

SMAC Ranking Committee Meeting: Pre-Application Selection
July 30, 2018
Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Jen Romero, Dana Dumbacher, Trisha Kauffman, Julie Grothe, Dan Lauer-Schumacher, Courtney Knoll, Betty Notto, Abby Guilford

The Ranking Committee received 3 applications for the Coordinated Entry Project, 3 applications for Expansion projects, 1 application for the New Project for the Bonus funds, and 1 application for the New Project for the DV Bonus funds. Scoring tools were sent to all Ranking Committee members prior to the Ranking Meeting. Scores from each committee member were shared for each project along with discussion regarding the applications themselves.

- **Coordinated Entry**
 - The committee received 3 Coordinated Entry applications:
 - Hearth Connection
 - Lutheran Social Service, Streetworks
 - The Salvation Army
 - Highlights and questions were discussed regarding all three applications

Hearth Connection –

- Committee members had questions about the Navigation Pilot. Julie Grothe was able to explain that it is a partnership with Guild. A Guild staff person works with people currently on the coordinated entry priority list and reaches out to households identified by the priority list manager that are close to receiving a referral for housing. The committee found it a positive with Hearth's application that they are already doing Navigation and have a structure that is working effectively.
- It was a positive and very clear to the committee that the writer of the application was engaged and involved in SMAC committees and planning
- Comments from committee members that the application didn't touch on youth as a focus. Committee members didn't feel this was a strong concern but would like clarity from Hearth on how they would continue a youth focus in their outreach plan.
- Strong application that focused on the following: racial equity, housing first, best practices as a system, all of which are values of SMAC and the Coordinated Entry System

Lutheran Social Service, Streetworks –

- The committee raised the point that Streetworks has a youth-specific focus currently doesn't go beyond youth services. It was also acknowledged that LSS as a larger organization works with households of all ages.
- The committee raised concerns that outreach positions are made up of 3 - .5FTE. This is the current way outreach is structured and it seems to lead to staff turn over and difficulty in re-filling positions. It is critical that communities have consistency in these positions for access into the system. A question was also raised if all the outreach would continue to be youth specific.

- The committee was confused somewhat about each position and what they each do. The structure and management of staff was somewhat confusing to readers of the application.

Salvation Army –

- The committee raised concerns about administration and capacity. Due to come of the challenges Salvation Army had to get the current CES grant up and running it was a slight concern that capacity would continue to be an issue when implementing new work.
- The committee though the application laid out a clear process and clear staffing positions.
- The committee felt the application focused more what they are currently doing with priority list management than what they would be doing under the new outline of responsibilities.
- The committee had concerns that there was no clear plan for outreach and felt more navigation was needed in the application.

Additional Discussion:

- Scores from the objective scoring tool from committee members favor Hearth Connection.
- The committee has concerns regarding LSS and Salvation Army hiring and staff turnovers.
 - LSS – staff turnovers. The current structure of 3 .5 FTEs for youth outreach seems to cause a lot of turnover making consistency of access a challenge in communities covered by those outreach workers.
 - Salvation Army – slow to start up and positions can sit vacant for a time.
- The committee discussed potential concerns regarding transitioning all funding to a new entity and disruption of referrals getting to providers in a timely way. During the ramp up to Salvation Army – referrals slowed WAY down, need to plan accordingly.
- Further discussion was had regarding timing of current grants ending and a new grant getting started. Careful planning will need to happen for any type of transition to ensure providers and clients continue to be supported.

Motion for Hearth Connection, as the highest scoring application to be the CES Grantee

Motion – Jen Romero

2nd – Dana Dumbacher

Motion Carries

- **Expansion**
 - The committee received 3 applications from renewal projects requesting expansion funding.
 - Carver County CDA PSH expansion
 - The Link SMAC Youth RRH expansion
 - The Link Youth PSH expansion
 - Highlights and questions were discussed regarding all three applications
 - Based on current scoring: The Link RRH is the highest scoring renewal, but the Link Lincoln Place is the 2nd from the lowest scoring. Carver CDA is a lower scoring project as well.

