In Attendance:
Andrea Simonett, Department of Human Services
Andrew Pietsch, Blue Earth County Human Services
Angela Early, Veterans Administration
Ashley McCarthy, Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership
Barb Durbahn, South Central Human Relations Center
Cindy Norgard, The Salvation Army, Rochester
Dayna Cemensky, Three Rivers Community Action
Gretchen Rialson, South Central MN Multi-County HRA
Guy Sing, MN Assistance Council for Veterans
Janie Holliday, Center City Housing
Jen Jorgensen, Semcac
Jen Theneman, Partners for Affordable Housing
Jennifer Cook, Red Wing HRA
John Buhta, Southern MN Regional Legal Services
Julie Anderson, Steele County Transitional Housing
Kate Hengy-Gretz, Minnesota Valley Action Council
Kelly McDonough, Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging
Kim Lieberman, JustUs Health
Liz Young, Hearth Connection
Mary Vrieze, Southern MN Regional Legal Services
Matt Traynor, MN Coalition for the Homeless
Meghan Sawicki, Ruth’s House
Meredith Stolte, Northfield Union of Youth
Michele Merxbauer, Olmsted County HRA
Nancy Bokelmann, Mankato/Blue Earth County-EDA
Nathaniel Saltz, Minnesota Assistance Council for Vets
Nellie Bruce, Hearth Connections
Nichelle Shannon, Community Representative
Nicollette Meyer, Family Promise Rochester
Randi Callahan, Three Rivers Community Action
Rebecca Rand, SCHRC
Rick Sundberg, 180 Degrees
Ruth Lee, MN Prairie County Alliance
Sheila Alba, Project Home HRC
Sue Worlds, Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans
Sybil Betsinger, Community Action Center of Northfield
Tammy Moses, Lutheran Social Services
Trent Fluegel, Olmsted County
Victoria Heun, The Salvation Army, Mankato
Wes Brandenburger, Center City Housing
Facilitator: Nancy Bokelmann, Mankato/Blue Earth County-EDA  
CoC Staff: Jennifer Prins, Katherine Cross  
Recorder: Michelle Loken

Pre-meeting Event: Governor Walz read the Ending Veteran Homelessness Declaration. Commissioner Jennifer Leimaile Ho (Housing Finance Agency) and Commissioner Larry Herke (Department of Veteran Affairs) were special guests and speakers.

Welcome, Introductions, and Announcements: This meeting included several announcements: Michele Merxbauer representing Olmsted County HRA, stated that a two bedroom, public housing waiting list has been open for seventy-two hours. The Section 8 waiting list is not open yet.

Tammy Moses said Lutheran Social Services has employment opportunities at both locations. Anyone interested in working with youth should check out their website.

Matt Traynor thanked Kate Hengy-Gretz for being the regional hub for scholarships for the MN Coalition for the Homeless Conference. He also mentioned they are working on collecting client stories about the MFIP (Minnesota Family Investment Program) increase. Parents that are on, or have been on, MFIP will get a $100 stipend for sharing their story with Matt or one of his colleagues. They have funding for up to twenty people.

Gretchen Rialson from South Central MN Multi-County HRA noted their Section 8 wait list is open.

Andrew Pietsch representing Blue Earth County Human Services said their biggest update is they continue to take referrals off Coordinated Entry for some case load openings for their Housing Support Long Term Homeless Program and Regional Housing Supportive Housing Initiative.

Nellie Bruce from Hearth Connection announced that she is the contact for the Crisis Housing Fund. She can assist anyone needing direction for clients experiencing mental health issues, or clients that are in a chemical dependency treatment that are looking for resources for housing stability.

Kelly McDonough from Minnesota River Area Agency on Aging mentioned that Title III Grant applications and RFP (Request for Proposals) are out and due by 4:00 p.m. on August 2nd.

Rebecca Rand-Johnson representing SCHRC will be providing rapid access to people who are homeless in our area.

Jennifer Prins announced that Robyn Meixner will be stepping into the Mainstream Solutions Navigator role beginning July 23rd.

Approval of June Minutes & July Agenda: Julie Anderson motioned to approve the June minutes and July agenda. Andrew Pietsch seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

Committee Decisions/Requests/Outcomes:
Executive Committee – Nancy B deferred the report to staff. Jennifer Prins stated there were no more revisions received on the Governance Charter since last meeting and that the Exec Committee requested a vote to approve the revised Governance Charter. Mary Vrieze motioned to approve the Governance Charter. Andrew Pietsch seconded the motion. The motion was carried. No abstentions.

Jennifer noted there were no additional comments regarding the Grievance Policy since last meeting and that the Exec Committee requested a vote to approve the updated Policy. Mary Vrieze motioned to approve the Grievance Policy. Ruth Lee seconded the motion. The motion was carried. No abstentions.
Jennifer also stated that the Executive Committee recommends that we continue with the workgroups. The Executive Committee also discussed identifying and welcoming new members to the CoC. They will be looking to committee members for suggestions and leadership in doing that.

