Collaborative Housing Expansion
 - Catholic Community Services - RRH
 - Korean Women's Association – Pathway Home
 - Exodus – Safe Choices Expansion Project
- James says in the past, the November and December are combined. Valeri confirms this meeting will be December 3.
- James says there was discussion about using the CoC to make a formalized, shared knowledge base, of what homeless services are in Pierce County, which would include provider trainings. This will ensure everyone has base line information.

Salvation Army Update, Martha Sheppard

- Martha says she has heard the following comments regarding using the Salvation Army as a meeting location:
 - Uncomfortable meeting in a church or an organization that has a history of discriminating against LGBTQ community.
 - LGBTQ community should be accepted wholly and fully for the people that they already are and not who someone else thinks they should be.
 - LGBTQ community is much more impacted by homelessness and other social ills because the way people treated them for being who they are.
 - Changes need to be made in the way people treat, respect, and serve people in the LGBTQ community by friends, community, agencies who serve them, and families and church who claim to love people unconditionally.
- Martha does not deny the history of the Salvation Army being discriminatory. She thinks honestly and transparency is the best way to start the road map to reconciliation. She does not know what needs to be done for things to change.
- Martha says the Salvation Army offers the location free of charge.
- Martha says the work is important because it is with an equity lens, not just for racism but also LGBTQ and the homeless.
- Jeff thanks Martha for the time allowing the CoC to come to the Salvation Army and providing refreshments; it's greatly appreciated.
- Devon commends Martha for having the conversation. She provides an example how Coffee Oasis and Oasis Youth Center were able to mend their relationship through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and says this could be something that the CoC and the Salvation Army could look into.
- James says the next meeting will be at the Salvation Army, then going forward we will be using Bayview Terrace.
- Valeri says a recommendation by the Executive Committee was to have about 8 meetings at a stationary location such as Bay Terrace and other peoples throughout the community.
- Erica says this is a good opportunity for us to talk about equity more. This is a real live situation and have more of those uncomfortable conversations. The concerns that were elevated are impacting us as a group.

Executive Subcommittee Report Out, James Pogue

- Jeff reports that HUD recently reached out to the Tacoma, Lakewood, Pierce County CoC and encouraged us to participate in community of practice that they are sponsoring across the Country. They are bringing together selected communities to work our governance structure.
- Jeff reports Pierce County Council has created a short-term Veterans Taskforce to look at addressing and ending Veteran homelessness.

Membership Subcommittee Update, Erica Azcueta

- The Membership Subcommittee have been meeting to review how to recruit and sustain new members.
- The main focus is taking racial and equity lens in recruitment, taking into consideration that HUD has made equity a priority.
- The application needs to have questions that reflect equity.
- Scrubbing through the existing questions because some questions were redundant and some created barriers for people applying.

- Existing members will submit an application so that everyone on board has completed the same application and we all agree to the same equity language and value and mission statement.
- Marilee asks for clarification on the process for existing members. Erica says the intent is not to clean house, but to have all members go through the same application process.
- Dr. Jackson says Pyramid did not take into consideration the work of the Board. He gives an example that there wasn't language about equity or diversity. He says his concern is if their role is to facilitate, they should facilitate and not lead.
- Tiffany explains there are deadlines per HUD in order to qualify for funding. Discussion about equity and how that gets incorporated in the plan could affect the ability of the CoC to secure that funding. There are ramifications if the plan is not completed in time.
- Jeff adds we received feedback from work that is done behind the scene. Jeff reiterates we do have deadlines, and just because something isn't placed in the plan now, that does not mean it could not be put into the plan as we move forward.
- Dr. Jackson wants to make it clear he knows the strategic plan is a living document, but he is more speaking to the role that Pyramid was playing.

