



Sonoma County Continuum of Care Board Meeting Meeting Minutes

May 26, 2021

1:00 pm – 5:00 pm Pacific Time – Meeting held by Zoom

[Recording of Continued Meeting](#)

1. Welcome and Introductions (0:00)

- Ben Leroi, Continuum of Care (CoC) Board chair, called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm. Ben Leroi went over the agenda, clarified Zoom rules around public comment and Brown Act guidelines.
- Roll Call was taken:
 - *Present: Supervisor Chris Coursey; Tom Schwedhelm, City of Santa Rosa; Kevin McDonnell, City of Petaluma; Chuck Fernandez, Committee on the Shelterless; Margaret Sluyk, Reach For Home; Ludmilla Bade, Community Member; Don Schwartz, City of Rohnert Park; Ben Leroi, Santa Rosa Community Health; Stephen Sotomayor, City of Healdsburg; Tanya Carvajal, proxy for Lisa Fatu, Social Advocates for Youth; Alena Wall, Kaiser Permanente; Angela Struckmann, Sonoma County Human Services*
 - *Absent: Bill Carter, Sonoma County Health Services; Jennielynn Holmes, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Santa Rosa*

2. Agenda Approval (2:00)

Public Comment

Alice Linn

Don Schwartz motioned to approve the agenda with re-order; Kevin McDonnell seconded.

Jennielynn Holmes joined at this time.

Bill Carter joined at this time.

Ayes: Ben Leroi, Jennielynn Holmes, Tom Schwedhelm, Kevin McDonnell, Chuck Fernandez, Bill Carter, Margaret Sluyk, Ludmilla Bade, Don Schwartz, Stephen Sotomayor, Tanya Carvajal, Alena Wall, Chris Coursey, Angela Struckmann

Notes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

The motion passed.

3. Approve Minutes from May 5, 2021

Public Comment

None at this time.

Chris Coursey motioned to approve the minutes for May 5, 2021; Margaret Sluyk seconded.

Ayes: Kevin McDonnell, Don Schwartz, Stephen Sotomayor, Ben Leroi, Jennielynn Holmes, Chuck Fernandez, Bill Carter, Margaret Sluyk, Chris Coursey, Alena Wall, Tanya Carvajal

Noes: None

Abstain: Tom Schwedhelm, absent from meeting; Angela Struckmann, absent from meeting; Ludmilla Bade, did not review

Absent: none

The motion passed.

4. Homeless Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) COVID-19 Update (8:00)

Michael Gause provided an overview of a staff recommendation for the updated ESG-CV funds and discuss the required expenditure deadline and a staff recommendation for spending the \$4,737,799. Funds are eligible for retroactive spending from March 2020. A minimum of 40% of the eligible funds must be spent on Rapid Re-housing programs (\$2,107,475) and the remaining 60% (\$3,628,712) may be spent on both congregate and non-congregate emergency shelters. The first 20% spending benchmark is July 31, 2021. A second 20% must be spent by September 2021. All funds must be expended by September 2022.

Staff recommendation is to distribute the initial 20% across the emergency congregate and non-congregate shelters who have incurred costs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding would be split evenly among all shelters. Staff recommends that a work group is initiated to determine how to spend the remaining ESG-CV funds.

Board Comment:

Board discussed the staff recommendation and determined that there was not enough information to make a decision on funding and that a workgroup should be formed.

Public Comment:

Teddie Pierce
Gerry La Londe-Berg
Gail Simons

Before motions began, Board members whose organizations could potentially receive funding recused themselves.

Board members that voluntarily recused:

Margaret Sluyk
Ben Leroi
Jennielynn Holmes
Chuck Fernandez
Tanya Carvajal
Tom Schwedhelm

Supervisor Chris Coursey volunteered to be interim chair.

Kevin McDonnell motioned to fund all of the listed and unlisted emergency shelters on the basis of population served, Don Schwartz seconded.

Don Schwartz: There are meant to be unfunded but related costs with no federal or state funding received, to include FEMA reimbursement for FEMA related costs. We are ensuring that dollars go to organizations that have not received COVID related funding. 60% of the first 20% should go to the shelters and the remaining 40% to Rapid Re-housing. The funding decision should be based on unfunded COVID costs and occupancy.

Stephen Sotomayor: I do not support making a decision today.

Stephen Sotomayor motioned to get more information from staff, via a work group, on incurred costs prior to making a funding decision, Alena Wall seconded.

Kevin McDonnell: There is a benefit to getting the spending started now while also relying on a work group to strategize and research for the remaining funds. We need to make decisions and utilize the work group. I withdraw my motion.

Ludmilla Bade: I would prefer a 2/3 expenditure from Kevin McDonnell's recommendation.

Kevin McDonnell: We need to vote on this then open it back up and have the entire group vote on the plan to get a work group for the remaining funding.

Don Schwartz: We need to refer to the work groups as Ad-Hoc Committee meetings.

Ludmilla Bade: I would like to see a broader eligibility beyond shelters.

Bill Carter: Would this process jeopardize the funds?

