



# Poverty and Homelessness Board

## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

### Enabling Legislation and/or Bylaws

The Poverty and Homelessness Board (PHB) meets both the requirements of the HUD Continuum of Care Board and the Community Action Agency. The PHB Governance Charter and organizational structure is required for all funds governed by the Continuum of Care title IV McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act 42 U.S.C. 11301 and the Continuum of Care Program Interim Rule. The PHB Governance Charter and organizational structure is also required for all funds governed by Community Action Agencies, Chapter 319yy, Section 17b-885 and Sec. 17b-887.

Through a public process and Continuum of Care member participation, it was determined that Lane County be designated as the Continuum of Care (CoC) to serve as the Collaborative Applicant to operate the Continuum of Care. Lane County was also designated an Administrator of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to review and approve privacy, security, and data quality plans, policies and procedures, and performance measures for HMIS.

### Scope and Function

The function of the Committee/Task Force is to provide recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners in the following areas:

- Recommend approval of proposed candidates for committee
- Governance changes
- Submission of Continuum of Care grant, including reporting requirements
- Request for Proposal (RFP) awards
- Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) report submission

### Membership

The PHB meetings are open to any county employee or member of the public. The PHB is officially comprised of the following members:

	Voting Board Positions	Board Members and Agency Affiliation
1.	Elected Official or Designee Lane County	Pat Farr Commissioner, Lane County
2.	Elected Official or Designee City of Springfield	Sean VanGordon City Councilor, City of Springfield
3.	Elected Official or Designee City of Eugene	Lucy Vinis Mayor, City of Eugene
4.	Elected Official or Designee Rural Lane County	Michael Fleck City Councilor, City of Coburg
5.	At Large Elected Official	Cliff Harrold Sheriff, Lane County

	Voting Board Positions	Board Members and Agency Affiliation
6.	Business	Brittany Quick-Warner Eugene Chamber of Commerce
7.	Direct Services Provider	Paul Solomon Sponsors
8.	Education/ McKinney-Vento Homeless Students Liaison	Donna Butera McKinney Vento Liaison
9.	Faith Based Organization	Pastor Aaron Box North Park Community Church
10.	Homeless/ Formerly Homeless Consumer	Kris McAlister Community Member
11.	Healthcare Representative	Dr. Willy Foster Community Health Centers of Lane County
12.	Mental Health	Shawn Murphy Laurel Hill Center
13.	Philanthropic	Shelly Galvin CBT Nuggets
14.	Homeless Youth Representative	Mattias Smith Community Member
15.	Victim Services (Children's Services)	Susan Lopez Oregon Department of Human Services
16.	Victim Services (Adult Services)	Julie Weismann Hope & Safety Alliance
	Non-Voting Board Positions	Board Members and Agency Affiliation
17.	Public Housing Authority Co-Applicant CoC grant	Jacob Fox Homes for Good
18.	Veterans	Dave Heavirland Department of Veterans Affairs
19.	Training & Employment	Cindy Perry Lane Workforce Partnership
20.	Mainstream Resource Provider State Department of Human Services	Sheila Wagener Oregon Department of Human Services, D5
21.	Housing Co-Applicant CoC grant, ESG recipient	Foster Martinez St. Vincent de Paul Vet LIFT Program
22.	Emergency Shelter Services	Sheryl Balthrop Eugene Mission
23.	Lane County Coordinated Care Organization	Debi Farr Medicaid Services, Trillium
24.	Lane County Coordinated Care Organization	Katharine Ryan PacificSource

## **Staff Contacts**

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## **Meeting Frequency**

The PHB met on the following dates:

- January 21, 2021.....Executive Committee
- February 18, 2021 ...All Member
- March 18, 2021 ... ..Executive Committee
- April 15, 2021 ..... ..All Member
- May 20, 2021 ..... ..Executive Committee
- June 17, 2021 ..... ..All Member
- July 15, 2021 ..... ..Executive Committee
- August 19, 2021.....All Member
- September 16, 2021....Executive Committee
- October 21, 2021.....All Member
- November 18, 2021...Executive Committee
- December 16, 2021...All Member

## Committee Topics of Note/Accomplishments

Starting in April 2020, all PHB meetings met virtually due to the COVID pandemic. The PHB continues to serve as an important communication avenue for COVID assistance resources and information as Lane County navigates the ever changing effects of COVID-19.

