

Family Services Committee Meeting Minutes – 11/13/18

In attendance: Yoshi Bird, YWCA, Melissa Blisset, Square One, Portia Bullock, NEFWC, Christine Cullen, Holyoke Chicopee Family and Community Program, Alicia Gordon, Veteran Administration, Jessica Jacobs, TPP, Fran Lemay, ServiceNet, Jane Lindfors, DTA DV Unit, Carmen Lopez, Yeisie Mateo, DCF, Heather Marshall, Elizabeth Freeman Center, Rylee O'Brien, Baystate General Pediatrics, Lizzy Ortiz, Medical Medical Group, Andrea Marion, VOC, Aisha Pizarro, YWCA, Stephen Plummer, Springfield Partners for Community Action, Martha Sandoval, Baystate General Pediatrics, Pamela Schawrtz, Network, Tanya Sparks, Janna Tetreault, Community Action, Janette Vigo, Way Finders, Julie Vital, Baystate General Pediatrics, Erica Zayas

Family shelter re-procurement discussion:The group discussed how best to approach the strategic planning. We agreed that while we await the Request for Information (RFI), due out late November or December from DHCD, we can get started with examining some of the presume questions, e.g.:

- what's working in the current system?
- what's not working and creates barriers or gaps? (including what currently exists in theory but is not actually working as intended AND what doesn't even exist but should)
- what do we think should be done differently to address those barriers and close those gaps?
- what is the role of the Network in this effort in

relationship to the role of the individual providers, i.e., what does it mean for the Network to maximize its support and complement the work

We discussed the value of family input in this process, including the possibility of focus groups and surveys. Family shelter providers will consult within their agencies on this question and report back at our next meeting. We also discussed the value of learning from the focus groups conducted by Boston-based Homes for Families and agreed to invite Libby Hayes, executive director, to our next meeting to get her input. Pamela collected possible meeting dates from the group and will report back after connecting with Libby.

We agreed everyone would consider the questions above prior to our next meeting. Then when we meet, Pamela will have news print in tow and we will use some of the meeting time to break out into small groups and start answering these questions.

Legal services training: Pamela brought to the group a conversation with Jen Dieringer of Community Legal Aid regarding bringing Legal Aid in for a training (within the committee) to better understand Legal Aid's availability and offerings in this work. The group was uniformly enthusiastic and recommended planning for a January date. Pamela will follow-up with Jen and report back.

Update on Three County Continuum of Care: Janna Tetrault of Community Action announced that the 3 county CoC is in the process of changing administrator hands. It is currently administered by the Hilltown CDC and they are deciding to no longer continue in that role. An RFP has been issued, so there will be a new CoC leader in the coming months. Stay tuned for more information as it becomes available.

Next meeting date: Pamela will report back after reaching out

to Libby Hayes to determine a meeting date.

**Update: Next meeting date set: Tuesday, December 11,
1:30-3:30 pm, Kittredge Center, Room 303, Holyoke Community
College**