The Data & TA (Technical Assistance) Committee was scheduled to meet today, but the meeting will be rescheduled due to schedule conflicts. Things to be aware of include the upcoming preparation for the Point-In-Time Count. Notifications will be sent out regarding any training opportunities.

Project Review and Rating Committee: Mary Vrieze announced the project review and ranking meeting will be at Three Rivers in Rochester, on August 16th from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Coordinated Entry Committee Kate reported that the CE Committee discussed the shift of responsibilities between Jennifer Prins and Katherine Cross. A who-to-contact sheet has been created. The committee also talked about the RHASP (Rural Housing Assistance and Stability Program) pilot. Work will continue on the pilot. MN Housing is requiring FHPAP (Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program) providers to use the MPAT (Minnesota Homeless Prevention Assessment Tool) tool and MN Housing has indicated that tool can be used by other organizations. One of the things put in place was an Order of Priority for Rapid Rehousing, Transitional Housing, and Joint Rapid Rehousing /Transitional Housing. This will be voted on at a later date. Please see attachment for details on the Order of Priority.

Katherine Cross shared details on a summer list cleanup. Each agency will be given fifty names to call. The list will be sent out by the end of August with a toolkit, confidentiality form, and specific instructions about the process. The calls should be made within a three-week timeframe. Student volunteers in the community could be recruited to make the calls.

Rochester Youth Committee is planning for a needs-based assessment. They would like to tie this in with a regional approach in preparation for the Homeless Demonstration Grant. If there are providers that would like to be part of this discussion and preparation, please connect with Jennifer Prins.

HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) Governing Board is looking for feedback from the HMIS user survey. There are sixty-three users in our region and only three have responded. Please see email from ICA for details and survey link.

FY2019 HUD Continuum of Care Competition Opens – Details: HUD released this year’s NOFA (Notice of Funding Availability) on July 3. Our local competition was announced on July 12 and is now open for new projects through August 78. July 25 is the deadline for notification of intent to apply (online form). If you are planning a standalone project, if you are thinking you want to expand your project, you have an expansion proposal now, or you want to be considered for unassigned funds, you need to put in the intent to apply. Unassigned funds means that, after the Project Review Committee looks at applications and ranks them for HUD and they realize that we have not applied for everything we are eligible for, there is still a chance to get a small expansion for previously already reviewed projects.

If you want to transition your program type (from PSH to RRH, for example), that is considered a new project that would require an intent to apply, which is a simple, online Google form. You would need to prepare a budget and describe the basics of what you are planning for, so you have a sense of where everything will fit. This is due by July 25.

New project webinars will be available to view on June 22 and 23. The webinars will cover what it means to be a CoC grantee and what’s involved in applying for funds. Jennifer will be sending out links and information regarding the webinars.
The total amount that our region can apply for is $2.3 million. The amount comes from the value of renewals ($1.6 million), plus two bonuses that are included in that, which total $275,000. The Planning Grant is $65,000. The July 25 deadline is for new projects, not renewals. We will do the final approval at the meeting on September 19th. The due date is September 30th.

CoC Bonus funds available are ~$108,000 for general new projects. There is an additional bonus for DV (Domestic Violence) projects. You must have expertise in services for DV, dating violence, stalking or trafficking to be able to serve that population well in order to be eligible for those funds.

Project priorities: 1. New Rapid Rehousing and Joint Rapid Rehousing. 2. New Permanent Supportive Housing or Rapid Rehousing targeted at specific unmet needs or increase client choice. If there are populations that are not being served well with existing programs, this is the time to think about that. 3. CE Navigation. 4. Expansion of existing high-performing PSH or Rapid Rehousing.

Changes this year:
- HUD is breaking Housing First into a couple different concepts this year. Low Barrier/No Barrier entry is still a key required component. However, this year’s NOFA notes that service requirements may make sense for some programs after housing is stabilized. In terms of programs that have been proposed, there won’t be any penalty for having service requirements this year.
- A strong emphasis on income and employment are highlighted this year. This area has jumped significantly in the points. HUD is looking for formal partnerships with employment agencies, workforce programs, job training programs, supportive employment, and direct employment. The aim is to increase income, which in turn supports housing stability.
- Another thing that is new this year is youth serving providers. The primary mission is to serve persons under twenty-five years old that do not have a safe night-time residence.
- HUD is heavily emphasizing data in their policy priorities applying to this funding round. Being clear about how data fits in will be looked upon favorably.

MCH Conference Scholarships (additional agenda item): Kate Hengy-Gretz, Andrew Pietsch, Sue Worlds, and Ruth Lee volunteered to be on the Ranking Committee for scholarships for the MN Coalition for the Homeless Conference. Andrew said last year they ranked applications on where they were spread across our twenty counties. They felt it was beneficial to choose people from the three hub areas. They also considered their motive for applying, and chose applicants that sincerely wanted to be a voice. They gaged applicants according to what sort of lived experience the applicant had, and how they wrote their application. The committee used content value to weigh the applications. Scholarship applications have to be turned into Kate by August 10th.