The PHB heard and discussed the following topics in their 2016-2021 strategic plan:

- **Create 600 additional housing opportunities throughout Lane County by 2021 for chronically homeless individuals and people with particular needs, including: veterans, youth, domestic violence survivors, those with mental illness, drug and alcohol abuse problems, and those exiting criminal justice, foster care and child welfare systems.**
  - MLK Commons provides 51 PSH units. OHA RAP provides 60 PSH units. Keystone PSH provides 15 units. The Nel (45 Units PSH) will be opening in 2022
  - 181 Emergency Housing Assistance Vouchers (EHV) through Homes for Good. The recent Continuum of Care grant award included 13 scattered site units for the Sahalie Project. These 13 scattered site units are dedicated for FUSE project participants. 17 units Emerald Village.
  - All Housing First unit tenants have access to case management, physical health, behavioral health, peer, supported employment and basic need supports. The PHB decided this was not a model to utilize.
  - Added 42 VASH units through HOMES for Good. Increased the number of households served housed through SSVF program. Significantly increased rent assistance provided to Veteran households.
  - Lane County will be hiring a Landlord Partnership focused staff member in early 2022.
- **Create additional emergency shelter and respite care for homeless individuals, youth and families with children awaiting housing by 2021.**
  - Dusk to Dawn continues to operate 24/7 at 105 bed capacity (reduction due to COVID protocol). 120 Pallet Shelters have been acquired by Lane County and are being overseen at multiple sites across the county for both year round shelter and winter warming. Plans are underway to construct a 75-person Navigation Center (low-barrier shelter) and scheduled to operate on July 1, 2022. Additionally, up to 119 shelter beds are currently operating to serve those most vulnerable to complications from COVID 19. These programs are staffed by SVdP and Carry It Forward. The Brooklyn St. Shelter will provide 12 congregate beds for a specialized population (yet to be determined) by Q2 of 2022.
  - The Annex Family Shelter is currently operated by SVdP in South Eugene. The program serves up to 28 households each night and 65 to 75 families per year.
  - City of Eugene has partnered with SVdP to operate a safe sleep site which opened in Oct 2021 and accommodated up to 55 vehicles. Eugene City Council has also approved four additional sites including Chase Commons, 2243 Roosevelt Blvd, 410 Garfield St, and Dani St which will ultimately accommodate up to 170 spaces. Lane County and city of Eugene are partnering to support these Safe Sleep Sites.
  - Partnership between PeaceHealth and St. Vincent de Paul created 6 Pallet Shelters dedicated to providing shelter and staff support for people discharging from the hospital. Lane County supported this effort by providing Pallet Shelters. A PHB Health Committee Action Team focused on respite met and reviewed data related to potential needs and gaps within our community. The PHB Health Action Team focused on care in Shelters made a recommendation to the PHB to include medical respite in the planned River Ave. Shelter and Navigation Center – this recommendation was not accepted, but catalyzed support for medical respite that includes 24/7 staff support including staff healthcare training. The Board of County Commissioners issued a letter of support for staffed Medical Respite in September 2021 and Health Action Team members have organized an opportunity to learn from other Medical Respite providers in the state.
  - The Healthcare Committee recommended against focusing on the ACT model, which requires specific standards to achieve fidelity and is not necessary or appropriate for all individuals living in shelter and supportive housing. The Health Action Team focused on this strategy developed a set of community recommendations and proposals that have been approved by the PHB and shared with multiple community organizations. These priorities included:
    - Health Screening and Coordination within Shelter and Shelter Alternatives
    - Primary Care that meets people where they are – in Shelters, Shelter Alternatives, and encampment
    - Health focused street outreach
    - Enhanced Medication support

- Coordination and system support

Based on these recommendations and the PHB Strategic Plan, LC Human Services developed a partnership with HIC Alliance to support a Health Focused Street Outreach Team that includes a primary care provider.

