# Meeting Minutes……………………Muskegon County Homeless Continuum of Care Network

**Meeting Description:**  **MCHCCN Steering Council Committee Meeting**

**October 12, 2023**

**United Way of the Lakeshore**

**31 E Clay Ave Muskegon, MI 49442 via Zoom:**

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**Meeting Date: ￼** **October 12, 2023** **Time: 8:30am – 9:30am**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Representatives | Present | Absent |  | Representatives | Present | Absent |
| Julie Aaron-Shyne, City of Muskegon Heights | X |  |  | Dan Skoglund, Muskegon Rescue Mission, Co-Chair |  | X |
| Hillery Ross, Health Project, Chair, Nominating Committee | X |  |  | Donata Kidd, Department of Health & Human Services | X |  |
| Brandon Baskin, Health West, Chair, Coordinated Entry Committee |  | X |  | Lisa Reinecke, True North Community Services (HARA) | X |  |
| Jamie Hekker, Public Health of Muskegon County, Chair | X |  |  | Sharonda Carson, City of Muskegon |  | X |
| Lashae Simmons representing lived experience |  | X |  | Angela Mayeaux, Muskegon Housing Commission, Chair Review Committee | X |  |
| Christine Robere, United Way of the Lakeshore | X |  |  | Cindy Larsen, Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce |  | X |
| Diolinda Sali HMIS Administrator (non-voting) | X |  |  | Vacant, Coordinator (non-voting) |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | John Peterson, Consultant (non-voting) | X |  |

**Meeting Minutes**

1. Call to Order - 8:36am
2. Approval of Agenda – (AR) - Agenda Approved, moved by Hillery Ross, seconded by Lisa Reinecke
3. Approval of Minutes of Steering Council (AR) -September 14th, 2023 – Amended to change that True North did not need to submit ELOCCS to the CoC but will instead send in FRS (Financial Status Report.) Motion to approve by Hillery Ross, seconded by Christine Robere. Motion passes.
4. HMIS Operating Procedures Addition (AR) - Diolinda Sali presented the final draft of the empty record cleanup for the HMIS Operating Policy and Procedures. This policy will ensure that agencies are active in adding service transactions at least once per month to client records in HMIS. Adding these Service Transactions means CoC will have a record of the services being performed. Motion to approve by Christine Robere, seconded by Hillery Ross. Motion passes
5. MOUs – 2023-2024 – New MOUs were prepared to eliminate the previous CoC Coordinators name from the document. Additionally, the name of the Agency was included on the front page and in the first paragraph, so it was clearer who the MOU belonged to. The only MOU that would need to be approved would be for EWP since they intended to rethink how they would like their agency to be involved in CES.
6. HARA Update – Lisa Reinecke –True North Community Services took over as the interim HARA in August and had about 106,000 and was able to assist 51 individuals with either securing housing or maintaining their current housing and avoiding eviction. True North currently has 3.5 staff in their Muskegon County office. They have nearly 200 calls per day from individuals looking for assistance. Currently, they are not taking walk ins since they are booked till the end of November for Prevention services but still have a lot of people coming to their office. Lisa estimates that they are spending roughly $20,000 per week on their current Prevention cases. True North had a portion of funds that were to be used for Utility assistance and Lisa has made the decision to move those funds to their RRH funds since there are many options available in Muskegon County for utility assistance. Those funds would be of better use for RRH cases since there is more of a demand for RRH in Muskegon County. True North’s HPP funds will need to be spent before the end of March 2024. They still possess some ESG funds, but they are trying to hold onto those with the colder months ahead of us, it is likely more people might reach out for assistance with securing housing. True North has not gotten into their RRH funds yet since they have been focusing on HP cases for now. They have started by assigning about 16 homeless clients to their case managers. These individuals will be receiving intensive case management to ensure that they can retain their housing after their financial assistance from True North is used up.
   * 1. Donata Kidd asked Lisa Reinecke about the qualifications individuals need in order to qualify for HP assistance. Lisa stated that those individuals would need to possess a Court Summons. Estimates show that True North could potentially assist about 28 more people who currently have court summons until their funds run out. Lisa states that each HP case is using about $4,000 worth of funds to retain their housing. This equates to about 6 intakes per week for her 3.5 case managers on staff. These funds will likely be spent out in about five more weeks. Donata then asked if these individuals should be applying for SER, Lisa said yes, that it is a requirement when applying for HP assistance. Lisa also suggested that having a contact person from DHS would be very helpful for when she needs a SER from a client done, Donata said she would get Lisa in contact with someone who would be happy to help with these verifications.
     2. Jamie Hekker also stated that she has made contact with Sarah Johnson from 211 to discuss how they can assist with the new HARA transition. Jamie stated that there has a be a shift in thinking within all agencies to understand the limited rental assistance funding with the ending of CERA. This will be transition for the people of Muskegon County as well when they are needing assistance and is something that should be explained to people. Lisa was wondering if there was possibly a way for people to be given a screening prior to them being transferred to True North for services for assistance. Jamie will provide Lisa with Sarah Johnson’s contact information and explain that usually it’s a warm hand off to the agency after they reach out to 211.
     3. John Peterson had a question for Lisa regarding the RRH clients. John would like a record kept of the individuals who had been selected for their RRH assistance (those with high VI-SPDAT scores but who are not chronic) but would also qualify for PSH (If identified as Chronic) if those individuals could be referred somewhere else for assistance if True North’s RRH funds would be unable to help.
7. Committee Updates
   1. Data- There was a recent update to HMIS Data Standards FY 2024, because of this update it has caused some errors to arise in running reports. These reports will not provide accurate data till the issues with the update are taken care of. After speaking with an HMIS Help Desk rep, they stated that this should be resolved in the next few weeks.
   2. Coordinated Entry – Lisa Reinecke mentioned it would be a good idea to come up with some type of “Car Policy” regarding those individuals who claim to be homeless and living in their car. There has been an influx of individuals claiming to be homeless but are living with friends and family and when they discover that they do not qualify for assistance because of being doubled up, they then call back saying that they are now living in their vehicle. Jamie Hekker agreed that this is something that can be worked on. Individuals should be recommended to stay at a local shelter because they can also get their verification of shelter stay from staff that then could be sent to True North to verify their homelessness.
   3. Outreach – Angela Mayeaux brought up the Mini-outreach committee being organized for Homelessness Awareness Month, Lisa Reinecke has plans to set up a distribution of Hygiene items to the local libraries. A meeting will be organized to talk about how the CoC can be involved in this process.
8. Coordinator Update – Christine/Jamie- Christine Robere shared that so far two interviews have been completed earlier this week and two more are scheduled to happen on October 12th, 2023. If a second round of interviews is needed, they will be put off till the last week of October and it's expected that a new coordinated will be selected and will start sometime before Thanksgiving.
9. Other Business/Announcements - Jamie suggested that the Membership meeting be moved to November instead of waiting till 2024.
10. Adjourned- 10:00am