



## CoC MEMBER MEETING MEETING MINUTES

June 22, 2017

9:30-11:00am

Facilitator:	Karen Tjapkes		
Meeting Attendees:	<p>Karen Tjapkes (Legal Aid), Victoria Sluga (Pine Rest), Wayne Kennerly (MDHHS), Kelsey Dracht (ICCF), Deanna Rolffs (ICCF), Lynn Henges (MDHHS), Tim Beimers (The Salvation Army), Emily Schichtel (United Way), Stephanie Gingerich (LINC Up), Chris Romero (HRS), Amber Troupe (MDHHS), Jan Van der Woerd (ICCF), Casey Gordon (Kent ISD), Sheena Threatt (True North Community Services), Erin Wieczorek (GRHC), Wanda Couch (GRHC), Johanna Schulte (City of Grand Rapids), Johnny Melendez (Health Network of West MI), John Wynbeek (Genesis), Donald Eikenhout (Cherry Health), Lauren VanKeulen (3:11), Denise Price (Reliance CCP), Adrienne Goodstal (Mel Trotter), Arielle Goodson (Bethany), Lisa Tatum (Community Member), Karen Leppek (AAAWM), Marcia Park (Senior Neighbors), Christina Swiney (Access of W. MI), Niki Perkins (Access of W. MI), Emily Stroka (KCHC), Jennifer Grostic (Degage), Kwan McEwen (GR Urban League), Lynne Bosma (Salvation Army), Alonda Trammell (Dwelling Place), Sherrie Gillespie (ASCET), Tara Aday (Safe Haven), Rebeca Venema (Wyoming Housing), Tom Cottrell (YWCA), Jean Olds (Well House), Becky Mills (Safe Haven), Heather Colletto (Serve GR), Amy Demott (IKUS), Tim Hileman (IKUS), JP Dombrowski (Keeler Flats I &amp; II), David Coates (Keeler Flats I &amp; II), Christina Soulard (Salvation Army), Felicia Clay (GRHC), Amanda Sterzick (Family Promise), Liz Keegan (FHCWM), Milly Wiersma (Family Promise), Trenessa Allan (GR Housing Commission)</p> <p>Also, Present: Jesica Vail (Coalition Staff), Bree Butler (Coalition Staff)</p>		
Time Convened:	9: 31 am	Time Adjourned:	10:58

<b>Approval of Minutes</b>		<b>April 28, 2017</b>	
Motion by:	Tom	Support from:	Casey
Discussion	None		
Amendments	None		
Conclusion	Minutes approved, motion passed		
<b>Presentations</b>			
Discussion			
<b>a. SOAR</b>			
Lynn Henges (MDHHS)			
Soar has been in existence for several years. Soar connects the most vulnerable individuals to income through social security. They can utilize a small number of resources to give individuals a life time of economic stability through social security.			
Wayne Kennerly (MDHHS)			
Feedback in the past has been that filing for social security has been a lot of work and time. SOAR has mainstreamed the process so that training is easier as well as the process. Kent County does the majority of cases with Newaygo following. There has been a 65% total approval rating, this compares			



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to an approval of 23% if individuals undertake the process themselves. 2,774 individuals have received help with approximately 800 being chronically homeless before finding stability through social security.

Victoria Sluga (Pine Rest)

In Kent County, there has been an increase in SOAR providers. Communications are open between SOAR, Disability Determination Services (DDS), and Social Security (SSA). SOAR representatives meet quarterly. SOAR has a great relationship with Legal Aid of West MI, this is a beneficial connection because when an application is denied, Legal Aid will take care of the appeal process. Organizations that have actively trained individuals includes: Hope Network, Dwelling Place, Community Rebuilders, Network 180, and Pine Rest. The community is not large enough for there to be a SOAR drop in center. Therefore, SOAR in West MI counts on organizations stepping up and training their own staff to be SOAR representatives. Pine Rest has found that pooling together staff and doing an assembly line to complete a SOAR application is preferable and more efficient. It is a two-month process working with the client, then around the 5-6 month mark a decision is received. The appeal process after a denial adds on additional time. Having SOAR as an aid in the process can be extremely helpful and speed up the lengthy process. United Way is donating money to SOAR this year for the first time. Jessica Vail (CoC)

The Kent County community needs more SOAR volunteers and the ability for agencies to build in an internal SOAR program because it is very beneficial and Kent County needs more SOAR providers. Heads of Households with disabilities is one specific area of need that would benefit.

For SOAR purposes, the SAMSA definition of homelessness is used. It is a broader definition, for example an individual who has 0% income can count as homeless.

Individuals can apply for work while in the SOAR process, and Soar has programs that are specifically geared for that.