- Implemented new, revised RRH Program Standards in 2021 incorporating a Progressive Engagement approach, and prioritized RRH enrolled households for Emergency Housing Vouchers, creating more movement within the model and allowing more households to be served through existing resources; Expanded RRH for families through ESG-CV; Reserved additional funding for RRH through ESG-CV for individuals and youth, but have been unable to secure a provider which remains a challenge in expanding RRH efforts locally.
- **Increase the stability of low-income individuals and families in Lane County. Ensure they are stably housed and have adequate employment income and/or benefits to meet their basic needs**
  - CSBG funds are assisting: 2,000 Springfield residents, 11,000 Eugene residents, 2,000 Florence/coast residents, 4,000 South County/Cottage Grove residents with food boxes, basic needs, replacing legal documents to obtain employment and housing, bus passes, prescription assistance. In addition, CSBG Cares funding is assisting Centro Latino in rural outreach to help 75 new clients, 225 visits annually.
  - CSBG funds are being utilized in Eugene, Springfield, Cottage Grove and Florence to issue bus passes at the Community Service Centers
  - Over 28 million in rent and utility assistance has been provided to households Lane County during the COVID crisis.
  - The Coleman is in development to house people involved with Sponsors. Construction begins in 2023. Glenwood Place is in development to as workforce housing. The Sarang and Hayden Bridge Landlord were preserved by converting the funding mechanism to project based vouchers. Market District Commons integrated affordable housing with market rate housing.
- **Reduce homelessness among low-income families with children and school age youth, as measured by the Oregon Department of Education, by 30 percent by 2021**
  - Barrier buster (Lane County) and rapid response (Sheltercare) programs have been created to quickly address needs of households that can self-resolve their homelessness with coaching and/or small amount of move-in cost assistance. The YHDP grant will provide an opportunity to create a diversion/rapid response program for youth households.
- **Increase employment opportunities, education, and employment and training activities for participants who are in poverty, and/or homeless with special needs**
  - Collaboration with local business has been enhanced by the addition of the President/CEO of the Chamber of Commerce and dedicated workforce professionals serving on this workgroup. Local businesses affected by the Corona Virus Pandemic identified the need for retention, recruitment and training of new employees to the workforce. Committee will continue to focus on identifying what training can enhance the employability of individuals with significant barriers to employment and strategize for funding sources and suitable training to fulfill local employment needs. Workgroup encourages “Lived experience” as notable work history, transferable skills to be identified and valued by employers, and suggests screening individuals, in versus out of jobs.
  - The Step Program began in 2017. On average:
    - 170 households served / year, individuals who are receiving SNAP (not TANF) and are literally homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless (within 2 weeks).
    - 35% of STEP customers identify as a person of color or tribal member.
    - 66 job placements achieved / year.
    - The average wage earned is: \$15.00\*
    - 47% permanent housing from homelessness rate
- **Increase access to integrated health care for persons who are unstably housed, homeless or are community members in supportive housing**
  - This committee is ongoing and currently focused on the development of respite care for people who are unhoused and in-need of continuing care.
  - Created the Carry It Forward Springfield outreach program, the Lane County rural outreach programs and the WhiteBird expanded outreach in Eugene program will begin in February/March of 2022.

- **Increase public understanding of poverty and homelessness issues and how they're being addressed**
  - Press releases have been shared for major system events or advancements, including the Point in Time Count, Rent Assistance, new PSH buildings and the receipt of the YHDP grant.
  - Developed new data dashboards for the general public.
  - Press releases have been shared for major system events or advancements, including the Point in Time Count, Rent Assistance, new PSH buildings and the receipt of the YHDP grant. Staff engage regularly with local conversations focused on homelessness. Most recently staff served as a panelist for a City Club conversation regarding Permanent Housing options in Lane County.
  
- **Advocate for support to reduce poverty and homelessness**
  - Worked closely with CAPO to progress legislative priorities focused on addressing COVID related needs. Including rent assistance, statewide ARPA allocations and Lane County specific legislative asks.
  - This effort continued with the TAC report strategies at the center.
  - PeaceHealth, Kaiser, Trillium and PacificCare have allocated significant funding to support homelessness funding.

## **Topics and Reports**

- TAC Implementation
- PIT Count
- Legislation Updates:
  - State Homelessness/Shelter Expansion Funding
  - Session Debriefs
- Governance Structure Evaluation
- Strategic Plan Revisions & Updates
- Rental & Energy Assistance
- Taxes & Stimulus Payments
- Inclement Weather and Natural Disasters Updates, Discussions, Taskforces
- PHB Committee Membership Applications, Reviews & Acceptance
- PHB Committees and Jurisdictional Updates
- Data System Performance Measurements (HMIS)
- Vaccine Access Plans
- Rapid Rehousing Standards
- Forensic Intensive Treatment Team
- Tableau Website Update
- Continuum of Care & NOFA
- Emergency Housing Vouchers MOU
- Youth Homelessness
- Lane County Updates
  - Assets Status
  - Staffing
  - RFPs and Allocations
  - Financial Reports
- Food Security
- Safe Sleep Sites
- Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) Reports

## **Focus Areas**

The PHB will focus on the following objectives in the upcoming 2022 year:

- Increase shelter/alternative shelters beds, including access and accessibility to facilities
- Reduce homelessness among youth with the implementation of the YHPD grant
- Improve equity within the Coordinated Entry and Shelter Systems
- Improve care coordination at discharge of institutions
- Clarify governance and future planning for PHB
- Increase training and education activities for those in poverty and/or homelessness with special needs

## **Challenges and Strategies**

The following are the greatest challenges before the PHB and the strategies planned to overcome them:

- The economic impacts of COVID-19 have proven to have had long lasting effects on Lane County residents, and most acutely those living in poverty and those experiencing homelessness. The PHB will continue to advocate for and assist in the administration of Federal, State, and Local resources to address the needs of the community.
- Insufficient affordable housing in the community and the extremely low vacancy rate present significant barriers to fully addressing the crisis of homelessness. The PHB will continue to seek resources, advocate for, and build partnerships to increase the supply of affordable and supportive housing in Lane County.