

CoC Board Meeting Agenda
WTAMU Downtown Amarillo 720 S Tyler
SBAC Conference Room 1st Floor
9 am Thursday 4/13/2023

Welcome and Introductions

Approval of March Board and General Membership Minutes

Lead Agency – Jason Riddlespurger

- HUD Technical Assistance

Required Committees

- Monitor, Scoring, and Ranking – Chair Needed
 - Grievance – Meg DeJong Shier
- HMIS Advisory - Possible Chair (Virginia)
 - Coordinated Entry
- Point in Time Count (PIT)
- Ending Veteran Homelessness - Teena Hall
- Ending Youth Homelessness - Chair needed

Ad Hoc Committees

- Gap Analysis – Kay Pechin
- Education – Chair Needed
 - What presentation for May General Membership Meeting
- Policy & Procedure – Kraig Stockstill
- Shelter – Connie Garcia
- Event – Audra Rea

Discussion Items

- Possible event– 4/13/2023
 - Plan needed
- Attendance requirements – Board and Gen Membership – 4/13/2023
 - Policy & Procedure will investigate and propose a change
- CoC Case for Support – Meg DeJong Shier – 4/13/2023
- Online viewing of Gen Mem Meeting – 4/13/2023
- Decriminalization
- Membership Software
- List Serv Guidelines
- CoC funds Guidelines
 - Jason to report

Old Business

New Business

- Committee Reports

Adjourn

Case for Support
Amarillo Continuum of Care

Introduction

The Amarillo Continuum of Care (CoC) is a consortium of agencies, organizations, and invested community members whose collective vision address homelessness in Amarillo, Texas. The City of Amarillo Community Development Department serves as the lead agency and thus is the primary planning entity responsible for a collaborative application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development annually. This grant application renews funding each year for a diverse network of homeless assistance program in the Amarillo CoC.

Mission, Vision, and Values Statements

Mission

To build a stronger community through collaborative solutions to ensure homelessness is rare, brief, and nonrecurring

Vision

To end homelessness in Amarillo.

Values?

What is a Continuum of Care?

A Continuum of Care (CoC) is a local or regional planning body that is responsible for coordinating the funding and and delivery of housing and services for people experiencing homelessness in its service area. CoCs also maintain the local Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which is used to collect and report data on the characteristics of people experiencing homelessness as well as any patterns in the way they utilize services within the CoC. Each CoC receive funding through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, this funding is allocated to promote a community-wide response to ending homelessness. Specifically the primary purpose of the CoC program is to:

1. Promote community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness
2. Provide funding for efforts by nonprofit providers, States, and local governments to re-house homeless individuals and families rapidly while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals, families, and communities as a consequence of homelessness
3. Promote access to and effective use of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families
4. Optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness

The Amarillo Continuum of Care serves the area encompassed within the city limits of Amarillo.

History

In 1987, the U.S. Congress passed the federal law that specifically targeted homelessness. The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act) amended the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Among other changes, the HEARTH Act consolidated the three separate McKinney-Vento homeless assistance programs (Supportive Housing program, Shelter Plus Care program, and Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation SRO program) into a single grant program known as the Continuum of Care (CoC) Program. Since 1995, HUD has requested that communities submit a single application for homeless assistance funding through a locally established CoC.

Amarillo CoC was first established in _____. In 2018, the Amarillo CoC underwent a rebuilding process which included executing multiple strategic planning sessions that identified future goals for the CoC. Currently Amarillo CoC consists of over ____ agencies and individuals who embody the spirit of compassion towards a homeless population that is often overlooked, ignored and even victimized.

Assessment

Needs Statement

In December of 2022 according the Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR), HUD estimated that 582,462 people in the U.S. and associated territories were experiencing homelessness. This number represents an increase of nearly 2,000 people over the last complete count which was done in 2020. While there are numerous factors that contribute to homelessness in the U.S., two key reasons for homelessness in the U.S. is the lack of affordable housing and poverty.

