

Sonoma County Continuum of Care Funding and Evaluation Committee



Michael Gause, Ending Homelessness Program Manager, Andrew Akufo, PPEA, Chuck Mottern, Community Development Associate, Karissa White, Continuum of Care Coordinator, Thai Hilton, Coordinated Entry Coordinator, Dave Kiff., Executive Director, Daniel Howland Overbury, HMIS Coordinator, Adam Siegenthaler, Department Information Systems Technician II  
**Committee members:** Teddie Pierce | Don Schwartz | Una Glass | Chessy Etheridge | Dennis Pocekay | Danielle Danforth | Rebekah Sammet | Kelli Kuykendall | Margaret Sluyk | Hunter Scott | John Baxter | Wendell Coleman

**Funding and Evaluation Committee Meeting**

Thursday, October 12, 2023

2:00pm-4:00pm

**Recording:**

<https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/rec/share/GpjiU7a6jEwVrZO3uw6eB2rW6FcO9YB1pISdCSXJGOQe2MFe3Pe6TwdvZLGzBEKV.W0Ow-2lLnDuQaAcw>

Passcode: GuC5?4i0

**Minutes**

**1. Meeting called to order at 2:01pm (00:01:56 - 00:04:37)**

Teddie Pierce called the meeting to order and summarized decorum guidelines.

**Present:**

Teddie Pierce, Una Glass, Dennis Pocekay, Don Schwartz, Dannielle Danforth, Rebekah Sammet, Kelli Kuykendall, Chessy Etheridge, Hunter Scott, John Baxter, Matthew Verscheure

**Not Present:**

Margaret Sluyk, Wendell Coleman

**Public:**

1 member

**Staff:**

Michael Gause, Dave Kiff, Thai Hilton, Andrew Akufo

**2. Consent calendar (00:04:42 – 00:10:39)**

- **John Baxter moved** to approve the consent calendar: F&E agenda; minutes from September 14, 2023
- **Teddi Pierce requested** approval of agenda only, pending discussion of minutes
- **Don Schwartz moved** to approve the agenda
- **John Baxter seconded.**

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- **Public comment: None**
- **Opposed or abstentions: None**
- **Motion passes.** Agenda is approved.
- Discussion ensued to address questions concerning the general structure of the monthly minutes.
- **Dennis Pocekay moved** to approve the September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, meeting minutes.
- **Una Glass seconded.**
- **Opposed or abstentions: None**
- **Motion passes.** Minutes are approved.

Teddie read the Brown Act disclosure and presented the agenda.

### **3. Charter and Member Responsibilities Revisions (00:10:40 – 00:15:19)**

- Teddie Pierce has reviewed comments from the previous meeting and has revised the two drafts. The recusal policy language is planned to be the same as that of the Continuum of Care (CoC) Board.
- The CoC Board will be reviewing the charter revisions and roles and responsibilities of the Funding and Evaluation Committee in December.
- Dave Kiff expressed that the recusal policy is set by recommendation from County Council rather than being part of the governance charter. The policy can be reiterated at the meetings for any vote that involves conflicts, or as needed.
- A motion to approve the documents was made at the previous meeting, no new motion today.
- **Public comment: None**

### **4. Draft Proposed Scoring Tool Approaches (for 2024-25) (00:15:20 – 01:15:58)**

- Michael Gause has prepared a draft scoring tool which he presented for review by, and input from, the committee.

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- Street outreach is not yet included but is in development.
- The draft scoring tool was reviewed with all providers last week.
- Work is still in progress on how to measure returns to homelessness by project.
- A questionnaire may be developed to collect information outside of just pure data.
- Input included a suggestion for implementing a sliding scale. The highest scoring proposal would receive the maximum number of points and others would be assigned points in proportion to how they compare with that highest scoring.
- Geographic equity: Areas where there is a geographic need for street outreach have been identified. Proposals could be called for in the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) specifying only new projects for subregional street outreach in these areas of need. A pass/fail score would be utilized rather than a point score.
- The scoring tool reflects a Permanent Shared Housing (PSH) case management ratio of 20:1; Rapid Rehousing (RRH) 30:1
- Input included a suggestion that case management should be an information item rather than a scored item. Feedback was in agreement.
- It was suggested that the dollars for PSH should be different than the dollars for RRH, with feedback in agreement.
- Measurement criteria for street outreach will look very different, as there are no beds to measure and far fewer factors to take into consideration.
- #6 – Coordinated Entry Participation - the language for the 3 pt and 4 pt items is intended to be reworded to enhance the distinction between the two.
- Funding streams will be HHAP-5, HHIP, a small amount from the Emergency Solutions Grant Fund, and local funding. Amounts of state funding won't be known until the end of December, local funding not until January.

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- Timeframe for wrapping up the scoring tool is within the next three weeks or so.
- The intention is that the F&E Committee will approve the scoring tool, which will be folded into the NOFA. The NOFA will then be presented to the Continuum of Care (CoC) Board for review. The F&E Committee would also approve the NOFA prior to the CoC Board's review.
- **Public Comment:** None
- A working group was formed for further consideration, feedback, and recommendations for the scoring tool. The members will be Dennis Pocekay, Hunter Scott, Teddie Pierce, Rebekah Sammet, Dannielle Danforth, and Chessie Etheridge. The work is anticipated to be completed within one two-hour meeting, which Teddie Pierce will organize.