Racial Equity Plan Finalized, Dr. Lamont Green and Evan Smith

- Removed from agenda because Lamont and Evan were not present due to conflict of schedule. Erica says today was to close up all the work that was done.
- Rachel asks if equity lens portion completed and Valeri responds it is not. Amanda explains the equity committee has met the last two Fridays and there will be something to share with the Planning Committee on Friday, but they are not finished, and it will be discussed at the meeting. James says we are challenged by the timeline, but if it does not make it in the final draft in December, it does not mean we cannot tailor our actions in 2020.
- Jeff says we have not used a consultant in the past for the CoC plan development. This is a learning process with the consultants and moving forward the CoC will update and amend the plan as needed.
- Amanda clarifies the one-year deadline is by Washington State Department of Commerce, not HUD.
- Rachel asks if the plan must be approved by County Council. Jeff says it's still in discussion; that is what the legislation says.

Good of the Order

- Marilee provides the following information on 2018-2019 school year for Sumner/Bonney Lake School District:
 - Declared 189 students as homeless (263 previous year).
 - Free/reduced lunch rate has dropped.
 - In the last 3 weeks, they declared 93 students as homeless out of 107 referrals.
 - Rent prices is the biggest issues.
- Martha says she looked at the Lewis County CoC Plan is 4 pages, and says we've done a great job. She asks if there will be a time in the October agenda to discuss the meeting place? She suggests in January to rotate. Valeri says January is already scheduled. She says there were two requests made 1) not be at a church or chapel 2) remove from Salvation Army. Martha says we need to address the first request from an equity standpoint, because if we are not going to allow everyone to be at the table, then why are we having a meeting? To limit where to have the meeting is going completely against the equity work the CoC is doing.

James encourages us to talk about it and says it's challenging to mandate to go to a church if someone does not feel comfortable. Valeri will put forth the email to see how people feel.

Public Comment Period

- Larry attended 3 community meetings and expressed the followings:
 - They were rushed, one-way briefings of very complex PowerPoint slides. Two of the meetings, when two people attempted to ask questions, they were told they'll have a discussion after the briefing, but by then, the time had run out. He says because of the short notice, location, no advanced copies available to the community, it does not seem clear how the plan can be forwarded claiming there is community input.
 - The plan is due to the State in December, he asks if there will be more community input?
 - The plan is too implied to a State's specification, a preceptor. Nothing in the plan that was briefed to the community tracks to the format of the preceptor. He does not understand how that plan ends up in this format. The requirements of the State are different from what the plan that was briefed. Valeri says we have a step by step guide that connects everything in the plan to the State's requirement. They are linked, they may be different verbiage, but it is all with the coordination of our State contact. Larry's understanding is that the community was briefed with the plan, the State is requiring the plan have certain specific characteristics, which were not available. How are we going to be able to unvalue what that is supposed to be?
 - One of the State's major points, #5 equity, his concerns were that they were unable to understand. He says at one of the meetings, he asked Jeff how is equity to be addressed and Jeff responds there is a separate committee. Larry appreciates that the CoC reevaluating the membership, but that does not result in a plan which meets the State's requirement. He is concerned that the urgent equity problems in our community are not being addressed. He adds that no matter how diverse or conscientious the members are of the CoC are, holding meetings and talking to consultants is not changing the facts on the ground.
- Al had the following statements:
 - We may be reacting to stereotypes about churches presented by people complaining anonymously and make a decision because of that complaint. He does not know anywhere in the plan or committee's policy that deals with the best way to deal with complaints. He suggests a policy along the lines if a complainer or concern is expressed that may lead to a formal decision from this group. The complainer/concerner should present to the group so that it could be discussed before a decision is made.
 - The real action of the group is to develop a policy and plan so that resources can be made to providers who can then deliver services that involve equity and outcomes.
 - He asks if the council have to approve this plan? Valeri respond the original release of the State requirement said the legislative body had to approve the plan, that has never been done in Pierce County. We are working with the State to determine what the means.
- Larry says the State's requirement for the plan says when we report to the State, we must use the Federal CoC Equity Tool. He says the Federal Tool is using data that is 2 years old.

Meeting Adjourned

Adjourns the meeting at 11:00 am.