The Link Youth PSH Expansion

- Committee members were confused that the PSH project WAS Lincoln Place. It was explained that The Link ended its relationship with the Dakota County CDA in April 2018 for providing services within the building known as Lincoln Place. The Link was the grantee for the CoC funds and worked with the local HUD field office to amend the Lincoln Place CoC grant to fund rental assistance for scattered site PSH for youth. The current expansion would make it possible to begin a successful scattered site program for youth.
- The committee had questions regarding what is currently happening with the CoC funding. If the relationship ended with the Dakota County CDA in April what has been happening with the funding. Committee members felt the funding should be utilized somehow and clarity is needed if this is happening.
- The lack of PSH for youth was discussed and the fact that youth PSH is a funding priority for the CoC. Concerns if The Link has not be utilizing this funding for PSH between April and September.
- It was discussed that historically the Lincoln Place grant has not performed well. It did not perform well in the current competition. The CoC Coordinator has had conversations with The Link that the relationship with the Dakota County CDA was part of the reason for poor performance. Movement away from this relationship is positive however there are questions the committee needs clarity on before making a decision about funding the expansion.
- Betty Notto volunteered to contact The Link regarding questions on The Link PSH Expansion application.

The Link SMAC Youth RRH

- The committee felt this was a robust application. It was clear that they have a good functioning program that is ripe for expansion.
- The only concerns was the application didn't touch a ton on SSI/SSDI.

Carver CDA PSH Expansion

- The committee discussed that the current Carver CDA grant is based on the Shelter Plus Care model. This means the grant ties services to county case management which can be difficult and doesn't work for everyone. The CoC has found this to be a difficult model and many other grantees are giving up their grants because the model just doesn't work that well.
- This model makes it hard for clients to opt out of services
- No budget was attached to the application
- Through this application the Carver CDA indicates it is open to serving more than just SMI or SPMI to folks with other disabilities.
- The committee noted that resources are needed in the area.
- To be eligible for services clients will need to complete a MN Choices assessment. This assessment is holistic, but not housing focused.
- The application was unclear if CE can provide accurate referrals when CM is required through county. It was shared that with the new housing position starting in Carver County eligibility for county services would not need to be an eligibility criteria on the front end as exists now.
- Julie Grothe and Jen Romero volunteered to reach out to the Carver CDA to talk about questions on their PSH Expansion application.

Due to questions on two of the expansion applications the committee will make the decision on what expansion applications to fund at the next Ranking Committee meeting.

- New Bonus Project
 - The committee received one application for the bonus funding from Stepping Stone Emergency Housing.
 - Discussion and questions were raised on the application

Stepping Stone Emergency Housing

- The match on the application is too low, making them ineligible. Stepping Stone is a new applicant to CoC funds. They will need TA if awarded the opportunity for bonus funding to ensure they submit an eligible application.
- The committee had lots of concerns regarding the application including that there was no budget attached.
 - Confusing roles – Navigator is more of housing specialist/coordinator.
- There have been past capacity concerns with the agency, and concerns with CE compliance in the past.
- The application details exploration to provide services in Washington County. This is not an eligible activity.
- Seems like services are more internal than serving the CE system
- The positive of this application is supporting a smaller agency to grow in capacity in providing a broader range of services. SSEH is the only applicant that submitted a bonus application and with coaching could create a strong program that would strengthen the CoC as a whole.
- Courtney Knoll will reach out to talk about TA for match and programming.

Until more information is collected from Stepping Stone the committee did not commit to this project serving as the Bonus Project for the CoC.

- Domestic Violence Bonus Project
 - The committee received one application for the Domestic Violence Bonus funds from Tubman.
 - The committee discussed the application and questions.

Tubman –

- Overall the committee was very pleased with the application submitted by Tubman.
- This application would Expand a project that currently serves Ramsey County.
- One commitment the committee felt was important is that if awarded the DV Bonus Tubman would need to begin participating in local and CoC wide planning.
- It was raised that the proposed match may not be eligible match. Clarity is needed from Tubman.
- TH – not charging rent, putting it into a saving account (could this be a match – does this mean clients will pay and put into account or what?)
- Clarity is needed if the project will they serve all of SMAC or only Washington County.