Ayes: Kevin McDonnell, Don Schwartz, Stephen Sotomayor, Bill Carter, Chris Coursey, Alena Wall, Angela Struckmann, Ludmilla Bade

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

Recused: Tom Schwedhelm, Jennielynn Holmes, Tanya Carvajal, Chuck Fernandez, Ben Leroi, Margaret Sluyk

The motion passed.

The group decided on two weeks for analysis and board members interested in joining the Ad-Hoc will email Leah Benz.

Recused Members were brought back for further board discussion.

Don Schwartz: We know that we are not doing a great job with our Rapid Re-housing programs because 25% go to already housed. There is a work group working on Rapid Re-housing standards and I would like a report from the group to come to the full board as soon as work is done We need to know how the providers are doing.

Tom Schwedhelm: Recused members should have been brought back as soon as Kevin McDonnell withdrew his motion.

Kevin McDonnell: we need to come up with a specific task for the upcoming ad-hoc group. The 40%/60% split can be a task of the work group and how they intend to solicit the funds.

Ludmilla Bade: I would support a letter of intent going out as soon as possible.

Kevin McDonnell motioned to create an Ad-Hoc committee with open meetings to the public, to determine expenditures of the remaining 80% of the funds, that the group be co-membershiped by the initial work group, and determine a process and recommendation for the spending to bring back to the full board, Chris Coursey seconded.

Board Comment:

Jennielynn Holmes: questioned recusal process for the work group

Kevin McDonnell: my motion is to make the work group the same as the initial one so a modification to the motion would have to be made. The process for the work group should include welcoming voices and have mechanism to include providers on the calls.

Chris Coursey: Ensured that the public will be able to attend the meetings to allow stakeholder input.

Ludmilla Bade: we need to be open to shift the membership as needed.

Public Comment:

Gregory Fearon

Ayes: Ben Leroi, Jennielynn Holmes, Tom Schwedhelm, Kevin McDonnell, Chuck Fernandez, Bill Carter, Margaret Sluyk, Ludmilla Bade, Don Schwartz, Stephen Sotomayor, Tanya Carvajal, Alena Wall, Chris Coursey

Notes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Angela Struckmann

5. Word from the Street (1:04)

Ludmilla Bade presented on her recent experience with HAS in the City of Sonoma. She noted the value of feeling included, having a safety network that allows those struggling with finding shelter to take the next step. She also discussed the importance of understanding the difference between a home and a house and the experience therein. HAS also hosts a mentoring group that pairs people up.

Public Comment:

Gail Simons

Alice Linn

Adrienne Lauby

6. Five Minute Break (1:52-1:58)

7. Report on Continuum of Care Renewal Evaluations from the Ad Hoc Committee

Karissa White provided an update on the Continuum of Care Competition Evaluation meeting and site visits with participating agencies. The Ad Hoc group met on May 17 and May 24, 2021 to review the Program Renewal Application materials for all 15 projects. Site visits are currently underway and the committee will meet in June prior to the Continuum of Care Board meeting to finalize the scoring and

make a recommendation to bring back for the boards consideration. Michael Gause thanked the committee members.

Board Comments:

Kevin McDonnell: It has been a great experience to be on the Ad Hoc committee, has humanized the issues and the providers.

Public Comment:

None at this time.

8. Update on Emergency Housing Vouchers

Martha Cheever, Housing Authority Manger for Sonoma County, and Rebecca Lane, Housing Authority Manager for the City of Santa Rosa presented on the upcoming available Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV). 150 EHV's have been provided to the County of Sonoma and 128 EHV's have been allocated to the city of Santa Rosa. Additional vouchers may become available. The goal of today's session is to facilitate the beginning of a recommendation for target populations. The Memorandum of Understanding needs to be signed no later than July 31, 2021. The Housing Authority also identifies it as a top priority to connect with the Lived Experience Advisory Board.

Board Comments:

Jennielynn Holmes: This has so much opportunity to initiate the system change we want. I recommend utilizing the Coordinated Entry Assessment Committee as it is already a public meeting.

Tom Schwedhelm: Echoes Jennielynn's excitement, but thinks that this should be a separate committee. Also clarified that two separate MOU's will be signed, so the board can recommend more than one target population.

Margaret Sluyk: Is it possible to use funds for Permanent Supportive Housing populations?

Kevin McDonnell: What is the housing availability?

Ludmilla Bade: Will there be a program beyond the applications? Are vouchers released through the lottery system? We are hearing about the mismatch of resources with the lack of wrap around resources.

Jennielynn Holmes: Would be interesting to see ESG-CV funds also support this. We have a real opportunity to end homelessness in sub populations with this opportunity.

Ben Leroi: Can you confirm that we can use the ESG-CV funds for this?

Don Schwartz: What is the timeline and time limit on the vouchers? It is critical that we establish a relationship with the realtor/landlord community. Requested the slides so that board members can extend through their communication channels. Also curious about the plan to provide continual case management.

Jennielynn Holmes: If the vouchers cover the leasing there is a potential to repurpose the funds for case management.

Don Schwartz: Room to amend Measure O dollars via the Board of Supervisors.

