



Homeless Alliance Monthly Meeting  
April 16, 2008

Present: Laila Bondi, Carolyn Hillman, Bill O'Connell, Sister Mary Augusta Kaiser, Pat Henry, Jewel Culverhouse, Glenda Washington, Chris Kennedy, Brad Dossinger, Chris Voltz, Ken Turner, Laurie Tanner, Dale Zuchlewski, Kevin Martin, Cherisse Walker-Betts, Devan Decicco, Karen Carman, Jorian Brock, Penny Selmonsky, Warren Marcus, Amanda Masters, Sara Manns

2008 Poverty Challenge: Devan stated that this Poverty Challenge will take place May 5th-8th. It's a three-day, awareness-raising campaign. On the first day, we are to think about what we spend money on daily, coffee, gas etc. The following two days, we will try to follow a poverty budget, which will likely decrease the money available to spend during that time, forcing us to make choices about food, personal care and transportation. This is an opportunity to stand in solidarity with those who struggle with poverty, to better understand those struggles. We also want to emphasize our message that people are homeless because of poverty and poverty is systemic.

Continuum of Care: Laila did a presentation, based on the information in the APRs just received for the local application. The main points that we need to focus on is the housing to services ratio. This year, we have determined we need to aim for a 75% housing to 25% services ratio. If we go in as we stand now, the ratio is more like 60% housing and 40% services. This means we will face some difficult decisions about what projects to put forward and what not to. HUD also wants to see a certain % of clients moving from transitional to permanent housing and also that those who are in permanent housing are staying there six months or longer. We are exceeding HUD's standards on both of those measures. Finally, we need to monitor what type of resources people are receiving. We are struggling year after year with our employment numbers; HUD has set a national standard of 20.9% of clients receiving income from employment upon exit from the program. We are only at 9%, which consistently cause our continuum to lose points in the competition. Some people had questions about filling out APRs and Bill responded that it is really HUD's responsibility to provide assistance on those types of things, we just collect, aggregate and submit the information

Bill also did a presentation, discussing our pro rata need share (\$7.3 million) and our actual total of all the renewal applications (over \$8 million). This means that all the applications cannot go forward as the total ask exceeds what we are eligible to apply for. This could mean that some projects can only go in for a two-year renewal instead of three or that some projects won't be able to go through at all. We must create a balance between what projects total an appropriate amount and also provide the 75%-25% housing to services ratio.

Also, the SHP renewals should have a match of 20%. The Alliance will have to send out letters to agencies to tell them that their match and leveraging are off. This is discouraging to staff at the Homeless Alliance because the application explicitly states that agencies need to have 20% match to even be eligible to apply for funding. Bill stated that the local HUD office informed us that we lost points last year for minor, mathematical mistakes. We are going to have to make some difficult decisions regarding programs that do not have the match or the leveraging or those that are not performing up to HUD or local standards. Pat said that it is very apparent from the

presentation that HAWNY has a very early due date because clearly there are many problems to address in local applications before we put it through to HUD.

PRISM: The next PRISM meeting will be April 30<sup>th</sup>.

FOOD Project: Tuesday April 29<sup>th</sup> there will be a Food Stamp training for religious communities to learn how to pre-screen people for eligibility. Also, Tuesday May 6<sup>th</sup> there will be another workshop, also for religious communities, that will prepare organizations to help people who seek their assistance.

May 14<sup>th</sup> will be the next WNY Homeless Coalition. Joyelle Tededschi is the new chair and she will assume the responsibility of reporting at the HAWNY meetings.

The National Center on Family Homelessness is doing a study on women who have entered transitional/permanent housing for the homeless within the last 90 days. They are having difficulty finding participants. If interested, please contact Laila at the Homeless Alliance.

Penny gave an update about DSS discontinuing cases because of felonies or outstanding warrants. The county has been instructed not to discontinue or deny people, please contact Penny if you here of that happening or if that is changed.

Next Tuesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, will be the next Transitional Housing Coalition meeting. It will be held at the Schoolhouse Commons at 9am.

We will back at the United Way next month.