- The staffing ratio seems high. 2.2 Staff for 8 households. The committee would like more details on what those staff would do. The committee would also like to ask if the project could serve more youth in RRH
- The committee would also like clarity on how youth would be allowed to choose between RRH and TH. How does one move from one to the other? How do they choose both?
- Trisha Kaufman and Dana Dumbacher will do outreach to Tubman to get questions answered and clarifications on the application.

To prepare for the next Ranking Committee meeting each Ranking Committee member was assigned renewal projects for scoring review meetings:

Betty Notto – Canvas Health and Washington County CDA

Bradly Legrid – The Link

Dana Scarlett – Metro HRA and LSS

Julie Grothe – Carver CDA

Dana Dumbacher – Hearth Connection

Trisha Kaufman – Dakota County and Dakota County CDA

Jen Romero – Mental Health Resources

Dan Lauer-Schumacher – CommonBond

Courtney Knoll – Scott-Carver-Dakota CAP

Abby will review and score all applications. Initial score sheets will be sent to each project and the Ranking Committee member assigned to the agency. The Ranking Committee member will coordinate a phone conversation with the agency to talk about any potential scoring errors or questions on the project applications. These phone calls must happen before the next Ranking meeting on August 10.

Ranking Committee meeting #1 was adjourned.

***SMAC Ranking Committee Meeting: Initial Project Ranking
August 10, 2018
Meeting Minutes***

Attendees: Jen Romero, Dana Dumbacher, Trisha Kauffman, Julie Grothe, Dan Lauer-Schumacher, Courtney Knoll, Betty Notto, Dana Scarlett, Abby Guilford

An issue has been identified regarding the new project from CAP for Scott/Carver/Dakota. The new project was created through the 2017 NOFA competition. It absorbed the Scott County grant last year. The Scott Co. grant doesn't end until April 1, 2019. The grant was supposed to transition at that time, but that makes the CAP grant ineligible because it won't have a start date before 1/1/19. The CoC can apply without them, but it is unclear how that affects the ARD, and the ARD next year. Points to consider during the meeting today:

- Eric from CAP would be willing to transfer early to start in 2018 to make this a non-issue.
- Abby took them out of the ranking last night thinking we wouldn't be able to rank them.
- If they're willing to start early, we should rank them.
- Abby is adding them back into the calculations

- An official ranking will not be possible until the issue has been cleared up that CAP will start their grant in 2018.

Committee members will share discussions with project applicants. Not all agency discussions need to be shared unless there are major concerns or scoring changes.

Scoring discussion:

- Canvas Health: Washington County CDA has listed 100% dedicated to CH. Canvas Health provides the supportive services for the CDA's Rental Assistance. Canvas needs to increase to 100% dedicated or Washington CDA needs to reduce away from 100% dedicated. Canvas agreed to increasing to 100% dedicated.
 - Mosaic program – 8 point increase for 100% dedicated and one of the stability exits was somebody who was deceased and therefore not counted against the program. That would add 2 more points. Increases Canvas's score to 82/104.
 - SHARE program – 8 point increase for 100% dedicated up to 75% with a new total of 76/104.
- Metro HRA: willing to go 100% dedicated. This will increase the score by 8 points. Data completeness, they were surprised they didn't get 100%. Follow up will happen after the NOFA process is over.
- LSS Anoka Supportive Housing: conversations with LSS staff have indicated substantial HMIS data issues and therefore the APR used to calculate scoring was inaccurate. Inaccuracies have been attributed to changes from ICA, the system administrator. An updated APR was shared but the updated data didn't change the score that much. There was a lot of transition with the program and it was short-staffed for a good part of the year. After reviewing all of discussion there was not enough evidence to increase their score. The committee can use that information as it is deciding where to rank things.
- Bryant project from CAP agency: - going to dedicate all the beds to Dedicated PLUS. This will increase the project score by 8 points giving a total score of 94/104.
- CommonBond: had a perfect score other than zero on maintaining or increasing unearned income. The project believes there is an error in the way they are inputting the data. The project will be reviewing this prior to next year.
- MHR: nothing to contest. Thought scoring was accurate. Question about data completeness - had 2 of the 3 below 2% and didn't understand how to fix it. Follow up will happen after the NOFA is complete.
- Carver CDA: don't think they're going to dispute their score. Clearly having issues with data into HMIS. Allison is now licensed to go into HMIS, but doesn't have her password yet so can't change anything in the next few days. She thinks some of the stuff like non-cash benefits just didn't get entered correctly, and their health insurance definitely didn't get entered correctly. She's willing to dig into it. But leave their score alone for now.

That concludes the score updates.

Expansion Projects Conversations:

- The Link Youth PSH Expansion
 - Planning to start with a few scattered site units in the fall.
 - If the expansion does not get funded the project will move forward with scattered site housing for youth just number of served would change.
 - The Link plans to follow the model of another successful project they operate- Housing First GRH in Hennepin county. The project in Hennepin County has positive outcomes.

- Betty is supportive of funding this expansion project after the discussion with The Link.
- Carver CDA Expansion:
 - The Carver CDA's intention is to take the chronic households next on the CE list regardless of previous county of residency or current service involvement. Households can come from anywhere as long as they want to live in Carver.
 - HCBC - the waiver services could help expand the type of disabilities they can work with. There are limitations on how fast HCBC can help someone. Eligibility determination can take up to 60 days so homeless outreach specialist will be able to work with people and will likely already be working with them. Dan: don't know if they'd have to have MOU or something set up for that 60 day window.
 - Not all 4 new units will be HCBC units. Just means we'll have another department in the county.
 - Budget: she did have a budget created it just got left off by accident. Budget is straight forward. Rental assistance for 4 singles + admin.
 - Julie and Jen reported the expansion application makes more sense after the discussion with the Carver CDA. Both Jen and Julie are satisfied questions were satisfactorily answered and there wouldn't be concerns funding this expansion project.

Motion to fund all three expansion projects.

Motion – Dana Scarlett

2nd – Dan Lauer-Schumacher

Motion carries

Abby will work with the expansion applicants to make budgets work.

Bonus Projects:

- Stepping Stone Emergency Housing:
 - Courtney met Stepping Stone staff.
 - Stepping Stone is open to receiving TA is both the application process for the project application and program design if the project is funded.
 - Clarified that Stepping Stone understands and expects to serve the clients referred from Coordinated Entry.
 - The application will be limited in scope to focus on Anoka County with the hope that the project can expand into Washington County once the project gets up and going.
 - Budget was revised to focus on one case manager.
 - Match was explained and Stepping Stone is confident they have 25% eligible matching funds. Another HUD project needs to support in developing the final budget and match.
 - The committee is comfortable with this being the Bonus Project as long as TA is provided in creating the application.
 - SMAC approved NOFA policies detailing the Bonus Project would rank in Tier 1. The Committee has concerns about placing this Bonus Project in Tier 1 because it is a new applicant to HUD funding. Further discussion about where to place this project will need to be had during ranking.

Motion to make Stepping Stone Emergency Housing the Bonus Project.

Motion – Julie Grothe

2nd – Trisha Kaufman

Motion carries.

Domestic Violence Bonus:

- Tubman:
 - Dana Dumbacher and Trisha were satisfied with Tubman’s responses to the committee’s questions.
 - The committee believes it is reasonable to request they increase numbers served while leaving staffing as is if they will be ranked in Tier 1. It will be requested that they serve 15 households total, an increase of 5 from the current application.
 - Abby will talk with Tubman prior to initial ranking being released.

Ranking Discussion:

- 4% of the ARD needs to be in Tier 2.
- Based on the NOFA Policies passed by the SMAC Governing Board the following adjustments were made to the ranking as follows:
 - ICA was moved from 19 to 13
 - Hearth Connection Coordinated Entry was moved from 24 to 14
 - Scott-Carver-Dakota CAP SMAC PSH was moved from 25 to 15
 - Tubman was moved from 20 to 16.
- The Link Youth PSH was moved to Tier 1 for the following reasons:
 - SMAC priorities set by the SMAC Governing Board that outlined youth PSH as a priority population.
 - The movement of The Link away from the relationship with the Dakota County CDA leads the committee to believe the project is working to improve outcomes.
- Expansion projects were moved to rank directly behind the renewal project:
 - The Link SMAC Youth RRH Expansion moved from 18 to 2
 - The Carver CDA PSH Expansion moved from 23 to 18
 - The Link Youth PSH Expansion moved from 21 to 20
- Tier 2 Discussion:
 - LSS HMIS data issues were revisited. The Committee doesn’t feel that there is enough evidence that outcomes would be improved if data was cleaned up. LSS will remain the bottom renewal project.
 - Canvas Health:
 - Performance issues- data quality, programs look the same every year despite encouragement from Ranking Committee in years past regarding Housing First.
 - Committee feels a continued unwillingness to move forward in the direction SMAC is moving.
 - Challenge in having 3 programs closely tied together it is difficult to separate the programs in the ranking process (Canvas Mosaic, Canvas SHARE, and Washington County CDA). One of these three programs will straddle the line.
 - Mosaic is a Housing First program and will be placed in Tier 1.
 - SHARE is not a Housing First program and will be placed in Tier 2.