Overview CoC Action Plan: The ten-year plan and annual action plans that we have adopted at CoC meetings can be found on the CoC website. The strategic plan and vision was to end homelessness within ten years. What ending homelessness really means is being ready and able to respond to and meet needs as they emerge. We will know if we have achieved our goals by the Point-In-Time Counts. Our plan is also tied in with the state Heading Home Together Plan. We are also connected with the System Performance measures for HUD and the US Opening Doors Plan.

Our overall goal is to prevent homelessness whenever possible. The strategies we will use are targeting prevention resources, increasing quality diversion strategies, and prioritizing project models that prevent returns to homelessness. The MPAT tool fits into prioritizing prevention resources. The diversion strategy is something on our work plan, and we intend to build that out more. Prioritizing
project models that emphasize preventing returns to homelessness is part of our scoring and project reviews. The second goal that has been identified is, when homelessness does occur, we need to end it quickly. Rapid Rehousing will shorten time in emergency shelters and transitional housing, along with, connecting people to employment and income. We also need to make sure emergency shelters are directing people to CE and mainstream resources.

The other two goals are making sure our programs and systems are making sense and delivering what they are supposed to. Monitoring, targeting resources, and training are elements for making sure that our programs are operating effectively and efficiently. We also need to advocate for more resources. Making sure that we have the funding for the system supports we need, is key to making our work happen.

We have identified four priority populations with target dates for ending homelessness. Ending veteran homelessness by 2019 was a goal. We are on target, but now we need to maintain. Other populations that have significant needs are: chronic, youth, and family homelessness. Specific strategies have been identified within the plan to focus on those populations. There are annual action plans as well. In 2019, we have been building out the workgroup plans. A copy of the 2019 work plan was handed out and reviewed. Please see attachment for details.

**System Performance Measures Workgroup Time:**
- Landlord Engagement
- Emergency Shelter Support
- Income and Employment/SoAR (Social Security Income Outreach, Access and Recovery)
- Expanding Housing Support
- Youth Homelessness Team – Convene?

**Workgroup Report Out and Discussion on Recommendations, Requests, and Next Steps:**
The Landlord Engagement Group will be focusing on creating and delivering a toolkit for landlord engagement and expanding use for master leasing for permanent housing. The group does not feel that we are ready for master leasing in our region. At this point, they are not able to create landlord mitigation funds.

The PHA Preferences Group is working to encourage use of PHA preferences to increase the supply of housing options to both 1) shorten the length of time homeless and 2) build partnerships for positive exits from PSH. The group has largely finished its workgroup tasks and would like to join the Landlord Engagement Group. They would like to see if the PHAs (Public Housing Authorities) can help with landlord engagement. The group have already had regional and state meetings on that topic, through efforts in coordination with the Minneapolis HUD Field Office. They feel they are already on track with that goal.

The Income and Employment/SoAR Group is trying to increase the income through expanded partnerships with Workforce Centers and SOAR. This group has looked at where Workforce Centers are located throughout southeast Minnesota. They are looking at how the different agencies are currently connecting with the Workforce Centers to try to increase employment, and recommend adding that as a requirement for the CoC project applications next year. Statistics have shown we have a large number of people in our region that are probably Social Security eligible, but are not receiving the benefits. Supports are needed. The group has reached out to an advocate from DHS (Department of Human Services) so they can get some information on how they can tie that together with the different funding that is available before the next funding round in July 2020. They want to talk to the advocate about what they can do to get more SOAR workers in our area. Jennifer will participate in a MN-DEED webinar for staff at Workforce Centers to help in building the connections for clients experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Katherine will research how additional questions on the CE form could identify who is in need and how we can reach them.
The Shelter Engagement Group is looking at ways to increase outreach to privately-operated emergency shelters to reduce barriers and increase connections to mainstream support services. They have created a draft survey to propose a meet and greet, to introduce everyone, and to share resources in their area. It would be an opportunity to talk freely about what their needs look like. They will finalize the survey and get it sent out within the next week or two. They will await feedback on location and topics people would be interested in discussing. From that initial meet and greet, they hope to develop an analysis to see if meeting is beneficial and to see if people are looking for more training. We want to make sure we are meeting the needs of the shelter, so we can focus on the priorities that HUD has established.

The Expanding Housing Support Group is working to help additional counties increase housing options with Housing Support program. The resource guide they have created is close to completion. They are going to contact DHS next week to schedule meetings with Region 9 and Region 10 Human Services directors to push out the guide in the next month or two. The guide will be posted publicly on the CoC resource page.

Kate Hengy-Gretz motioned to adjourn the meeting. Randi Callahan seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.