

Auburn Cayuga County Homeless Task Force

Meeting Minutes

November 9, 2022

Present: Renee Jensen (City of Auburn), April Rowlands (Finger Lakes 211), Kim Dunn (Chapel House), Alexa Hicks (Chapel House), Shari Weiss (Cayuga Community Health Network), Nicole Gee (Cayuga Community Health Network), Timothy Donovan (Community Member), Arlene Ryan (Community Member), Darlene Podolak (Unity House), Mary Rathbun (Cayuga County DSS), Krista Tallman (Rescue Mission), Erica Ryan (Home HQ), Mike Slomski (Chapel House), Tracy Myers (Chapel House), Sara Douglass (ARISE), Katie Jones (CAP), Armani Moore (HHC), Miranda Spencer (HHC)

Next meeting: January 11th, 11:00 am, Auburn City Hall

1. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 11:04 am by Chair Renee Jensen. Introductions were made.

2. HHC Updates

Miranda Spencer shared some updates. She introduced Armani Moore who is the new HMIS Data Specialist.

She shared about Annual State of Homelessness event on November 18th @ 2:30 pm was being moved to only in person as the zoom option was not going to work for the event.

The HHC Advisory Board selected and approved the PIT date for 2023. It will be on January 25th. The Rescue Mission will most likely be the local point of contact for Cayuga County's volunteers.

SNOFO final application selected projects several Cayuga based projects: Chapel House RRH in rural for SNOFO, Unsheltered CCHN's two applications for street outreach and RRH.

The HHC receives requests for ESSHI letters of support. Renee shared agencies that submitted requests. Two letters of support requests from CCHN for 12 PSH in city of Auburn, with 8 individual units and 4 family units and Chapel House for 6-8 individuals for scattered units attached in the new shelter in the next few years.

3. CoC Funded Program Updates

Chapel House: Men's Shelter has 14 individuals, staying steady, all CDBG eligible. Ray of Light- 14 single occupancy and is now offering meals. There has been some restructuring of the agency. New case workers have started. Tracy is now the program support coordinator. Mike Slomski is the shelter supervisor. Alexa is the case manager supervisor.

PSH started with 22 individuals, 5 individuals found alternative housing and they looking to house 5 more within the month.

STEHP has 55 individuals and 24 households. They had 64 individuals and 26 families at the end of the last month. CDBG RRH and EFSP is still available. Tracy shared \$11k in utility support. \$3800 in housing arrear help. Their UW campaign kickoff has started and it's going well.

Chapel House will hit its 15th anniversary on December 2nd, and they have come a long way. OTDA certification by March 2023.

CAP: Katie shared HUD RRH has one opening, ESG Prevention is not accepting new applicants currently. The HEAP department is open, but people do need an appointment. The Christmas Help program is also open, but it does close on November 23rd. Rental Assistance is available as they just received their CDBG contract within the city of Auburn, however there is a cap on how much they can allocate.

4. Agency Updates

DSS Updates: Mary shared some regulation changes which will allow more people to be eligible for on-going assistance. Families and single individuals now have the same eligibility due to the earned income changes.

HEAP is open. DSS is currently housing 18 families: 11 in hotels, 7 at Rescue Mission. 77 single individuals: 55 in hotels, 22 in shelter, coming from everywhere, out of state, out of county. There has been some movement into PSH. People are cycling in and out and it is not the same individuals. Last night was the first code blue night which brings numbers up. There was a question asked about which hotels are working with DSS: Days Inn, Auburn Inn, Grant Motel, some other Rodeway in Weedsport among others.

The state has changed the guidelines for childcare and there will be changes for Medicaid income brackets. Medicaid is doing automatic rollovers because of covid, but the re-certification is still required.

CCHN: Nicole shared the numbers are similar from what she has heard from the other agencies. To date, she has been able to assist 75 individuals and 12 families. Thirty-five are on the street, as substance use is playing a big role. Facebook has been a way to pinpoint locations of people. Seymour Library has been a meeting place. Mental Health has been a big barrier because they haven't been interested in treatment. Nicole will have some new locations for the PIT count. She will have about 10 more locations to add to the current. With the increases of substance use- Molly/ecstasy is the hot drug on the street right now because it doesn't show up on drug tests. TIPS training is being offered throughout the county.

City of Auburn Update: Renee shared that \$1.2 million has been allocated to Non-Profit Organizations in the city. Direct Benefits had \$287,000 allocated for revenue loss due to COVID-19. Capital Improvement had \$350,000 allocated.

Agency funding was allotted \$559,000 to CAP's Mobile Food Pantry and Rx assistance program; St. Peter and St. John Soup Kitchen; East Medical and CCHN's new Bringing Care into the Home; CCHN Street Outreach; Chapel House Rapid Rehousing; John E. Gavras Center Child Care Scholarships; Catholic Charities Rental Assistance; Calvary Food Pantry Emergency food; Cayuga Counseling, Psychiatric Clinic; Salvation Army, Pathway to Recovery Program.

The CDBG community participation project is starting. They are working toward gaining input and feedback on what they should fund, such as human services, housing projects, infrastructure projects (parks and sidewalks). The public meetings will be December 7th @ 10 am at City Hall and 5:30 pm at Booker T. Washington Center. The feedback will go into the action plan. Youth development wasn't included in last year, but it was slated as a need after the public meeting.

Homeless RHY Committee: Cayuga Counseling's Ruth Stewart has taken a new role. Yvonne Vasquez will be taking over.

5. Announcements/New Business

CCHN just started the Maternal Child Health Program- reproductive health coaches can help with case management for any female-presenting individuals from 15-44 years of age. They will get case management until the youngest child is 2 years. This could be very beneficial for single mothers, especially those experiencing homelessness.

Sara Douglass from ARISE: ESSHI Sennett Meadows will be opening in the coming weeks. The units will be furnished and staffed. Hopefully by the week of Thanksgiving, they will have 60 bed for 55+ between Skaneateles and Auburn. Eighteen units are supported by ARISE, 14 senior units, 4 veteran units. There are admission requirements and a referral form. ARISE has been extremely short staffed so she thanked everyone for their patience. They are hiring a Grant Coordinator and Advocacy Specialist, both are part time.

Tim Donovan is holding his annual coat drive. He will be sending out the flyers Thanksgiving is coming up so there may be some meals available. The Knights of Columbus are going to be providing a takeout meal only. The Salvation Army needs a call for the deliveries for thanksgiving meals.

April brought 211 cards for people to pass out.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm.