

SMAC Governing Board Agenda

May 16th, 2023

1:00-3:00

Attendance: Laquita Love-Limo, Corey Samuels, Mike Manhard, Suzie Misel, Liz Moen, Jacob Wasmund, Doreen Farrell, Dolores Castillo, Jennifer Crotteau, Zach Riley, Jarahia Mann, Matt Lewis, Jennifer Romero, Jenny Mason, Denise (The Link), Bre Baker, Yei Bhunah, Kamaria Toulon, Sarah Broich, Rebecca Bowers, Jane Lawrenz, Peter Goldstein, Thom Romano, Linda Hall, Bianca Nordwester, Marcus Schmit, Steve Thronson, Raya Mann, Keshia Bradford & Laura Craig

1) Introductions 10 Minutes

What is one thing you would like to do this summer?

2) Mike /Marcus – MOU 15 Minutes

a) Overview of MOU between SMAC & Hearth

SMAC/MESH/Hearth Connection - Partnership to support Planning Grant (supports Laquita's (CoC Coordinator) Position and partnership around Coordinated Entry

Established MOU to detail how we can effectively work together and delineate roles between MESH's role, the CoC and the Collaborative Applicant. Transition of staffing to MESH identified the depth of missing information that exists within the present MOU. Necessary to clarify roles and the named responsibilities of the Governing Board, which may be worthwhile for us to review in future meetings.

Collaborative Applicant Role (held by Hearth Connection) is identified within the MOU as ending on 02/15/23. Seeking a vote to sign the MOU, alongside our soon to be elected officer positions.

Kamaria motion to approve, Dolores seconded the motion. **Motion Approved.**

3) SMAC Governance PowerPoint 30 Minutes

a. Laquita/Liz TA/ findings

b. Retreat Recap/Findings

Retreat Report (**included with notes**).

Outcomes:

Meeting & Making Connections with folks that we only meet with on SMAC

Focusing on where we need to go & orient around common values to align our priorities for future work

Proposed SMAC values:

Accessibility

BIPOC Representation

Diversity

Lived Experience

Proposed Priorities

- Year 1: Access – Services & Housing (Specifically within the Coordinated Entry System)
- Year 2-3: Legislative Goals & Policy and Procedures

Technical Assistance Proposal (**Slides included with notes**)

Dusty's proposal for what she's observed from SMAC & identifiable next steps.

Working with Dusty since last year (May 2022)

Observations thus far:

Lack clarity regarding roles and responsibilities. Need to support operationalizing the structure outlined to do these tasks.

Each committee is functioning in isolation and isn't connected to the larger work of the entire CoC (need a better system of communication)

Recommend: Establish an ad-hoc CoC Governance Committee to focus on CoC Operations. Need representation from the board, each committee, and each county.

Would be tasked with building a vision and aligning objectives, which would then be reviewed, and feedback solicited from CoC stakeholders.

Seeking to complete all of this within 6 months.

This is more than remaining balance of hours of TA support. The plan will require additional TA hours from HUD, which would allow Dusty to walk alongside us in this process.

HUD will require evidence that the CoC is committed to the project process and timeline to approve additional hours.

- 4) Governing Board Officer Positions Nominations 20 Minutes
- a. Send nominations via email to Laquita!
 - b. You can nominate yourself or someone else.
 - c. Vote needed.

Candidates:

Co-Chairs: Kamaria & Jamie

Secretary: Peter

Motion Approved

- 5) NOFO (Pre-Work) 30 Minutes
- a. Intent to apply (needs Vote)

Released alongside our agenda that was sent for this meeting. Needing folks to consider reviewing these to determine whether any additional needs for edits exist.

The hope is to get this out as quickly as possible to support providers in collecting and amassing the necessary components that they need to submit alongside this document.

Governing Board members – please review and suggest whatever edits you see fit ahead of Friday, 5/19/23. Please submit any proposed edits to Laquita.

- b. Scoring tool (needs Vote)

The intent would be for the Monitoring and Evaluation Workgroup to review responses and score through the utilization of this tool.

