

Kent County
Family & Children's
Coordinating Council

KCFCCC Meeting Minutes
January 8, 2019 12:00pm – 1:00pm
Kent County Administration Building
Room 311

Members/Alternates

Present:

Melanie Beelen, Ron Caniff, Candace Cowling, Lynne Ferrell, Judge Patti Gardner, Sandra Ghoston-Jones, Cynthia Gladyness, Jack Greenfield, Jennifer Headrick, Lynn Heemstra, Maureen Kirkwood, Adam London, Jacob Maas, George Meek, Jackie O'Connor, Jim Paparella, Kasie Pickart, Julie Ridenour, Savator Selden-Johnson, Diana Sieger, Scott Smith, Michelle VanDyke, Matthew Van Zetten.

Members Absent:

Chris Becker, Tracey Fountain, Yazeed Moore, Teresa Neal, Bill Riley.

Guests:

Peter Beck, Veneese Chandler, Peter Dickow, Kristen Gietzen, Lori Latham, Carol Paine-McGovern, Courtney Myers-Keaton, Pam Parriott, Kristyn Peck, Wende Randal, Rebecca Rynbrandt, Jim Talen, Annemarie Valdez, Lauren Van Keulen, Patti Warmington.

1. Welcome & Call to Order

Adam London, Chair, called the meeting to order and asked for introductions.

Jim Paparella made a motion to approve the minutes, 2nd provided by Lynne Ferrell – vote was UNANIMOUS. Julie Ridenour made a motion to accept the agenda, support provided by Michelle VanDyke – vote was UNANIMOUS.

2. Public Comment

None.

- 3. Homelessness Update** – Courtney Myers-Keyton and Wende Randall provided the update regarding Homelessness. Courtney provided handouts of her slide presentation. She began, saying she and Wende were from the Grand Rapids Coalition to End Homelessness (CTEH), and were there to provide an update of what has been happening the last couple of years. There are 60 organizations involved in the effort to end homelessness in Kent County. They are the Continuum of Care (COC) planning body for

HUD. The premise of these efforts is to provide housing first and then supportive services to maintain that housing. This program uses a centralized intake process through the Housing Assessment Program (HAP) at Salvation Army.

The types of homelessness discussed included: Literal Homelessness, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing and Functional Zero. Each of these terms were defined to the group.

The Point in Time Counts (PIT) data were provided and discussed. The manner of count and reason for the timing of the count were discussed. When asked if a count done in warmer weather might provide a more accurate count, Wende said that is currently a point of discussion, but there is a window of time when they are required to do the count.

The group discussed the data provided on homeless rates in our community. These numbers haven't moved much in the last three years. Wende said that in terms of our size of community, these are good numbers. We aren't doing poorly compared to other communities our size, but we're not doing fantastic either. These are comparable numbers for the State.

Youth Homelessness was also discussed. They discussed how difficult it is to collect that kind of data due to youth keeping their homelessness private.

Courtney provided an update for the following projects at the Grand Rapids Area Coalition to End Homelessness:

- Extension of Strategic Plan – Somewhere between 6 and 12 months extended.
- Youth Action Board & Voices of Youth Count – Youth Action Board meets regularly. It consists of Youth between the ages of 18-24 who have experience with homelessness. The Voices of Youth Count will take place again, hoping to make it more robust this next time.
- Coordinated Entry Evaluation Report-out and Action Step Planning – Looked at how the system is accessed by individuals experiencing homelessness. Action steps include looking at how the system is being accessed by individuals and families and whether it is being used to the best of its' ability. The plan is to move forward on this over the next few months.
- K-Connect Community-wide Housing Conversations – Wende provided this update, saying that K-Connect was asked to help facilitate discussions in terms of the homeless need, a response to homelessness and how to ensure we follow equitable practices and how we respond to homelessness and prepare for reducing it and eliminating it in the future.
- Financial Modeling Report Framework – Wende said the Coalition to End Homelessness had a report done by CSH that lays out what resources we have in the community related to rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing. Costs for development and Costs for utilization of existing structures and resources. Two models were identified of how some decisions on shifting resources within the community or garner more resources can reduce homelessness.
- Fulton Manor Project – Courtney said this is specifically for families that need shelter. This was birthed from the lack of federal motel funding available for

families. The Family Emergency Shelter Task Force was created because of the funding cuts, who subsequently entered into a partnership with Holland Home to provide a temporary living space for up to 70 or 75 families but is only available for one year. Holland Home will be either redeveloping or selling the facility in about a year. United Way and local foundations have been a partner in this project, providing some funding.