A requirement of HUD for CoCs is that they conduct a count of sheltered homeless persons on a single night in January which is call the Person-In-Time (PIT) count. CoCs are also required to conduct a count of unsheltered homeless individuals every other year (odd number years). Amarillo CoC conducts the PIT count of both sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons biannually. During this 24-hour count a record is made of all homeless people who are sheltered in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and Safe Havens.

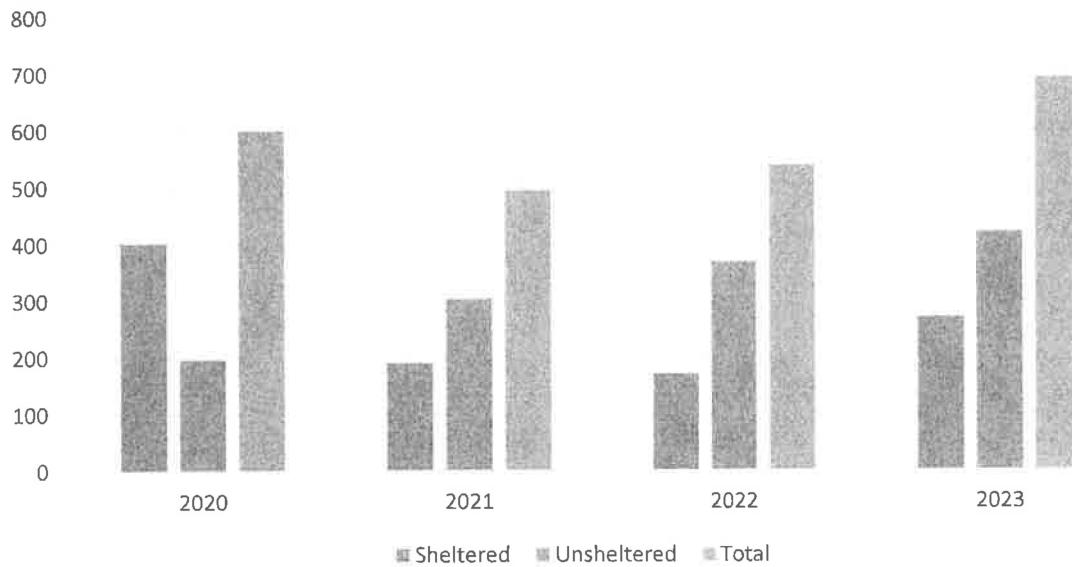
The 2023 Winter PIT count for Amarillo reveals the following results:

January 2022	Sheltered	Unsheltered	Total
TOTAL	271	421	692
Adults (Age 18+)	218	412	630
Children (Under 18)	44	0	44
Young Adults (18-24)	9	9	18
Female	60	129	189
Male	210	290	500
Transgender	1	2	3
Veterans	29	22	51
Chronically Homeless	3	99	102

As the population of Amarillo is 201,000 for 2022, the rate of homelessness for Amarillo is calculated to be 344 homeless individuals per 100,000. This rate is more than three higher than the estimated rate of homeless for the state of Texas which is 94 homeless individuals per 100,000.

Further examination of multiple winter PIT counts for Amarillo demonstrate that homelessness trends are shifting in Amarillo. Amarillo is seeing a steady increase in Unsheltered Individuals during the course of the past four years. While there was a decrease in the total homeless population during the height of Covid-19, the most recent winter PIT count has saw a significant increase which is likely to be the result of recent inflation in the U.S.

Amarillo Winter PIT Count Results



Solution

Amarillo CoC primarily utilizes the Housing First model which is an evidence-based model of addressing homelessness developed by Dr. Sam Tsemberis in 1992. This model is an approach to quickly connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment or service participation requirements. Supportive services are provided in effort to maximize housing stability and prevent a return to homelessness. Housing is viewed as a basic human right, rather than a luxury.

Housing First is built on the following principles:

- Homelessness is first and foremost a housing crisis and can be addressed through the provision of safe and affordable housing.
- All people experiencing homelessness, regardless of their housing history and duration of homelessness, can achieve housing stability in permanent housing. Some may need very little support for a brief period of time, while others may need more intensive and long-term support.
- Everyone is “housing ready.” Sobriety, compliance in treatment, or even criminal histories are not necessary to succeed in housing. Rather, homelessness programs and housing providers must be “consumer ready.”
- Many people experience improvements in quality of life, in the areas of health, mental health, substance use, and employment, as a result of achieving housing.