- c. Policies (needs Vote)

- 6) Reallocation request to CoC Boards 10 Minutes

We are presently offering them 3.5% to ICA for their work with HMIS. **One pager-overview will be included with these notes.**

MN HMIS:

Reviewed updated HMIS Vision Statement: First time that ICA has operated with one.

Software RFP:

Reviewed timeline of existing software developer and their connectedness to our operationalized HMIS

ICA released an RFI to learn of competing developer products in 2019/2020 following concerns about reporting tool stabilization issues/concerns about viability of the tool (and/or lack of innovation)

March '23 – the HMIS Governing Board voted affirmatively to issue an RFP for HMIS software vendors.

HMIS Governing Board will be the entity to hold the decision about the final software developers. ICA is releasing content now that will be open for public comment throughout June, with the intent to release an RFP from there. Demonstrations for stakeholders will follow.

Asks:

- Continue to support at 3.5% of our NOFO award (unused funds could be reallocated)
- Continue to support ICA proposals as a Tier 1 Project in our NOFO submissions
 - Support ICA Bonus Projects with a Tier 1 ranking in our NOFO submissions

7) YHDP Planning grant?

5 Minutes

A youth board is a key component for entities that have received this funding previously.

Youth (defined as aged 18-25) Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP) begins with the availability of planning funding prior to the receipt of programming. This would be a great opportunity to further develop a board of agencies that serve youth within our communities and would enable to pursue funding for our planning activities, which would position us to be better able to have programming available to support youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness across our continuum.

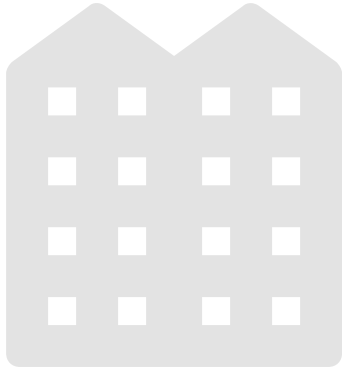
Regardless of the availability of funding, youth boards may be beneficial to developing the diversity of experience and thought that is being sought within our proposed SMAC values. If electing to try to pursue this funding in the 2024 NOFO, may benefit from the creation of a youth board beginning this year.

Would need to determine who would have matching capacity to support the establishment/potential of additional funding.

This would increase our capacity for serving youth in SMAC and in directing the work of our potential YHDP funding. Dolores, Yei, Denise, and Kesha all identified interest in participation.

8) Action Items/Next meeting

- a. Monitoring and Evaluation
- b. Park Vue Apartments (Burnsville) is on the verge of being condemned due to code violations within the building. There is the potential of significant displacement from this household, which is requiring Dakota County to explore utilization of FHPAP RRRH funding to support housing services to these impacted households.
Discussed HUD standards for condemned properties – hazards and issues abound within the building (50+ code violations) that would lead folks to identify this as a HUD category of homelessness.
Intending to request a decision around the interpretation of homelessness to the SMAC Coordinated Entry Advisory.



SMAC Retreat

2023 Retreat Objectives: *to build relationships, create a shared vision, and develop shared Continuum of Care (CoC) values.*

Day One
(4/18/23)

About 80 members met to dialogue, build relationships and strengthen connections in the CoC.



4.5

of 5 average rating
of the overall event

"I enjoyed the event overall, and I was able to meet various partners I've seen in virtual settings, but not in person. I also met folks I was unfamiliar with, but am now acquainted with. This was a great, relevant networking opportunity as a services provider."

"People really seemed to appreciate the opportunity to network and share best practices. There was a lot of frustration at the general state of the housing and homelessness world. There probably could stand to be more education about what SMAC does, since I heard a lot of suggestions that were already happening or being worked on."

Day Two
(4/25/23)

About 50 members met to decide on shared values, and to identify short and mid-term priorities for the CoC.



4.3

of 5 average rating
of the overall event

"I think my biggest take away is that we all individually have power within CE and that we need to use that in an equitable way everyday."

"[the] critical importance of working together for impact on a primary concern such as racial equity."



