

The Iowa Council on Homelessness

UNOFFICIAL DRAFT MINUTES

CONTINUUM OF CARE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, December 8, 2015

10:30 AM

Location: The Iowa Finance Authority

Address: 2015 Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50312

A meeting of the Continuum of Care Committee was held on December 8, 2015. The following voting members were present: Benne, Kellogg, Walker, and Wilson. A quorum was not established and the meeting proceeded in an unofficial status.

Application Timetable

General consensus that although not perfect, the 2015 calendar model is the best alternative. This means keeping the renewal application completion process prior to release of HUD's NOFA.

Late submissions

There were two issues this year, one with an application of the e-snaps version of a renewal and one in which 1-2 questions were not answered but the application was turned in before the deadline. In the former case, there seemed to be confusion because of multiple submission dates and a similar timetable for submission of APR data to HUD. Again, there was consensus that having a written policy in place was desirable. There was not consensus on whether or not late submissions should be accepted, be they of entire applications or of answers that had not been completed. As discussion ensued, more sentiment seemed to be in favor of not accepting late submissions. There appeared to be consensus that applicants who submitted incomplete applications should not be penalized beyond the zeros they would receive for answers left incomplete.

Scoring process

There was consensus on the importance of having the same number of reviewers assigned to read and score each proposal. The idea of having all reviewers read and score every application was expressed but this would require buy in and participation from reviewers who could set aside more-or-less a day to do so. Finding enough reviewers who do not have conflicts of interest has been a challenge in the past.

An advantage of having several reviewers (at least six) score each application would be that high and low scores could be dropped so that outlying scores do not dramatically affect any one proposal.

Composition of Reviewers

The committee agreed that it is important to work toward having totally separate groups review applications and appeals. There was also sentiment that it would be preferable if the Executive Committee were removed from the appeals process, though individual members of the EC might continue to be involved as reviewers. Identifying outside groups from which reviewers for one phase or another might be recruited was discussed. Possible sources that were mentioned were people serving on local planning groups in areas where few if any applications have originated and those serving on other governor-appointed boards and councils.

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Utilizing reviewers from outside of the Council and certainly from outside of homelessness/affordable housing issues would require some orientation to HUD, the CoC and issues of services to those experiencing homelessness. This would be in addition to the time involved in reading the applications.

An advantage of this system would be that the CoCC would then be free to hear appeals and have final say on scoring. Having a body composed of individuals from outside the Council serve for appeals would require less time and involve a shorter orientation, since the questions mainly focus on process. However, at least one Committee member would be reluctant to relinquish final decision-making to a group only tangentially involved in addressing homelessness.

The Committee asked for input on the composition and review/appeals format from the Executive Committee; in particular in identifying new people/groups that should be approached to participate in reading applications or hearing appeals.

The unofficial meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM.

Voting Members Present

1. Steven Benne, Iowa Economic Development Authority
2. Barb Kellogg, North Iowa Community Action Organization
3. John Walker
4. Tim Wilson (Chair), Home Forward Iowa

Others Present

1. Cindy Hess, Hillcrest Family Services
3. Stacy Kiser-Willey, Vera French Housing
3. Amber Lewis, Iowa Finance Authority
4. Josh McRoberts, Iowa Finance Authority
4. Galen Rundle
5. Janet Walker, City of Dubuque