

## MC2 Minutes – April 5, 2021, 10:30 a.m.

**Attendance:** Dottie Kastigar (Chair), St. Charles CoC; Anthony Smith, BOS CoC; Sandy Wilson, Institute for Community Alliances; Randy Sharp, St. Joe CoC; Amanda Stadler, Springfield CoC; Kelli Kemna, DMH; Cassie Sipos-Haas, MHDC; Amy Bickford, St. Louis City CoC; Rachel Grady (private homeless shelter for teens), Sonia Campbell, Catholic Charities Kansas City

### Cold Weather Updates

Amanda Stadler: Shelters were opened almost every night in February, normally during non-pandemic times, they have three shelters open, but because of COVID restriction and the over-abundance of requests for shelter they had about nine shelters in their region open. Fortunately there were no turn-aways and there were enough beds available to accommodate. The region wants to work on creating a framework for consistency across all shelters. Homeless tend to have a preference for shelters that offer amenities like showers and pizza for dinner. Volunteers were instrumental in providing service. Most of the sites kept six feet distance; health department gave permission because of the cold to go down to three feet as more beds were needed.

Randy Sharp: For cold weather in February they used existing shelter they had; they opened up their Safe Haven, but didn't have to use it as a spillover location; mostly was utilized because they didn't want or couldn't go back to the shelter.

Anthony Smith: Had multiple cold weather shelters open. Southern regions had to deal with inclement weather in addition to COVID protocol. Volunteers were very helpful with providing and supplying individuals with PPE equipment. Lucky enough to have vaccines in Walmart and other locations being available. We used existing shelters. We saw a lack of faith based or churches that could provide shelter in the balance strictly because of COVID concerns.

### COVID Updates

Rachel Grady: Wanted to inquire about homeless populations' availability to receive vaccination versus the number of homeless who may have contracted COVID.

Randy Sharp: They had a COVID vaccine clinic for the homeless in their region. There hasn't been a lot of data to show the impact of how COVID impacted homeless shelters, either from contracting the virus, hospitalizations, or fatalities.

Amy Bickford: They launched a few additional shelters, funded a few out of ESG funds, one shelter that normally expands to 50, but could only accommodate 20 this year. Three shelters were funded last year, as COVID hit they were expanded to cover about 60 beds "overflow", probably will be funded until July. Two community centers have been converted to shelters with 80 beds total. FEMA provided funding for the typical COVID shelters with roughly 80 beds either using hotel spaces or

single room occupancy in an existing building with a floor to accommodate about 26 additional beds. Their St. Louis winter outreach group consisting of volunteers normally are able to open up 7-10 locations; however this year could only open four sites. A couple of area shelters had to go on lock-down due to a contraction and exposure within the center, however nurses and the city were able to address the issue and mediate any major concerns.

Dottie: Their area has not been able to get vaccine, there just is not any vaccines to distribute. Churches were pretty much inactive due to lack of volunteers. Motel vouchers were used, however funding was sparse and went very quickly. Looking at longer-term options to deal with sheltering.

Anthony: It has been exceedingly difficult in this area educating about the vaccine, a lot of misconceptions about the vaccine. County health departments have been exceptionally good about having mobile clinics from a different health department. We have been sending out information to all our community partners about the vaccine.

Amanda: Had our first clinics for homeless last week as soon as the government opened up for that tier. We hosted a clinic this morning, going on right now at our doors, between two clinics we hosted, maybe 50 people that we served. We will be looking for multiple smaller clinics.

### **Written Standards**

Cassie: Have been completed by the work groups, available for everyone to review. We will have a meeting for review approval. Applications for SAFHR all over the state opened up April 1<sup>st</sup>, including for landlords as well. Application for that is online, there will be a paper application soon, but it will be slower time. MHDC is also working with people to do case management services. Contact Jenny Miller at MHDC for more info on that. MHDC does not have data for this program.

ERAP we will no longer accept new apps after today. The program has prevented evictions for over 5800 individuals or 2600 households since January 4<sup>th</sup>. The program offered approximately \$900,000 to a million in rental assistance per week. We are at 9.7 million spent in rental assistance for ERAP. Biggest help for our programs would be spending ESG dollars, helping community fill out apps, and explaining the program. ESG CV apps closed April 1st. SAFHR program has treasury money so that won't close yet and do not know when we must have that money spent.

Randy: HUD Kansas City has decided to revisit the protocol for submitting environmental reviews. It appears they are scrutinizing agencies' environmental review forms. Just be aware that may happen depending on who is signing your ERF. We are just waiting on further guidance on how to proceed with community municipalities who can sign off on the Environmental Reviews in order for HUD to accept them to go along with the renewal applications for CoC funding.

### **Random Update**

Amanda: someone from SINC Health reached out to me about United Missouri, it's a data sharing system that they're trying to launch regarding health disparities, and wanted feedback from the

MICH. Julie Schwab is the contact person with SINC Health and will be working with ICA, to potentially receive referrals through HMIS and provide data on how we can focus on the homeless population and their healthcare service needs. A meeting with the company and CoC members will occur on May 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 am.