

**Arkansas Balance of State
Continuum of Care General Meeting
June 8, 2023**

Coalition/Organization	Attendees: Voting Members	Attendee: Non-Voting Members
ARVHAN	Cody Shelton, Terrie Morgan (proxy for Mary Thompson)	
BBMN	Chonda Tapley, William Tollett	Nicole Brakebill, Jessica Minton, Liz, Cindy
Collaborative Applicant		Casey Kidd, Whitney Force
Delta Hills	Shannon Haward	Rose Dawson, Janet Harris, Theresa Aasen, Carol Townsend
DHS		
EAR	Josephine Flowers	
HMIS		
HUD		
Mississippi	Lisa Willard	
NEA	Shane Fore	Madelynn Williams, Jessica Strickland, Heather Coats
Phillips	Rosie Burton	
RHC	Paul Henley	Stephanie Gee, Capt. Juan Gomez, Shelley Faulknor
SSVF-St. Francis House		Desiree Willmuth
SWAP	Sarah Fowler	George Biggs
Toadsuck	Aimee Prince, Lacey Strom	Gabe Simon, Lacey Crosby, Melissa Dyson, Shawanna Rodgers, Laura King, Nerissa Passmore, Mary Wood
Cloudburst TAs		Rori Knight-Durham
ADFA		Alisa Green and Kim Edmonson

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order via virtual platform at 11:01 am by the Chair, Melissa Allen.

Roll Call

A welcome was given and roll of attendees was recorded.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Shannon Haward to approve the minutes for May, William Tollett seconded. Roll was called for voting members to vote, and the minutes from approved.

Federal and State Reports

HUD:

No one present

DHS:

No one present

HMIS:

No one present

ADFA:

Alisa Green from ADFA gave the CoC an overview of the HOME-ARP funding application process indicating that 3 applications have been released including non-congregate shelter, supportive services, and non-profit operating expense assistance. There is a training video and step-by-step instruction sheet on their website as well. She indicated they would like individuals to review that information and submit questions for the question and answer session they will host on 6/13. They will be releasing more information including the NOFO to provide more specific details. Casey thanked Alisa for providing that update so that attendees could hear from them also and what a great opportunity this is. Alisa further indicated that applications will be accepted starting 7/1 and that supportive services and non-profit operating assistance will be accepted and funded until all funding is awarded. Non-congregate shelter will be accepted starting 7/1 and closing at 4:30 pm on 10/6. They will continue to provide guidance as needed going forward. It is important that the questions received for the 13th are in regards to the application so that they can be completed completely.

HMIS Regional Coordinator:

Whitney Force introduced herself as the HMIS Regional Coordinator for the Balance of State Continuum of Care. She explained that in this role, she will solely focus on the projects and agencies within Balance of State and not the full state. She indicated that she and Casey have started planning, and that she has already reached out to agencies and will reach out to more. She will also be doing site visits and attending LHC meetings when able. She ask that everyone be open to working with her on their data and system and to also ask her any questions that they might have so she can assist them.

Old Business

Governance Charter Review: Melissa Allen indicated that we will not vote on Governance Charter Revisions until a later date. Melissa asked Casey to confirm whether or not revisions had been received. Casey stated that there had been some just made in passing since the last revision, but that the only one received this time was from Josephine. She had indicated that we might want to hold off on a vote since the Delta Hills realignment would also impact the map in the governance charter. By doing this, we would only take a vote on revisions once instead of twice. The vote on revisions will occur in August if the DH alignment is approved at that time. Melissa indicated that you can now take additional time to review the governance charter if you have not. She asked that comments be sent to Casey by July 20th.

Workgroups for Continuum: Melissa asked Casey to discuss this section. The workgroups were discussed at the last minute focusing on items that we should be implementing throughout the CoC. Casey has not yet heard back from anyone wanting to participate at this time though. The potential workgroups are racial

equity, identifying first time homelessness and reducing that number, reducing length of time being homeless, increasing exits to permanent housing, and reducing the number returning to homelessness. We want to look at strategies we have in place throughout the CoC to impact these above items. We want to ensure that we have equitable approaches to overall reduce homelessness and get individuals into housing. You can indicate in the chat or email Casey if you would like to participate.

New Business

NOFO Prep-Gaps Analysis: Casey indicated that we do not have any idea when the grant will be released as we find out the day that HUD announces it. We do anticipate a bit of time though until it is released as we have not yet received the Grants Inventory Worksheet which comes out first and is typically a month ahead of the release of the NOFO. In preparation for this, Casey has been working on a gaps analysis using PIT count data, Housing Inventory Count, and location of rapid rehousing and homelessness preventions. She has put together maps and shared those which show what counties are covered and show where resources might be missing. This helps us to identify where the gaps are and how we can work together to close those.