- Washington County CDA will straddle the Tier 1/Tier 2 line.

Motion to accept the initial ranking.

Motion – Jen Romero

2nd – Dana Scarlett

Motion carries.

***SMAC Ranking Committee Meeting: Final Project Ranking
August 16, 2018
Meeting Minutes***

The Ranking Committee received 3 appeals for projects ranked in Tier 2 or straddling the Tier 1/Tier 2 line.

- LSS
- Canvas Health
- Washington County CDA

All appeals were reviewed and discussed:

LSS:

- The appeal submitted by LSS was based in data entry and HMIS issues.
- One issue detailed in the appeal is the Returns to Homelessness report. Abby used a report generated by ICA when scoring on Returns. When LSS ran the same report they got different results. Abby checked with ICA regarding the differences between the reports. ICA staff shared that due to system configuration, projects cannot accurately run their own Returns report accurately. The data in the ICA report is what needs to be used in scoring and therefore the original scoring is accurate. No additional points can be given.
- Documentation of communication trying to fix data issues between LSS and ICA was provided in the appeal. However, the committee had concerns that the communications dated back to January of 2018. Committee members felt 7 months should have been enough time to resolve the data issues.
- It is still unclear to the committee if the poor performance is based in data errors or in execution of the program. However, the appeal does demonstrate there are technical issues beyond LSS's control.
- The appeal does not increase LSS's score and does not provide enough reason for movement into Tier 1.

Canvas Health:

- The appeal is based on changing the project application to indicate Housing First. This would increase the score by 8 points and give a total of 82 points and 81%.
- In the initial conversation between Canvas Health and Betty Notto (the assigned Ranking Committee member), this project was not interested in changing the application to reflect Housing First.

- The move to Housing First feels reactive to the ranking as opposed to a planful transition to improve program outcomes.
- The conversation regarding Housing First has been had with Canvas Health for several years and the outcome seems to continue to be the same. Based on this, the committee does not feel the project's score should be increased.
- With the project score staying the same, there is no reason to move the project into Tier 1.

Washington County CDA:

- The appeal received from Washington County CDA outlines concerns about Housing First definition not being properly applied by the Ranking Committee. It also details data entry errors that are relevant with the implementation of the new scoring tool.
- In the initial conversation with Washington CDA and Betty Notto (the assigned Ranking Committee member), there was confusion on how the HMIS data and therefore scoring between the Canvas Health projects and the Washington CDA projects is different. This has been an issue with these 3 projects for several years and concerns the Ranking Committee that the projects have not spent more time trying to understand this.
- The appeal also questions why The Link Youth PSH project is ranked higher when the project received a lower score. The Committee discussed again the reason for ranking The Link in Tier 1 is the commitment of the project to update their program model in an effort to improve outcomes for households served.
- Both Canvas Health and Washington CDA have been encouraged over the past years to make changes to program practices to support better outcomes but both projects have been hesitant to make changes.
- Based on the appeal, the committee does not see evidence that would support moving this project fully into Tier 1.

Discussion was had to move LSS above Stepping Stone Emergency Housing in the ranking. The Committee has concerns about putting households at risk of homelessness for a new project and an applicant with no experience with a HUD RRH program.

The decision was made to move LSS to 24 and Stepping Stone Emergency Housing to 25 in the final ranking.

Motion to approve final ranking.

Motion – Betty Notto

2nd – Jen Romero

Motion carries

