



Butler Collaborative for Families

General Membership Minutes

February 8, 2024, 10:00 am – 11:30 am

Monarch Place: Dedication Hall, 100 Brugh Avenue, Butler, PA 16001

The mission of the Butler Collaborative for Families is to build a unified and integrated network of services by using a multiple-agency approach to break down barriers and strengthen the system of care for individuals and families of Butler County.

I. Welcome: BCF Co-Chair Linda Thoma- Meeting was called to order at 10:07

II. Review and approval of the November 9, 2023, BCF General Meeting minutes- M/S/A

III. Budget & Finance Committee Report: BCF Treasurer Janet gave the update.

a. Restricted Funds: \$13,533.93 Unrestricted Funds: \$27,947.99 Total: \$ 41,483.92

IV. Featured Speaker: Amanda Feltenberger-Director of Integrated Services of Butler County. Maura Flick-Housing Authority of Butler County

- a. Amanda shared that there are currently 15 people on the prioritization list. 1 family and 14 individuals.
 - i. The county has 160 units for homeless individuals, currently 124 are filled. The reason there are 15 people on the prioritization list is that they don't meet the criteria for the homeless housing that is open.
- b. So far the warming center has served 63 individuals so far for the 2023-2024 season
- c. During the January PIT (Point In Time) count, 4 individuals were found sleeping in cars that night. No one wanted services. Many factors influence this event and how to find/identify homeless individuals in the community.
- d. ERAP (Emergency Rental Assistance Program) was federal money that was to help with paying rent. The money ran out in December and now the county is seeing the fallout of this program. Many people are being evicted from not paying their rent due to the long term ERAP assistance.
 - i. On average, 59 evictions are filed a month.
 - ii. Catholic Charities has seen a 250% increase in people seeking assistance.
- e. The County's Continuum of Care for these folks:
 - i. Emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing.
- f. If facing homelessness, contacting Catholic Charities is the first step.
- g. Some goals that the county is working towards:
 - i. Working with the states Western COC (Continuum of Care) to provide housing for the ages 16-24 population that is on the rise in homelessness
 - ii. Landlord mitigation (basically providing insurance/resources to fix apartments if tenant leaves and destroys it)
 - iii. Shared housing program (finding roommates to help cover rent/costs)
 - iv. Expansion of the warming center hours and or coordination with other agencies to provide somewhere for homeless individuals to go while they wait for the warming center to open at night.
- h. Barriers the County is facing:
 - i. Funding
 1. HAP has not increased their funding in 9 years
 2. HUD has not increased service money for at least 10 years.
 3. Homeless funding is very competitive to receive
 4. Increased barriers and additional needs of the people being served
 5. Staffing capacity
- i. Maura from Housing Authority talked about Affordable housing options in the county
 - i. Vouchers- these are given to private landlords, the tenant pays 30% of rent, the voucher covers the rest.
 - ii. County has family units, senior housing and homeless vet housing options

- iii. There are 5 units at the Franklin Court complex that are designed to house the chronically homeless.
- iv. The Housing Authority (Redevelopment Authority) is working on a Blight Mitigation Program where they go in and rehab dilapidated properties. They use these houses for the “hard to house” families. Currently they have 10 properties.

V. Subcommittee Reports

a. Marketing & Events Committee

- i. Join Emily Snow in planning the summer “Spirit of Collaboration” event held in July.

b. Resource & Development Committee

- i. Excel training via BC3 is being postponed due to a medial issue of the instructor – Tricia Pritchard
- a. Continue to write gaps/needs on the large sheet of paper near the entrance.

VI. Partnering Collaboratives Updates:

a. Butler County Prevention Council (BCPC) – Amanda Feltenberger

- i. We are in the process of scheduling a strategic planning meeting to establish our action plan for 2024. For more information, please contact Amanda at AFeltenb@co.butler.pa.us

b. Butler County Local Housing Options Team (LHOT) – Devin Cunningham

- i. 2024 Point in Time Count was done on January 24. Found 3 individuals that night and 1 individual the next morning in the parking lot of the Lighthouse Foundation. There were 5 teams that canvassed the county that evening.

c. Butler County Early Care and Education Council (ECEC) – Julie Thumma

- i. “Spring into School Readiness” is a consignment sale being held at Clearview Mall on April 27th. More information is coming.

- ii. The next council meeting will be on Thursday, March 21st from 1-2:30 at the Mars School District Admin office (zoom is an option) Contact Julie if you would like to be a part of the council.

jthumma@lifesteps.net

VII. 2024 BCF Membership Drive: Benefits of Membership

- a. Get your 2024 memberships renewed.
- b. Career & Resource Fair, April 10 @ BC3, Founders Hall. Event is live, register on the BC3 website, no fee for a table. School Districts will be bussing in students.

VIII. New Business

- a. Twilight Wish fundraising event will be held on Thursday, February 22nd from 5-8pm in the Back Alley of the 11th Frame. \$15 donation to get in. Food, drinks, baskets, and games will be provided.
- b. There are 3 more Reality Tours scheduled through the end of the May. Check out the website to find a location close to you. www.realitytour.org
- c. VA has a resource fair coming up July 13th at the Butler VA. More information will be coming
- d. 4 the Kids (YMCA) Bowling event will be held on March 3rd. Looking for bowlers
- e. Reach and Rise program is looking for one more mentor for Karns City SD. More mentors are also needed for Butler.
- f. February 27th starts a Recovery and MH training at YMCA as part of the Hope is Dope series. It will entail 3 classes educating individuals on addiction and recovery.
- g. The United Way has moved. They are now on Hollywood Drive across from ARMCO CU

IX. Next General Meeting: March 14, 2024, at 10:00 am @ Monarch Place

XII. Adjournment 11:09 M/S/A

XIII. Networking with a Purpose – Collaboration and Information Sharing