RESULTS

PROPOSED **SMAC Values**

Accessibility
BIPOC Representation
Diversity
Lived Experience

PROPOSED **Priorities (Year 1)**

Access
Coordinated Entry System

PROPOSED **Priorities (Years 2-3)**

Legislative Goals
Policy and Procedures



MN-503 Technical Assistance Proposal

May 2023

**Dusty Olson, HUD Technical Assistance Provider
Abt Associates**



Current Technical Approved Technical Assistance

- HUD approved 32 hours to support the CoC in May 2022
- Tasks include:
 - Reviewing current governance roles and responsibilities
 - Clarifying responsibilities of the CoC
 - Providing best models of governance structures
- Work completed so far includes a full review of current governance structure
- Training for CoC board on CoC roles and responsibilities

Observations

- The CoC Governance Charter is fairly clear regarding roles and responsibilities, follows HUD expectations and doesn't require significant edits beyond the standard annual review
- The lack of clarity regarding roles and responsibilities appears to be more an issue with operationalizing the structure outlined in the charter.
- Each committee is functioning in isolation, not clearly connected to the larger work of the entire CoC or working in alignment towards a system wide goals.
- The primary communication structure is through people who sit on or staff more than one committee.

Recommended Next Steps

- Establishing an ad-hoc CoC Governance Committee to focus on CoC operations and structure
- This ad-hoc committee should include representation from the board, each of the committees and all key jurisdictions engaged in the homeless response
- The primary responsibility will be to engage with community in order to develop a strategic vision and objectives for the CoC
- Once a vision and objects have been adopted by the CoC, each committee will work to develop a charter to clearly outline its structure and how the work contributes towards the vision and objectives
- The ad-hoc committee will reconvene to review the committee charters, address any gaps and recommend any changes to the governance charter
- The CoC board will adopt the committee charters and present the revised governance charter to the full membership for adoption

MN-503 Technical Assistance – Proposed CoC Planning and Technical Assistance

Purpose: To support MN-503 to increase the capacity of the CoC for effective CoC operation and regional planning through the development of a CoC strategic vision and increasing

Activity	Objectives	Timeline
Establish an ad-hoc CoC governance committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with key community partners and persons experiencing homelessness to gather input into a unifying vision for the CoC Develop a vision statement, key priorities, and objectives 	June -July 2023
Develop Committee Charters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly identify the body of work each committee is responsible for Define how committee work is assigned or delegated Identify how each committee related to other committees and the governing board 	July-August 2023
Review Committee Charters for Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure there aren't essential functions that haven't been delegated to any committee Identify areas that are unclear or where communication isn't likely to occur Make recommendations for any charter changes 	September 2023
Revise the CoC charter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise the charter based on the committee charters and workflow processes identified Present the charter for vote to the full CoC membership for adoption 	September 2023
Increase opportunities for regional planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase alignment across jurisdictions in support of the CoC strategic vision Identify practices and policies where alignment is necessary and/or beneficial Develop MOUs with regional entities outlining the commitment to acting in concert towards CoC objectives and strategies 	October- November 2023
Increase fiscal solvency and staff capacity of the CoC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a comprehensive budget for CoC operations Identify additional sources of funding Seek support from jurisdictions for essential CoC functions 	October – November 2023

- As proposed, this is more than remaining balance of hours of TA support
- This plan will require staff capacity to take on facilitation of meetings and processes with the committees
- If necessary, Abt can request additional hours from HUD, including potential on-site time for TA
- HUD will require evidence that the CoC is committed to the project process and timeline to approve additional hours

INITIAL SOFTWARE REVIEW RESULTS

Summary. The ICA MN team completed a preliminary evaluation of HMIS products available in our market, including our current platform, Community Services, at the direction of the HMIS Governing Board. **What we found** is that competing products provide a drastically better, more modern, and intuitive user experience than our current product. ICA then recommended that Minnesota’s HMIS community switch to a better product.

Our methods included reviewing vendor responses to ICA’s Request for Information from 2019, interviewing seven (7) staff across four (4) HMIS leads whose communities transitioned from Community Services to a competitor or otherwise use a competing platform, interviewing a CoC Director in a state of comparable size and complexity, 20+ hours reviewing user training materials for other platforms, and participating in two (2) live vendor demonstrations.

The HMIS Governing Board holds the authority to select or change software for Minnesota’s HMIS, not ICA or any single CoC or state partner – and at their March meeting, the MN HMIS Governing Board did indeed vote affirmatively to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for HMIS software vendors!

