

Minutes
Scranton/Lackawanna County Continuum of Care
Board of Directors Meeting
May 18, 2021

A virtual meeting of the Board of the Lackawanna/Scranton CoC took place on May 18, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. The following members participated: Joe Hollander, Lisa Durkin, Andy Hurchik, Alexis Kelly, Justin Marino, John Byrd, Peg Ruddy, Nichole Rios, Krista Somers, and Sr. Susan Hadzima. Joe Hollander, Chair, welcomed everyone and thanked them for joining after the meeting was rescheduled. The meeting was then turned over to Justin.

Justin reviewed the two Rent and Mortgage programs: the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) open to residents of Lackawanna County and the City Relief Program available to residents of Scranton. The ERAP uniquely provides assistance to people living in public and subsidized housing. The City program has partnered with UNC, Neighborworks, and Penn Legal in the implementation of the program. UNC assists with utilities and rental assistance, Neighborworks, mortgage relief and Penn Legal provides any legal assistance. Information is located on UNC's and the City's websites. The application is available on UNC's website. The County program has been well utilized while the City program which started April 1, is picking up particularly regarding utility relief.

The eviction moratorium has been extended to June 30, 2021. . As the deadline approaches and word spreads about the two rental relief programs, more people may apply. Additional funding may also become available. Agencies are struggling to hire needed staff and to fill positions.

Justin presented information from the Point in Time Housing Inventory taken on Jan. 27, 2021. The numbers throughout the report are pretty consistent with the last three years. 165 individuals were homeless that night including 97 male, 66 female and 2 transgender. 103 were adults, 16 youth and 46 children representing 23 households with children and 94 with adults only. The population of nonwhites was higher than in past years. 126 people were white, 31 black, 4 multi-racial, 2 Asian and 2 Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islanders. There were slight changes in the numbers of special populations over the past four years. Much of the Point in Time information is taken from HMIS stressing the importance of HMIS data being accurate. The Point in Time is used to inform priorities and ranking for HUD funding moving forward.

The 2021 CoC NOFA is expected to be a full NOFA and not an expedited process as was used in 2020. That will require a ranking and prioritization process and a call for new projects based on information gleaned from Point in Time. Justin will send out information when it arrives. At the July Board meeting, discussion will take place on priorities and rankings.

HUD is currently sending out FY2020 grant agreements. HUD reps are requiring MOU's for In-Kind matches. The Board was encouraged to have the documents ready. Justin will send out samples of the MOU's.

UNC has hired a new Scranton/Lackawanna Housing Navigator to work with the CoC agencies and clients in assisting those in need of housing, finding housing for Rapid ReHousing, recruiting new landlords, improving landlord relationships, and expanding the housing inventory for the County. Meetings will be set-up with each agency to meet staff and explain her role. A referral process will be set-up. Hopefully this will be a step to addressing the major struggle to find available apartments. She will also be asked to serve on the Landlord Committee of the Housing Coalition.

Joe Hollander gave an update on the vaccines. The ongoing efforts have slowed considerably. Scranton Primary would be willing to come to any agency that has a group in need of vaccination or individuals can be directed to Scranton Primary.

Next CoC Board meeting is scheduled for July 13, 3021 at 10 am via Zoom. If the NOFA arrives prior to that, Justin will let us know.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 am. .

Respectfully submitted,

Sr. Susan Hadzima, IHM
Secretary.