HUD CoC Committee
Meeting Notes
Wednesday, January 12th, 2022
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Present: C'Mone Falls (Chair), Paul Berry (Youth Action Board), Josh Jacobs (City of Berkeley), Lara Tannenbaum (City of Oakland), Riley Wilkerson (Alameda County Housing and Community Development), Tunisia Owens (Family Violence Law Center), Paulette Franklin (Alameda County Behavioral Health)

Absent: Marnelle Timson (Consumer Member), Wendy Jackson (East Oakland Community Project)

Leadership Board: Moe Wright (Chair), Susan Shelton (At-Large Representative), Liz Valera (Building Futures with Women and Children), Peggy McQuaid (City of Albany), Sara Bedford (City of Oakland)

Members of the public: Kathie Barkow (Aspire Consulting), Peter Connery (Applied Survey Research), Andrea Ford (Alameda County Social Services Agency), David Modersbach (Alameda County Health Care Services Agency), Natasha Paddock (Alameda County Housing and Community Development), Lucy Kasdin (Alameda County Health Care Services Agency)

EveryOne Home Staff: Chelsea Andrews (Executive Director), Tirza White (Senior Director of Performance and Data Analytics), Katie Barnett (Systems Planning Coordinator), Katie Haverly (Director of Research and Data Analytics), Dorcas Chang (Operations Manager)

Meetings are public. Alameda County residents with lived experience of homelessness are encouraged to attend. Public Comment will be taken at the beginning of each meeting and is limited to 2 minutes per person. Click here to learn more about the public participation policy.

1. Welcome (C'Mone Falls, HUD CoC Chair)

2. HUD CoC Public Comment
   
   a. Christine Ma (Leadership Board member) submitted the following written remarks:
      
      i. In the event that I can’t make any of the meeting, I wanted to say that I think it makes a lot of sense to postpone the Count to a later date for all the reasons you mentioned.

   b. Doug Biggs (Leadership Board member) submitted the following written remarks:
      
      i. I will not be able to attend, but just wanted to register my support for delaying the count. In the last week I have had 4 staff go on sick leave due to Covid. I have recruited a number of staff to assist in the count, but in doing a quick poll with them, they are all at this point reluctant to participate until the situation is better.
From an organizational perspective it will also be hard to dedicate staff to this at the risk of them getting sick and stretching our resources so thin that we will have to curtail essential activities.

3. PIT Count Update (Katie/ Kathie/ Peter)

a. Kathie Barkow (Aspire Consulting) gave an overview of three main areas of rationale that are behind this request.

i. The first is emergent information from HUD.
   1. HUD has been very clear that, due to the option to waive the unsheltered count in 2021, many communities are not in compliance with the biennial requirement for Point In Time (PIT) counts. It will not allow such communities to opt-out again this year.
   2. HUD has indicated it will be encouraging all Continuum of Cares (CoCs) to reschedule to February if it is feasible. However, they are steadfast in not allowing any extensions on the deadline for data submission, which is likely the end of April.

ii. The second issue is the potential negative impact on subject matter experts.
   1. Providers and outreach teams that are being relied on more than ever for this Count are already struggling with staffing limitations, due to outbreaks, exposure, and subsequent quarantines.
   2. Guides are individuals currently experiencing homelessness or have experienced homelessness very recently. While there are no active outbreaks yet in encampments, shelters are already overwhelmed by the surge in COVID-19 cases. The risk of exposure is unusually high for this population, and trying to conduct the Count without an adequate number of guides would directly impact the accuracy of the data collected. Their insight and expertise are critical to the process.
   3. In some jurisdictions, police, fire department, and other public safety staff are an integral part of the Count. They are experiencing similar staffing concerns and strain.
   4. Feedback has been received from all 8 regional coordinators assisting with the Count. Between one-half and two-thirds of the programs that will staff the most intensive census tracts are reporting concerns about staffing shortages that could impact data collection. One hundred percent answered affirmatively that rescheduling to late February could help with the staffing, accuracy, and completeness of the Count.

iii. The third area of concern is optics.
   1. Other Bay Area counties, including Santa Clara, Sonoma, Contra Costa, and San Mateo are postponing their Counts until late February. San Francisco County is also considering it. There are risks if Alameda County moves forward when surrounding areas have chosen to wait due to health and safety concerns.
   2. However, making this decision now will position our CoC well when HUD begins broadly recommending all CoCs postpone their Counts until February.
   3. Reactions from local coordinators during preliminary discussions have consistently shared the sentiment that it would be insensitive or even irresponsible to not reschedule this Count, given the circumstances.
iv. Rescheduling will allow more time to coordinate with the youth count providers and sites and get unsheltered family count partners on board.

b. It is the unanimous recommendation of the Point in Time Count Planning Committee to reschedule the Point in Time Count to February 23rd, 2022.

c. Josh Jacobs (City of Berkeley) asked if postponing would impact funding and delay data.
   i. Kathie Barkow (Aspire Consulting) responded that HUD has not changed the deadline for data submission. There will be no funding implications or impact on the submission timeline.

d. Susan Shelton (Leadership Board) asked for clarification about why another date is being set when it’s possible things might not be different at the end of February.
   i. Kathie Barkow (Aspire Consulting) responded that the end of February is comparable to the standard date the PIT Count is conducted in terms of weather conditions and the likelihood of individuals who experience unsheltered homelessness having exhausted their monthly resources. Any earlier or later than the proposed week would not provide the same comparable quality data.
   ii. Chelsea Andrews (Executive Director) added that a date needs to be provided to HUD in the waiver request, which is another reason a date has been proposed.

e. C’Mone Falls (City of Oakland) asked about the possibility of holding a modified version of the PIT Count if there are similar or worse conditions in late February.
   i. Kathie Barkow (Aspire Consulting) acknowledged that HUD is allowing alternative methodology by doing a random survey of census tracts based on the probability of impact. Some high, medium and low impact tracts would be visited and enumerated, and estimations for each size category would be made based on the enumerated tracts.
      1. This is a significant departure from the methodology that has been used in Alameda County historically, and would not be a comparable data set to any that has come before. There would not be a clear sense of what differences were due to the change in methodology.
      2. Other options can be pursued with existing methodology by making staffing modifications and strategically using volunteers from within a single household or quarantine pod.

f. David Modersbach (Alameda County Health Care Services Agency) noted that Healthcare for the Homeless is seeing significant outbreaks throughout the community, and asked what kind of indicators are being used to monitor the situation.
   i. Kathie Barkow (Aspire Consulting) responded that meetings are held with coordinators on a near-weekly basis to discuss the state of staffing.
   ii. Peter Connery (Applied Survey Research) added there is no single indicator that can be relied on to make this determinator. The majority of outreach workers are in the field every day, so it’s being monitored very closely.

g. Lucy Kasdin (Alameda County Health Care Services Agency) added that Healthcare for the Homeless is tracking cases in both sheltered and unsheltered spaces, and offered their support to assist the tracking that’s underway concerning the Count.

h. Josh Jacobs (City of Berkeley) moved to postpone the Alameda County Point in Time Count until February 23rd, 2022. C’Mone Falls (City of Oakland) seconded the motion.
   i. C’Mone Falls - Yes
ii. Paul Berry - Yes
iii. Josh Jacobs - Yes
iv. Lara Tannenbaum - Yes
v. Riley Wilkerson - Yes
vi. Tunisia Owens - Yes
vii. Paulette Franklin – Yes
   i. Motion passed.

4. HUD CoC Committee Upcoming Events
   a. Next meeting – January 24th 1:00pm- 3:30pm