- People experiencing homelessness have the right to self-determination and should be treated with dignity and respect.
- The exact configuration of housing and services depends upon the needs and preferences of the population.

Impact

Discuss the amount of money received by HUD due to the CoC grant application? Distribution?
Need info.

Services

The main objective of the Amarillo CoC is to facilitate the collaboration between the many agencies and programs in Amarillo who provide services to those who are homeless. This is done through hosting a general membership meeting every other month. At these meetings updates about the CoC is divulged, education is provided, and an opportunity to network is provided. To meet the needs of members as well as subpopulations within Amarillo's homeless community the following committees have been developed:

Monitor, Scoring, and Ranking. This committee reviews all applications made directly to the Amarillo CoC for HUD funds allocation.

Grievance. Is assigned to address any concerns or complaints made by agencies who participate in the grant application process with the Amarillo CoC.

HMIS Advisory. Created to facilitate the prioritization of collection and analyzation of data collected through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) by all members of the Amarillo CoC.

Point in Time (PIT) Count. This committee works to assist the lead agency in preparing and conducting a successful PIT count both in July and January of each year.

Coordinated Entry. ?

Ending Veteran Homelessness. Focused on the specific needs of those homeless individuals who have served the U.S. military.

Ending Youth Homelessness. Focused on the specific needs of those under the age of 18 and who are homeless.

Finances?

Planning and Evaluation

The board members of Amarillo CoC meet monthly to discuss strategic planning for the CoC at large. In addition, the lead agency works directly with representatives from HUD who regularly conducts audits on the Amarillo CoC. (Feel like there is more, but uncertain)

Governance

Membership in the Amarillo CoC is open to agencies or organizations that work within the City limits of Amarillo and provide or facilitate services to the homeless. Within this membership are representatives from relevant organizations in Amarillo including nonprofits homeless assistance providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, university, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, and organizations that serve veterans and homeless and formerly homeless individuals.

Voting membership is allocated to one designated individual from each member agency or organization. An agency or organization can identify an alternative voting representative. Voting members are responsible for evaluating proposed governance structures, completing a community assessment, and voting new policy into place.

The Amarillo CoC board consists of individuals who represent relevant organizations and projects that serve homeless subpopulations and will include at least one homeless or formerly homeless individual. To be eligible for the board, an individual must meet the following requirements:

1. Must attend a minimum of 75% of the CoC regular meetings in a calendar year.
2. Must attend a minimum of 75% of the meetings of their assigned Standing Committee in a calendar year.
3. Must be current with membership fees each year.
4. Must disclose potential conflicts of interest and sign a conflict of interest statement annually.
5. Must recuse oneself when voting on a matter that is a conflict of interest.
6. Must have the authority to act on behalf of the organization they represent.
7. Minimum attendance requirements can be met with the use of a written proxy for no more than two (2) meetings in a calendar year

2023 Board Members (Need list from Joyce):

HMIS Committee - Bare Bones Report - CoC Board Meeting - 2023.04.13

- No formal meeting since our first meeting on 3/7/23
- Discussion of next meeting being Friday, 4/21/23 @ 9.
- Several people attended the NHSDC Spring Conference: From CoA: Caressa Pena, Vanessa Robinson, Alvaro Hrgic (Coming Home), from CoC: Mark Zimmerman (Transformation Park) and Julie Cleveland (Texas Panhandle Center), from PCS: Andra Rea + 4 team members, Personally funded: Virginia Williams Trice (Amarillo Housing First)
- Hopefully some of the attendees will be interested in participating in Amarillo CoC HMIS Committee
- Need to formalize the mission/purpose of Amarillo CoC HMIS Committee and review/refresh P&Ps to encourage optimum participation and data quality. Caressa is already working on the P&Ps. I have pulled examples from other CoCs and guidance from HUD Exchange regarding suggested/normal HMIS Committee operations.

Respectfully,
Virginia Williams Trice