

Amarillo CoC Board Meeting Minutes

December 14th, 2023

Simms Municipal Building

808 S. Buchanan St.

Amarillo, TX 79101

9:00 AM

Meeting was brought to order at 9:05 am by Kraig Stockhill and a quorum was established.

Members in attendance: Virginia Williams Trice, Kraig Stockstill, Rudy Montano, Mike Johnson, Shanna James, Meg DeJong-Shier, Michelle Shields, Audra Rea, Rachel Scott, and Juan Maldonado.

Alternate: Stefanie Rodarte-Suto was present for Jason Riddlespurger

Others Present: Caressa Pena and Samantha Hernandez

Motion was made by Juan Maldonado to approve the minutes of the November board meeting and was not opposed. Motion to approve November minutes was passed.

Lead Agency Report

Stefanie informed the CoC that HUD has assigned a new Technical Assistant. Initial meet and greet meeting was briefly held and the lead agency will work to getting the TA involved with CoC as needed.

Samantha Pena will now be the grant manager for the CoC.

Shanna James and Caressa Pena have created a google drive to keep CoC records. A link to the google drive will be sent to the board members. If board members need assistance in accessing and using the google drive, Shanna is able to provide training. While documents pertaining to prior meetings and policy and procedures, only select documents determined by the board will be editable by board members. This will ensure that documents are secure when appropriate.

Education:

Shanna reported that there is currently no speaker arrange to present for January General Membership meeting. Offered to present on the collaborative process. Topics for future meetings will first focus on those required/recommended by HUD for CoCs. At the next general meeting, there will be a request for potential speaker suggestions

PIT Count:

Shanna has initiated a PIT committee and they have had initial meetings to discuss planning for the upcoming PIT count scheduled for January 26th. Flyer to recruit volunteers for PIT was handed out to board members.

There will be a resource fair held during the PIT count. This fair is not for the general population and the target is to link actively homeless individuals and families to available resources. In addition, there is the goal to update photos of clients and update their profiles in HMIS when appropriate. Tables at fair will be first allocated to agencies actively engaged in the CoC.

Coordination for PIT count will be shared via google-drive. Included is a list of agencies/businesses that have been asked for donations. Board Members are encouraged to seek donations for resource fair and update contact list as appropriate.

Resource Pocket Pal was updated by Shanna and examples was provided to all members at meeting. A brief lesson in origami was provided.

Beans and Cornbread –

Audra explained that there have been a lack of progress due to several different reasons. Audra also announced that she was stepping down from being chair of this committee. Kraig made the recommendation to table this committee until some future time when members of the CoC can devote the necessary time and energy to a fundraiser. Board was in agreement.

Decriminalization:

No reportable progress made. Shanna suggested expanding the scope of committee to include advocacy. Board in agreement. New name of committee will be Decriminalization and Advocacy. Meg will have description of committee ready for general membership meeting in January and begin to solicitate members.

Facebook Page:

Shanna is in the process of creating the new facebook page for the Amarillo CoC. Is also in the process of working with facebook to have the old one discontinued. It was recommended that all people following the old page unfollow that page. The new facebook page should be available in time for the general meeting in January. Shanna will create a QR code for easier access.

Shelters:

(Should be added to future agendas as a committee)

Virginia mentioned that clients are dealing with inconsistencies between published policies of emergency shelters and what is actually being done at facilities. Specifically policies regarding when shelters have expanded services due to weather and whether or not they will accept pets.

Cold Blue hosted approximately 95 individuals last night.

Action Task: Kraig will reach out to all emergency shelters to confirm current policies regarding weather and pet policy. Kraig will then inform the CoC Board and general membership regarding current emergency shelters policies.

Policy Revisions

Discussion about CoC Board Requirements was held. Carissa explained that the entire procedures and policies are expected to be reviewed annually by the board in order to remain compliant with HUD. Revision to the CoC Board Requirement policy was made to ensure compliance with HUD regulations. It was noted that there should be "reserved spots" within the board for targeted populations identified by HUD.

Audra made motion add language to policy to reserve a spot on CoC board for agencies that serve schools, LGBTQIA+, and BIPOC (this is HUD language). Motion was modified to include an agency that served the disabled. Approved by board.

Audra also made motion to remove language within the procedure section regarding requirements to serve on the board of CoC as this is addressed else in the CoC policy and procedure manual. Approved by board.

Confirmed that Board has the ability to make changes with transparency with general membership- changes require ratification

Action Task: Meg will develop a statement for the CoC regarding ADEI. Draft of statement will be provided to the Board and made available via google one-drive before Christmas.

Other Business:

Kraig provided follow up regarding hosting future meetings at AAF. Unsuitable placement due to reservation system (can only reserve a month in advance). Request that members of the board use their networks to locate a suitable location downtown that is large enough for a general membership meeting. Consistency is desired as that will improve attendance.

Michelle Shields announce that there is a meeting between FSS and APD tomorrow to discuss the fact that reports of sexual assaults in the homeless communities have increased sharply over past few months. There was discussion regarding the fact that there are allegedly two predators within the community who have been identified. There is also general reports of increase use of weapons for protection and threats to and within the community.

Audra explained that the PCS Hygiene Closet, due to some issues will not be open in December. It is also not sure if there will be one in January. Superior Medicaid has not decided if the funding will continue past January. But if we have a client in need to contact Jennifer or Audra if they need hygiene items now.

Kraig asked for nominations for vice-chair and secretary. Provided additional information on the responsibilities of both positions.

Meg DeJong-Shier nominated Shanna James for vice-chair. Seconded by Juan Maldonado. Unanimous.

Juan nominated Meg DeJong-Shier for secretary. Shanna seconded. Unanimous.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:35am.

Please add coctx611@amarillo.gov to your address books and remit all future correspondence to this email.