NOFO Prep-Specific Project Request: Casey continued the discussion by adding that the project requests goes along with the gaps analysis. At this time, the CoC does not have any CoC funded Permanent Supportive Housing Projects. She indicated that we have 1 transitional housing project, 2 Joint Transitional Housing and Rapid Rehousing projects, and 1 newly funded Rapid Rehousing project. The transitional housing project did not seek renewal funding, so that project will expire 12/31/23. At that time, all CoC projects will be focused on the DV population. Those projects are with Margie's Haven House in Cleburne County, OCYFS in Garland County, and Families in Transition in Crittenden County. Casey has been looking at the data to see what gaps we have and what resources are lacking to serve individuals. She feels like we are truly lacking for permanent supportive housing projects in the CoC. She further indicated that we saw a large number of chronically homeless individuals in this year's PIT count. These are the individuals that can receive assistance through PSH. They are the individuals that are in and out of homelessness along with at least one disabled person in their household which could include mental health disability, physical disability, developmental disability, and others. We saw a large number of the adult population in the PIT identifying as struggling with serious mental health illness as well as substance use disorder which is a qualifying disability for PSH. She is very passionate about this and personally feels like this is what is needed in the CoC. She further mentioned that at the general meeting, attendees determined the top 3 vulnerable populations in our CoC are Serious Mental Health Illness, Substance Use Disorder/Addictions, and Domestic Violence. These have not yet been voted on by the board. We are serving the DV population at this time through CoC funds, but Casey feels as though we should move in a direction of serving individuals through PSH. With saying that, Casey stated that at times, CoCs do release a request for applications for specific projects, and she is asking that this occur by the CoC but would need a board vote. This would not impact renewal projects or even new projects that are not PSH. We would not be saying that non PSH projects could not apply, but that PSH projects would most likely receive higher priority which again would be a board and/or rank and review committee decision. Casey asked that the board either vote today on this or hold a special election through email after they have time to think on this discussion more. Shane Fore made a motion to hold a special election, and Chonda Tapley agreed with that. We did not need a vote on this as we were not tabling an item that was supposed to be voted on at today's meeting.

Informational Webinar: Casey reminded the group that last year we held an informational webinar to discuss the ins and outs of the CoC funding, so we will be doing that again this year. The webinar will be held on 06/29 from 11-12:30 through zoom. We hope it to last 1 hour, but scheduled for 1.5 to give enough time for questions if needed. If you have not received the calendar invite and would like that, please reach out to Casey.

Data Sharing Agreement: Casey introduced the data sharing agreement as it will be used with our coordinated entry system. Any agency that will participate in coordinated entry must sign the agreement in order to share data from HMIS with other agencies regarding clients that will be moving through CE. The coordinated entry committee has reviewed data sharing agreements put in place by other CoCs or even statewide agreements. In addition, this shows how agencies will use the data and how client data would be protected. The client must give consent either verbally or by signing a release of information to share their information. They must also know what agencies are participating and sharing their data. This has been discussed both in coordinated entry committee and HMIS steering committee and will be discussed further. At this time, this only impacts data in HMIS. DV data is not in HMIS, so we will look at other methods to protect their data while ensuring they are able to participate in CE. We do have DV facility representation on our CE committee. Casey thanked the committee for their work including Josephine Flowers, the chair, who worked to make the agreement specific to Balance of State. Shannon Haward made a motion to accept the data sharing agreement for Coordinated Entry for Balance of State, and William Tollett seconded the motion. The motion passed, and the data sharing agreement was adopted.

Delta Hills Realignment: Casey indicated that conversations have been going on for months regarding the realignment of Delta Hills Local Homeless Coalition. Casey gave historical information regarding Delta Hills indicating it was its own CoC until it merged with Balance of State officially in 2020. They were an 18 county CoC and remain an 18 county LHC today. COVID hit and serious conversations were not able to be had about the size of the LHC. 18 counties is very large for a coalition and is actually larger than the other 4 CoCs in the state. It is a lot for one coalition as the counties are scattered, they do not necessarily all work together with resources and clients, and it is difficult to connect clients. Casey shared the map of the current breakdown and then proposed realignment map. She indicated that there have been onsite meetings with agencies within the DH coalition while TAs were here the week of the general meeting in addition to a survey being sent out to all of the DH agencies on Shannon's mail list regarding information about their agency, counties served, counties in which they receive referrals, community partners, and feedback regarding the realignment. The information was analyzed along with review of the conversations/meetings that took place, and looking at service areas to develop the proposed map. Casey went over the current coalitions that would be impacted by the realignment. She also indicated that they could view this through the governance charter on a link shared in case they would like to view the proposed map and current map side by side. Casey introduced the proposed map to show what the new coalitions would be if this is approved. Every agency that is in an LHC that would be directly impacted received this proposed map about 2-3 weeks ago asking for feedback regarding this by 7/18. The next DH meeting is on 7/25, and that is when this will be further discussed. It will then be presented to the board if there are not any changes needed for a vote in August. At that time, she asked for any thoughts, questions, or feedback today. Laura King with Toadsuck did ask about an email regarding this discussion, and Casey stated she would need to discuss that with the executive committee of Balance of State before responding. Melissa Allen thanked the group for their work on this as well as the visual map which helped to put it together.

