

**The Chicago Alliance to End Homelessness**  
**Service Providers Commission**  
**January 13, 2009**

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Commission Co-Chair Felix Matlock welcomed the group and began the meeting. Commission members introduced themselves.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes were reviewed by the group and were approved as written.

**III. Elections**

**a. At-Large Member of SPC Executive Committee**

David Esposito of Thresholds resigned his position on the SPC Executive Committee which created an opening. One nomination was received prior to the meeting for Israel Vargas from San Jose Obrero Mission; Christine Achre from Primo Center was nominated in the meeting. An SPC member asked that someone speak to Christine's qualifications since Israel's were made available via a handout. Nancy Radner and Susan Reyna-Guerrero filled in some of the information about her background: Caucasian female, she worked at Beacon Therapeutic for 5 years before doing consulting work, she's now the ED at Primo Center serving women and children on the west side of the city.

An election took place in the meeting and Israel Vargas was elected to the open position.

**b. Alternates to SPC Executive Committee**

The SPC Executive Committee has been discussing membership responsibilities and has decided to elect some people to serve as alternates so At-Large members have someone to attend in their place if they can't attend the meetings. Alternates would be encouraged to attend all meetings even if they're not filling in for someone. The group meets 6 times a year and a calendar is already in place. The following 6 people were nominated for the alternate positions:

- 1 Ceandra Daniels – Inner Voice
- 2 Christine Achre – Primo Center
- 3 Johanna Dalton – Goldie's Place
- 4 Bridgette Baker – Beacon Therapeutic
- 5 Pete Toepfer – North Side Housing
- 6 Ellen Ray - Humboldt Park Social Services

**IV. Calendar for 2009 NOFA Process**

Nicole Prichard of the Alliance presented information on the 2009 NOFA process. The HMV Committee and the Tool Committee have started meeting. We're still waiting for HUD to release Chicago's score which will show whether we fell above the funding line. HUD has not set a definite date for the release of the NOFA so the calendar is tentative at this time. The hope is that the entire process is done by July but this is very dependant on HUD. The timeline was not distributed today because it has not received final approval by the HMV Committee, but it will be available on the Alliance's website once it's been approved.

**V. Presentation by Staff from the City of Chicago**

**a. Reorganization**

Jim LoBianco attended today's meeting to speak about the new Department of Family and Support Services. He read a letter from Mary Ellen Caron to the staff of the new department. She's currently the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Family and Support Services.

After reading the letter, Jim asked if there were any questions:

- Where are homeless services housed? Lesley Levy is now reporting to Jim LoBianco in Homeless Services and Betsy Benito is now focused on the policy related to the plan and is reporting to Anthony Radon in Policy and Advocacy.
- What about the Low Income Housing Trust? It was never part of the Department of Housing so there are no changes-the office didn't move either.
- What about Veterans? Veteran services are now part of the Human Service Delivery Office.
- What happened with the CDBG denial letters? There seems to be confusion about what happened. Jim will look into and respond.
- What happened to Ellen Sahli? She's now the First Deputy commissioner of the City of Chicago's Department of Community Development.
- How many jobs were lost? In Human Services there were seven lay-offs and position/title changes.
- Where is HMIS? This department is now under Jim's supervision.
- Can we get a copy of the letter? No because a public letter will be sent out soon.
- Who will be the public face of the 10 year plan? The Commissioner, Mary Ellen Caron.
- Will there be some changes in the way monitoring happens? The Commissioner has put together a group to look at this so it's easier for agencies.
- What was the thought behind moving the policy portion of the plan away from the implementation of the Plan? It will allow Betsy to focus on policy and not to be drawn into day-to-day operations.
- There was a question about staff such as Tami Cole and other Homeless Services and Domestic Violence team members, are they still around? The only lay-offs were administrative so those people are all still in the department.
- What are your goals for Homeless Services and what do you want to accomplish in the first year? The plan is to follow the lead of the new Commissioner.

#### **b. HMIS**

The initial training phase is coming to an end. They're preparing the AHAR submission and expect to meet the deadline of 1/31/09. Some agencies still need to turn in their bed lists so the data can be entered. If you call For Data for assistance please get a "ticket number" so follow-up can occur and they can be held accountable. Once the AHAR is submitted, there will be a focus on improving the quality/accuracy of reports. An online registration process for training registration is being developed.