Here is a closer look at how ICA MN did this research and review. The table below represents features of a high performing HMIS, and their availability in our current platform, Community Services, and at least one of the top competitors.

Feature	Community Services	
	(ServicePoint)	Other Platforms
Familiar to us	✓	
Real-time reporting (no waiting for twice daily warehouse builds)		✓
Automatic project provider recognition (no Enter Data As)		✓
Date defaults to enrollment start date (no back-dating)		✓
Field constraints (flags/alerts to prevent errors during data entry)		✓
Mobile & tablet compatible		✓
Built-in e-signature tool		✓
Direct messaging between users at different agencies		✓
Intuitive guided workflows (pause and come back to same place)		✓
Sub-assessment data automatically updated		✓
Descriptive helper text for assessment questions	✓	✓
Built-in Calendar feature (client appointments, due dates, etc.)		✓
Bed & unit inventory	✓	✓
Real-time eligibility calculations, client choice in Coordinated Entry		✓
Built-in alerts on client status within Coordinate Entry system		✓
Data owned and controlled by us (MN and ICA)		✓

These features would transform the daily experience of our users. They prevent errors from happening in the first place and facilitate the work of front-line staff. As one HMIS trainer put it, “it is life-changing”.

If this leaves you wondering if these high-performing features are essential or just excessive, since we have gotten by all this time with what we have, we invite you to consider how that looks today.

Minnesota has done a lot with what we have for the last 20 years. But while the tool has barely changed, Minnesota's homeless response system has.

- ❖ Imagine a cell phone from 20 years ago. Typing “hello” on your Nokia looked like “44 33 555 555 666” Many of us learned how to send a text message this way, we became texting wizards!
- ❖ But technology has advanced. Today a smart phone is easier to use with capabilities we only dreamed could be handheld – sending group texts filled with emoticons, sharing photos with mom, looking up a new restaurant and getting directions to it.
- ❖ Now imagine picking up that old phone knowing what phones today can do.



We see the incredible work you do despite our current antiquated system.

- ❖ We see the Intake Specialist painstakingly entering sub-assessment information for every person they serve.
- ❖ We see the Housing Coordinator updating a referral and waiting and waiting (and hoping they are not timed out!) for the client’s record to load.
- ❖ We see the Priority List Manager who, because there is no easy way to see it, needs Helpdesk support just to help assessors see whether or not their clients were housed.
- ❖ We see case managers defying the limited ability of our current platform in effort to creatively coordinate care.

OUR INITIAL RESEARCH SHOWS THERE ARE NOW “SMART PHONE CALIBER” HMIS TOOLS AVAILABLE AT A REASONABLE PRICE POINT.

An HMIS with these capabilities for users means planning and decision-making for the homeless response system can also improve. We asked a CoC Director in a large, rural area to tell us their perspective; specifically, we wondered if there was a material difference in their ability to do their work. They shared, **“I trust the data more, it’s cleaner, it feels accurate and when it’s not, it’s obvious.”** And when asked directly if they could do their job better, they shared unequivocally that they could.

ICA pursued this work knowing those who participate in MN’s HMIS increasingly express the desire for a system that is more intuitive, easier to use, and can facilitate housing and sheltering clients quickly.

A glimpse at how transitioning to an up-to-date software will benefit users:

	<i>How you do it now:</i>	<i>How it could be:</i>
<i>Release of Information</i>	Present ROI, fill out client Alias field, ROI date field, scan and upload PDF file	Present ROI, client signs ROI in HMIS with built in e-signature tool, save.
<i>Data Entry</i>	Always remember <i>not</i> to click: “verify and save,” “leave household”, end date on active data row in sub-assessments.	Better systems can be setup to only show needed data entry fields and options based on user roles, and require completion on certain fields
<i>Questions on another agency’s data</i>	Email the Helpdesk, ask for the other HMIS user’s contact information, email or call them	Direct message the other HMIS user within HMIS, securely able to use client name
<i>Reporting</i>	Run a report > complete data corrections > wait a day for the warehouse build > run final report for funder submission	Run a report > most errors avoided entirely > same day run final report for funder submission