There are cases of individuals who might have a disability but have never been formally diagnosed. SOAR will poll all the hospitals that the individual may have visited to locate records. In cases where no medical records have been located, Network 180 will help with medical issues and getting formal documents. Once a social security application is opened, the applicant has 60 days to gather records and complete the application. Another benefit of SOAR is that they will help with issues that may take longer than the 60-day period, problems which could be difficult for applicants when applying alone. A one day Michigan SOAR fundamentals training in the Lansing area is available the end of July. The online training is good when done in tandem with the cohorts, which can help to keep people on task.

### **b. ServeGR Website**

Heather Colletto (ServeGR)

ServeGR connects individuals with ongoing volunteer opportunities in the greater Grand Rapids area. The website has a search tool that will help narrow down/tailor options. ServeGR aims to match people's strengths and interests with volunteer opportunities. They also take time constraints into consideration.

All opportunities are local and all opportunities are updated and accurate. For each opportunity there is descriptive and essential information provided.

One time projects are not listed but there are low commitment opportunities.

Call Heather if you would like your organization to post volunteer opportunities on the website.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
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<p>Jesica to send web address for SOAR resources out. Jesica to send out an email about upcoming training and cohorts for SOAR</p>		
<p><b>Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Applicant Presentations</b></p>		
<p>Discussion</p>		
<p><b>a. ICCF – Eastern Elementary</b> Jan Van der Woerd: ICCF purchased the Eastern Elementary property and is working with an architect and construction company to get the project underway. The building is 4 stories tall and is located in the highland park neighborhood. For the project, filing an October application is a possibility but not a guarantee. Today is only an update about where ICCF is on the project. 50 apartments over 3 floors, would be Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) for individuals with special needs. There would be a range of apartment sizes and number of rooms. ICCF is currently looking for a partner to help with the PSH housing. ICCF may also pursue the tax credit. Additionally, 25-35 units would be low income available. A feature that will serve as an amenity is the gym in the building, the gym would be great for winter months providing an indoor activity space. Please note that the MSHDA timeline is 120 days so projects may change over this time.</p> <p><b>b. Keeler Flats I &amp; II Limited Dividend Housing Association Limited Partnership</b> JP Dombrowski: Keeler Flats I &amp; II is located at 56 North Division and is 173,000 sq. feet. It has historical significance and the NPS may accept it as an historical landmark. This would be beneficial as it would add a federal tax credit. The finished building would have 132 affordable apartments on floors 2-7. The project proposes to be able to cover bus fares for residents for the duration of their tenancy, paid for by the savings in energy from the building. With 60% of net zero energy efficiency, residents may not have to pay a utility bill. Currently working to help residents not need a car to survive and reach basic amenities. David Coates: This building is the first building in Grand Rapids to be built with poured concrete. The building has a good foundation to build residences. An atrium is one solution for use of the large space taking up the middle of the building. There would be parking space for IKUS to have a pick up and drop off point and space inside the building for meetings and activities. Floors 2-7 would be residential and the first floor would be commercial. Tim Hileman: To help tenants maintain a long term residential living situation can be a challenge but there is a plan for community living support and job/career support in place. Breaking isolation and providing necessary support is the goal, therefore social spaces will be incorporated as well. Steering council votes on a letter of support for each project closer to the MSHDA application deadline.</p>		



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Updates	
Discussion	
<p><b>Legal Aid:</b> Legal Aid of West MI has officially moved and 25 Division South is the new street address. Please be sure to refer clients to this address.</p> <p><b>Degage:</b> Degage is celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a free luncheon (pig roast) on July 11th 11:30am to 1:00pm. Everyone is invited.</p> <p><b>MDHHS:</b> The application period is open for ESP. Shelter Training Opportunities: <u>Being an Awesome Shelter - July 20-21, 2017</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Kellogg Center, East Lansing, MI</li> <li>o Registration Fee: \$40.00</li> <li>o Register by June 30 at: <a href="https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/awesomesherter">https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/awesomesherter</a></li> <li>o <i>This 1.5 day workshop focuses on transforming shelters as a critical part of ending homelessness when they have a strong housing orientation. From intake procedures to staff engagement strategies; rules to barring practices; built form considerations to approaches to housing engagement – this Learning Clinic is rich in not just provocative content, but also practical adjustments shelters can make to improve positive destinations out of shelter. This clinic also features specialized streams for families, youth, and single adults.</i></li> </ul> <p><u>National Alliance to End Homelessness Emergency Shelter Webinar Series</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o NAEH is providing a six-month installment of webinars and complementary resources and tools dedicated to guiding and supporting communities interested in improving the way they serve those experiencing homelessness and in need of shelter. The website is: <a href="http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/emergency-shelter">http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/emergency-shelter</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Weatherization Assistance Program:</b> Currently accepting applicants to apply for weatherization. For more details call (616) 336-2228.</p> <p><b>Grand Rapids Housing Commission:</b> GRHC will accept new applicants to their Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program until June 30<sup>th</sup>. For more information visit <a href="http://grhclist.org">grhclist.org</a>.</p>	
Adjourn	
Discussion	
Next Meeting: Thursday, August 24, 2017	