- Community Rebuilders Family Homelessness Funding – They have received a \$5 million grant from the Bezos Foundation. It is specific to ending family homelessness. Hoping to get this plan on track quickly.

The group discussed their concerns with the Land Bank being disbanded, mainly that it has been helpful in making housing safe and affordable.

Jim Talen provided his comments about the affordable housing crisis. He said we need to get people in permanent housing. The stays in shelter need to be short. Families don't do well in temporary shelters. He added that the Financial Modeling Report give us a road map on how we can do that, and he hopes attention is paid to it.

4. **3:11 Update** – Lauren Van Keulen, the Co-Executive Director and Co-Founder at 311 Youth Housing. She said they provide safe and long-term affordable housing for youth ages 18-24 who are experiencing homelessness in Kent County. She added she is also on the steering committee for Coalition to End Homelessness. She is involved in the Youth Committee and a lot of the work our community is trying to do systemically in ending homelessness for our entire community and for youth specifically.

Youth are experts at hiding homelessness, so it is tricky in identifying them. HQ has seen 450 unduplicated young people in the last 3-4 years.

Lauren went on to say they work with any young person 18-24, youth aging out of Foster Care, youth coming out of jail, pregnant and parenting individuals.

Youth pay \$250 per month in rent in 3:11 Housing. Fifty dollars of that goes into an escrow account for their 1st month's rent deposit for when they move out. Fifty dollars of that pays for utilities and \$150 goes to help defray costs. She added they work on employment and education. They have house mentors on site at each property. The relationship provides a safe and stable place for young people to find rest and move forward to the next step in their lives.

In July they received a National award from Youth Move National as the Youth Organization of the Year in Washington DC. The award was significant in many ways, but mainly because it is youth-driven. Youth voice is in every level of this organization. It is found that youth-designed approaches blended with best practices are effective ways to create buy-in and programs.

This program follows a National model called "Non-time limited Supportive Housing for Young Adults". They are not limited on how long they stay before they move on to the next phase.

The results over the last six years are seeing youth moving from homeless to owning their

own home. They have served just over 40 youth since the beginning. The last 3 or 4 years this program has grown significantly.

This program costs about \$37 a day to house a youth in this program, while it's about \$200 a night for a motel, \$28,000 to incarcerate. The cost savings are significant. Federal dollars are not utilized at this time.

Services provided in this program for youth include: purchasing things they need, providing them with 0% interest car loans, support and technical training and creative employment solutions.

Matthew commented that the award this program received was from the System of Care Conference. The System of Care Grant was written by the Coordinating Council and Network180. The connection was made by kids aging out of foster care, juvenile justice and the young adult work that is going on.

This is an example of how the relationships and partnerships we are working to create really do matter. This is good stuff coming out of the work that has been done and we are creating systems change. There are lots of good things going on.

Lauren said more information on 3:11 Housing can be found on their website at: www.3-11.org.

5. **Early Childhood Millage Update** – Sandra Ghoston-Jones said the deadline for the RFP related to the Early Childhood Millage that passed in November 2018, was Friday, January 4. Only one applicant submitted. The proposal is being evaluated and contract negotiations will be started next week. First Steps Kent was the sole applicant for the RFP.
6. **Miscellaneous**
 - Melanie Beelen shared that Baxter Community Center turns 50 this year.
 - Veneese Chandler said the Family Outreach Center is turning 40 this year. There will be a celebration.
 - Adam London said get your flu shots! Flu numbers are going up...norovirus numbers are going up. Wash your hands!
7. **Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 1:22 PM. Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 5, 2019.