Questions:

- Is there a timeline for administrative training? Jim will get that sent out today but he thinks it should be in February.
- The help desk typically refers questions back to Rafael-several people agreed with this statement. Jim will follow-up on this feedback.
- Has HUD asked for access to agency data? No not yet though there's talk that they will be asking for more detail in the future.
- There are problems with pulling migrated data into reports. The goal is to improve this soon-February is the target.
- Are paper reports being developed in case there are problems with electronic reporting? Yes
- Right now HMIS doesn't accurately track all the activities-is that being addressed? Yes
- Will there be on-going training? Yes
- What's the protocol for clients who refuse to be entered into HMIS? Some agencies say they've been told to enter everyone even if they refuse. Clarity is needed for the process to accurately count and track the services they receive. The HMIS Committee will need to clarify this in the HMIS SOPs.
- Can you refuse to provide services to people who refuse to be entered into HMIS? No. Be sure to track the number of people who refuse to be entered into HMIS but continue to serve them as usual.

- Who should we contact about training? The standard people-they haven't changed.

Jim encouraged people to direct any other questions to him-his contact information has not changed.

## **VI. Presentation on State Plan for the Neighborhood Stabilization Act**

Christine Harley (312-793-2347 or christine.harley@illinois.gov) is the Assistant Project Manager to Grace Ho at the Illinois Department of Human Services. Last fall HUD announced that \$4 billion dollars would be released to help buy up homes in foreclosure so entire neighborhoods wouldn't be destabilized.

Nancy Radner met with the City to try to get supportive housing included in the City's plans for the money and was told that the initial focus would be on single-family homes. Illinois received a total of \$173 million dollars (Chicago got \$56 million dollars from this program and the funds are being distributed via a part of Mercy Housing-someone will come to a future meeting of the SPC to give information on the city's plans for the funds).

Eligible activities include purchasing or rehabbing properties, providing down payment assistance or loan assistance, public buildings (ex. shelters or supportive housing-HUD mentioned parks and child care) demolishing vacant or abandoned buildings and then redeveloping the land. The funds need to be spent quickly-18 months is the target for identifying how the funds will be spent and then 4 years to get the projects completed.

IDHS (lead agency), IDA, and DCEO are working together to distribute the funds in Illinois. They want to target funds to people at 200% of the poverty level (at least 40% of the funds should be targeted to this group) and the target IDHS populations in the state (Ex. people with disabilities, elderly people, ex-offenders, etc.). The state has targeted the funds to non-CDBG areas, CDBG areas that didn't get funds. The CSH will be providing technical assistance for the process.

### Questions

- If an agency gets IDA tax credits could they apply? Yes
- Can Chicago agencies apply for Illinois's funds since the city is already getting money? Since Chicago is not focusing on the low income population or the supportive housing they'll consider applications from Chicago.
- Can these funds be used for a social enterprise? Maybe-you would really need to show how it's stabilizing to the neighborhood
- What's the application timeline? Illinois has made revisions and resubmitted the plan. Once the plan is approved the 18 month clock starts ticking. The application will be out by the end of 1/09, application workshops will be held throughout the state in 2/09, applications should be back to IDHS in 3/09, decisions on funding will be made and announced in 5/09. Some funds might be held back for another round of applications for groups that can't submit an application with this timeline.
- Will information be on the website? On the IDHS website there's a link for the program on the home page. An application guidance document will be posted by the end of the month. Workshop information will also be there.
- Is there an allocation listing for various counties? It's on the website.

Additionally, people can apply for operating and support dollars as part of this program.

## **VII. Report from the SPC Representative to the Chicago Planning Council on Homelessness**

Susan Reyna-Guerrero distributed a handout with a listing of our representatives to the Planning Council and 2009 meeting dates.

## **VIII. Announcements**

### **a. Homeless Count**

The count is coming up and handouts were provided about trainings for the 1/27/09 count. The city is looking for hundreds of volunteers. Nancy spoke with Alderman Schiller and she said that Alderman will be sending letters to the DFSS about where homeless people are most frequently found. There was a suggestion that the police department be consulted about ideas for where homeless people are located. The police are involved in this year's count which is different from previous years. There was a question about whether police stations are still warming centers?

### **b. SPC Meeting Dates for 2009**

A handout of the meetings for 2009 was distributed.

### **c. Announcements**

1. Lincoln Park Community Shelter has been talking with Ed Stellan about doing a basic training on Harm Reduction on the evening of 2/9. The estimated cost will be \$30. An Email will follow with more details.
2. Social Entrepreneurial follow-up: Nancy has been hearing from people interested in this. There will be a Track I (for agencies considering starting one) and Track II (to expand existing businesses). There will be a very limited number of spots in Track II (most likely 4)
3. La Casa Norte housing openings: They have openings in their housing program for male 16-21 y/o. You can check their website for more information on making referrals.

## **XI. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55am.