**Minutes**

**Mental Health Planning Council**

**Housing Committee**

**October 28, 2015**

Present

• Jeff Chasse (Vinfen)

• Mary Callanan (MAMH)

• Adrianne Cassidy (Advocates)

• Sue White (Vinfen)

• Jonathan Bowen-Leopold (MA APSE)

• Paul McPartland (DHCD)

• Ann Capoccia (DMH)

• Ruthie Poole (M-Power)(Transformation Center) (via telephone)

• Joe Vallely (DMH)

Excused

• Constantine Souris (NAMI)

• Dennis McCrory, MD (MRC, Private Practice)

• Sid Gelb (NAMI)

• Dave Eng (MassHousing)

**Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The meeting was chaired by Adrianne Cassidy, who called it to order at 10:08AM.

The minutes from the July 15 meeting were presented and approved.

**Report on Joe Finn’s Meeting with Commissioner Mikula**

Joe stated that he had a very good conversation with the Commissioner a number of weeks ago, touching on a variety of issues including access to services, the need for housing, housing first, Medicaid; and felt there was significant common ground to establish a collaborative working relationship to address the needs of those with mental illness who fall into homelessness. He appreciated her openness and expression to listen and learn, as her background has been in child and adolescent mental health.

Joe went on to talk about the need for a planned approach; as the numbers of homeless grow and resources are limited. He noted that single adult efforts are somewhat now overshadowed by the need to house families who are stuck in hotels and motels. The private hospitals must be brought into the conversation as significant numbers of clients end up at shelters. Medicaid is stepping up to fund programs like (CSPECH) Community Support Program for People Experiencing Chronic Homeless that that supports homeless in housing. MHSA has their own model of housing-first named Pay for Success that is showing promising results. All of these approaches and more must be brought to bear on the homeless mentally ill.

**CHAPA Regional Meetings**

Adrianne reported on having attended the CHAPA Regional Meeting in Boston as did Jonathan. There was a very thorough presentation on the DHCD budget. It was clear that low income families, particularly homeless families, are the focus based on CHAPA’s presentation as the need is great and children must be a priority. CHAPA did not report on DMH-RSP increase of $500,000 in FY16.

It was suggested that CHAPA be invited to a future meeting of the Housing Subcommittee to talk about the housing policy work they are involved with. Adrianne will follow-up.

**FY2016 Housing Budget Update & DMH-RSP**

Some of the highlights to the DHCD budget included an increase of $18.7M to MRVP (MA Rental Voucher Program) along with $1M increase to AHVP (Alternative Housing Voucher Program). As we know DMH-RSP increased by $500,000.

In addition, there was a $1.9M increase for homeless individuals; $2M for unaccompanied homeless youth and $1M for EOHHS fund called End Family Homelessness Reserve Fund.

Joe further reported that DHCD issued awards in September for affordable rental housing supporting about 1,484 units. Of these awards 277 units will serve those at or below 30% of Area Median Income. Units designated to serve DMH clients funded by FCF number 12.

DHCD is making available additional funding ($11.5M) through the Housing Preservation and Stabilization Trust Fund (HPSTF) and MRVP targeting vulnerable populations. These include homeless families, homeless individuals, unaccompanied youth, frail elders and individuals in recovery from substance abuse. Approx. 125 MRVP will be made available. Pre-Applications due mid-November.

He also noted that the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD) in a meeting with Commissioners encouraged Depts of Mental Health to get directly involved with devising a supportive housing strategy working with state housing agencies, Medicaid and others in government at the highest levels. MH Authorities cannot by themselves be responsible to figure out how to provide housing.

**Next Meeting**

December 2, 2015 Conf TBD- 10am-1130am

25 Staniford Street Boston, MA 02114