Public Comment:

Adrienne Lauby
Gregory Fearon
Dannielle Danforth
Gail Simons
Alice Linn
Teddie Pierce
Jules Pelican

Board Discussion:

The CoC Board discussed utilizing the CEA Committee to determine prioritization of these vouchers and discussed the need to collect feedback from the public and those with lived experience.

Margaret Sluyk motioned to use the Coordinated Entry Assessment Committee to work through the requirements of the vouchers with the support of the public and lived experience to create an MOU; Jennielynn Holmes seconded.

Tom Schwedhelm requested an amendment to permit additional committee members for this discussion made up of CoC Board members to discuss and make recommendations for the prioritization of vouchers. Jennielynn accepted the amendment.

Ayes: Kevin McDonnell, Ludmilla Bade, Don Schwartz, Jennielynn Holmes, Chuck Fernandez, Bill Carter, Margaret Sluyk, Tanya Carvajal, Ben Leroi, Tom Schwedhelm, Angela Struckmann, Alena Wall, Stephen Sotomayor

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Chris Coursey

The motion passed.

Interested Board Members: Margaret Sluyk, Tom Schwedhelm, Ben Leroi, Don Schwartz

9. 100 Day Challenge for Homeless Youth (3:45)

Meghan Murphy and Martha Cheever presented on the 100 Day Challenge which was a County wide initiative. In 100 days, the goal was to connect 65 Transitional Aged Youth to housing with a focus on the LGBTQI+ population and BIPOC youth. The 100 Day Challenge also helped to reimagine the homeless response system in order to ensure housing accessibility to the maximum number of youths. Post challenge, 59 youth moved into stable housing. There are 32 remaining housing vouchers that are looking for housing or still in process of procuring the voucher. In total, 91 transitional aged youth were impacted by the challenge. The constraints in the system were identified as follows: capacity restraints, lack of housing stock, and limitation of the HUD definition of homelessness.

Public Comment:

None at this time.

10. Standing Committee Updates (4:00)

Thai Hilton provided update on the Coordinated Entry Advisory Committee, which is working on developing the Request for Proposal for the Coordinated Entry Operator.

Leah Benz provided a brief update on the Homeless Management Information System Committee who's first meeting is scheduled in the middle of June.

Karissa White provided an update on the Lived Experience Board and the timeline and outreach strategy that is being developed to ensure engagement. Goal is to listen to the community and create something for Sonoma County. There is a need to compensate people for their time so the Sonoma County Community Development Commission is exploring funding sources for this.

Board Comments:

Don Schwartz: Asked about the RFP and share if community finds the process intimidating.

Public Comment:

Alice Linn

Adrienne Lauby

Teddie Pierce

Gregory Fearon

11. Staff Report (4:09)

Leah Benz let the board know that the KPMG meeting is scheduled for June 2, 2021 from 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM.

Michael Gause updated on the HUD monitoring process that is currently underway. Youth Homelessness NOFO was released for collaborative applicants and Continuums of Care. Built for Zero has also started the nationwide kick off.

Board Comment:

Don Schwartz: Are we in contract with Built for Zero? With Community Shared solution? There is a services agreement without signatures.

Alena Wall: explained a bit of Built for Zero from the Kaiser Permanente Perspective.

Don Schwartz: Would like this to go to the Strategy and Planning Committee

Ludmilla Bade: Can the CoC planning be fund be used for stipends? Would like an update on the status of the HEAP fund reallocations.

Public Comment:

None at this time.

12. Review Draft Agenda for June 23, 2021 (4:22)

Board Comment:

Don Schwartz: For the membership meeting it may be helpful to discuss issues with membership and strategic plan. How might the CoC membership look different in the future?

Ludmilla Bade: Change review agenda to draft agenda.

Public Comment:

Alice Linn

13. Board Member Questions & Comments (4:28)

Tanya Carvajal provided a nomination for the TAY Gianna Luis Jacques

Don Schwartz: Rohnert Park has 1.3 million dollars to homelessness for encampments and hiring a full time position. Would like a By-Names list and expanding Project Hope, the goal of not reinventing the wheel. Council is also pursuing tiny homes and a volunteer-led safe parking program. Also opened a 218 unit affordable housing complex which may be the largest ever in Sonoma County.

Tom Schwedhelm: Curious about Reasonable Impact council as Santa Rosa is starting a strategic planning process. Supervisor Gorin is listed as the board member for Sonoma County and is curious about its relationship.

Ludmilla Bade: there are really tight deadlines, is it possible to consider another meeting in June? Also would like a physical invitation to pass out for the Lived Advisory Body and process for signing people up.

Jennielynn Holmes: Perhaps the organizations can pull together some funds to leverage funds and work together to provide incentives for lived experiences. Gift cards are an option until we can get a stipend, organizations may reach out on their own and get a pot together.

Stephen Sotomayor: discussed North County's process for ending homelessness as all parts are heading into strategic planning. There is an increasing collaboration due to this effort.

Public Comment:

Alice Linn

Adrienne Lauby

14. Public Comment (4:53)

None at this time.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:55 PM