### **5. Definitions Discussion (01:16:00 – 2:02:09)**

- **Final Clarifications of NOFA language:** Teddie Pierce presented slides with final clarifications for NOFA language in a continuation of the discussion from last month. Michael will incorporate agreed upon language into the NOFA. The slides are also in the meeting packet.
  - Slide 1 - Permanent Supportive Housing: This language is intended for the F&E Committee's understanding and guidance, and for clarity about what the money is paying for in PSH. Abbreviations were identified:
    - FMR – Fair Market Rent
    - RR – Rent Reasonable
    - HQS – Housing Quality Standards
  - Slide 2 - Promising vs. Proven Practice – Recommended NOFA language approach: concern was expressed that the context is missing. Discussion points included:
    - How does the committee feel about including “Promising vs. Proven” language at all in the NOFA?

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- How does something become a good practice, and how does something fall out?
- Allowing people to be innovative may result in developing new best practices.
- The strategic plan allows for 80% proven, and 20% to other. Proven practices are tried and true, evidenced over time, the most cost effective.
- The question is how to define what goes into the 80% category, and what comprises the 20%. They didn't become proven until someone tried them,
- How will we choose an innovative practice to try? Scoring hasn't been developed – will it be selected by who pushes the hardest?
- In terms of description in the NOFA: We could provide the 80/20 rule, give good guidance as to what “proven” means, then let the applicant self-select and provide the rationale for the choice.
- The difficulty is how to score the promising practices. Could the Upstream folks evaluate? If someone applies with a promising practice, perhaps experts could be consulted to evaluate. Review committees have been consulted many times in the past. Subjective analysis is required - need someone to convey a compelling reason why the suggestion is a good idea. If there is no compelling argument, then we wouldn't be giving out that 20%.
- Regarding Upstream, or the National Alliance Policy Institute: links to documentation reflecting the stated level of evidence of the proposed service need to be included to instruct an agency on how to become part of that portfolio. Suggestion is made to include line C about explaining in detail and substantiating, then ask for review from someone from the county who does evaluations
- Promising vs Proven – applicant self-declares which category they might be in, and then explains in detail how they might substantiate that, including proving that they will follow the practice in fidelity.

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- For scoring, we review what we have, then call in experts, seeking to incentivize those innovative approaches and not discourage providers from applying. If applicants bring forward numbers of people who could potentially benefit and are already interested, this could also carry some weight.
- **Concluding consensus** is to include a reference to self-declaring. If applicants choose that category, the professionals can evaluate and offer a brief opinion of the fidelity of the proposal, then we fall back into the strategic plan framework of the 80/20.
- Slide 3 – New vs Existing Programs: Discussion of what constitutes “new” vs “existing” projects to develop very clear framing of NOFA language. Discussion points included:
  - A caveat around interim projects – the state has stated no new interim projects without proof of sufficient PSH. Existing interim projects can be funded, but new projects should be PSH. This is only for HHAP, but that would be the backbone of the funding.
  - It’s important to avoid the perception that a new project in the county will receive lower priority so as not to discourage applicants, not to put a damper on a potentially great idea.
  - It should not be binary, as in “either/or.” Categorizing as “new” or “not new” doesn’t cover all the possibilities
  - **In conclusion:** “New” projects that have not been implemented elsewhere lack historical data for judging effectiveness and efficiency. For these more speculative projects, the applicant can make an argument for what they can do, for evaluation about whether it would be a good bet.

If a project has been running elsewhere, though not funded by us, there will be historical data to review and it should be considered an existing project, rather than new, and evaluated in comparison with data from other existing projects.

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- Slide 4: Geographic Equity – Dave explained that geographic equity as regards the NOFA is related to needs or gaps in the system for emergency shelter, interim housing, and street outreach. It would not apply to programs such as PSH, other housing, or RRH. Some discussion points were:
  - Suggestion that this is fine for now – but we should get to a place where we can allocate funding for PSH according to geographic choice
  - Over the next year, geographic equity can be looked at as background to ascertain people’s location preferences and consider whether to look at incorporating this as a goal if CE moves to reflecting those preferences
  - It’s two-pronged – we’d like participants to have their choice of location, but if there is no PSH in that area, then they don’t have that choice. There are limitations in certain geographic regions. Suggestion to prioritize tenant-based PSH in the community as supposed to site-based project- based PSH to allow opportunities for choice in those currently limited areas.
  - Established that there is no limit in the CE policy to the number of times a household can decline a housing offer – it’s the client’s choice.
  - A topic for further consideration, and for possible discussion with the cities: If a city is funding all their street outreach on their own with their own funds, so that cup is full, but in another region of the county no one is funding anything, but someone could, how do we make that fair, or do we? It’s Important that no city ends up being punished for putting in their own funds – that disincentivizes investing in the system
- **Public Comment:** None
- There is consensus to omit a motion on the slides as a general direction has been determined.

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**6. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda (02:02:15 – 02:02:29)**

- **No Public Comment**

**7. Adjournment (02:02:30 – 02:03:33)**

- **Don Schwartz motioned to adjourn.**
- **Una Glass seconded.**
- **Meeting adjourned at 4:05 pm.**

**Next Meeting: November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2:00-4:00PM**

Virtual

**PUBLIC COMMENT PRIOR TO THE COMMITTEE MEETING:** Public Comment may be submitted via email to [Andrew.Akufo@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Andrew.Akufo@sonoma-county.org)