Lived Experience Workgroup: Casey indicated in the last governance charter review and revision, we added 4 board member positions for those with lived experience of homelessness. She sent an email requesting individuals interested in serving in this capacity to let her know. These individuals could either be currently homeless or have experienced homelessness within the last 5 years. The CoC wants those individuals to be at the table and have a voice. If you or someone you know are interested, please let Casey know. She is going to reach out to those that have shown interest and ask for them for a small bio to share with the voting members so that we can get them installed soon. Melissa Allen further stated that we do not want anyone to be discouraged if we do have more than 4 delegates since we have received a lot of interest and must vote. We want them to know that they can still participate on committees and have a say in how we serve individuals such as themselves. Sarah Fowler of SWAP mentioned that she had an individual that might qualify and would like to speak to them about this if possible. Melissa said that it is exciting to know that we are going to have individuals representing those we are trying to serve.

Committee Reports:

Coordinated Entry: Josephine indicated that she was pleased that the data sharing agreement has been approved and adopted. More updates are to come from the next meeting. She thanked everyone for reviewing the agreement and how great it is that one is now in place. Casey asked Josephine if she could add something about vulnerable populations. She then continued with permission with details regarding the vulnerable populations that were identified at the general meeting which were Serious Mental Health Illness, Substance Use Disorder/Addictions, and Domestic Violence. Our next step as a board is to decide if these are the top 3 vulnerable populations for the full CoC. We have been asking the LHCs to have this discussion: "Do you think the 3 chosen at the general meeting are correct, or do you feel like there are a different 3 for your area." When we say vulnerable, we mean the population that has a difficult time accessing services, knowing where to go, and everything that goes with that process. Our next CE meeting is 6/27, so we ask that you have that discussion before 6/27. We know some have had the discussion, so let us know if you agree or have another 3 by 6/27.

Coalition Reports

ARVHAN: Cody Shelton was not able to give a report at this time, but later told Casey that they are still working on scheduling their LHC meeting at this time.

BBMN: Chonda Tapley indicated that they met in May and indicated that Casey and Whitney were both able to attend. They had their regular topics regarding their local agencies, funding available for clients, the vulnerable populations, coordinated entry, and then letters of good standing for ESG as well. Chonda indicated that they have invited a new organization to attend and be part of BBMN. They will discuss the realignment, ADFA funding, and governance charter revision. Melissa encouraged Chonda on our LHC and participation. She thanked Melissa and indicated they definitely try and thanked Casey for her assistance.

Delta Hills: Shannon indicated that Casey had discussed their current items since realignment is being determined at this time. The next meeting will be 7/25.

Eastern Arkansas: The group will meet on 6/13 and will discuss items missed last month since the meeting was rescheduled along with the items regarding their coalition and the realignment.

At this time, Shannon offered to share DH contact information for the counties that would be moving into other coalitions. Melissa suggested an email introduction, and Shannon will lead that.

Mississippi: Lisa stated that she had to leave but gave the update to Casey through chat. They met in May and that update was shared at last month's meeting. Casey believes they might meet again in July.

Northeast Arkansas: Shane reported that he is working on bringing the recovery community into the coalition as they work a lot with the same individuals. He indicated that his facility works closely with this community and would like to invite them to the table. NEA will meet on 6/15.

Phillips County: Rosie had audio issues, but she called Casey after the meeting with an update. They are continuing to meet monthly, and they have a new member which is Pastor Shelley from a church in Poplar Grove. He has a passion for those experiencing homelessness and is excited to participate. The LHC will meet again on 6/27 at 9:00 am.

RHC: Shelley from Salvation Army of Texarkana indicated that they will have a meeting tomorrow (6/9) so will have an update next month. She stated that Casey would be attending to assist them. Casey further mentioned that she and Whitney would both be there to meet with them and are excited about the meeting!

SWAP: Sarah stated that they did not have a meeting last month, but they will be having a meeting next week. They plan to discuss membership and to elect a new voting member since Sue Legal has resigned. Casey asked Sarah to give an update on the coordinated entry coordinator interview process. She indicated that she is working to confirm times on an email for a candidate as well as waiting to hear back from one more candidate to see if they are interested.

Toadsuck: Laura King had to leave the meeting but left the following message in the chat: We took a group of agencies and spoke to Public school homeless liaisons at Arch Ford. We met in May as a full coalition. Our next meeting is in July. Our exec team met yesterday to discuss the many BOS items that are before us. Melissa asked if the voting board members had anything to add, and they did not.

Next meeting: July 13th through zoom

With no other discussion, Melissa Allen adjourned the meeting at 11:55 pm.

Minutes recorded by Casey Kidd via recording of meeting.