

ARKANSAS BALANCE OF STATE CONTINUUM OF CARE

Minutes April 10, 2025 – 11:00 AM

Zoom

- I. Welcome
- II. Meeting called to order 11:04 am by William Tollett - Chair.
- III. Approval of Minutes: March Minutes, Shannon Haward accepted the minutes, seconded and approved by the group.
- IV. Partner Reports
 - ADFA – Susan Garner, I apologize, I am sick, and my voice is choppy, but I'll just chime in real quick on your meeting. I won't be too long. We are presenting the award, the recommended awardees to our board on the 17th of April. And following that, we will send out, you know, based on the board review and approvals, we'll send out approval notices in applications that didn't make the cut. That'll come out after the 17th of April. I know I sound horrible, but I'll let the group also that after this award process we are going to do a quick turn so anybody that that got denied ESG funds this round they can reapply within the next couple of months we're going to have our consultant do an application review and consulting you know to let everybody you know everybody who can apply the ability to work through the application and troubleshoot any problems they had with this current ESG application round. We're going to try to be more interactive and have more training for everybody to get them where they need to be to get the funding.
 - HUD – No report provided
- V. Balance of State Update
 - Collaborate Applicant – Loren Morphey discussed the strategic planning process, identifying the LHC leaders and their counties. The need for a contact person in each of those counties within the LHC. Emphasis on the importance of organic change, chain of command. You know, it's early in pit planning. So, if there are concerns for a specific county, then the contact person will be able to get that information to the LHC leader and the LH leader get it to me or us.
 - Homeless Program Director – Mark Sniff federal reporting is back and on track, so we have recently submitted our system performance measure. I think next is going to be PIT and HIC, which Loren and I have started working on that data already, but we're going to submit that through the HUD exchange. It is required that all home AARP grantees start to submit reports effectively on the first of next

month. If you are a home AARP grant recipient and you're not entering any information into HMIIS, please get with me immediately if you need to get set up or if you just need to get a little bit more information on what that looks like. They're looking for basic specific pieces of information like demographics, HMIS number, entry, date, and exit. As well as the services received. I believe we're getting that information for ESG grantees in the future as well. So, those are the items that we would be expecting to do reporting wisely and making sure that we're entering that data into HMIS.

- William Tollett asked Mark, so since the 1st of October, when we've not been under a grant, and not having resources to spend. Do we still enter information into HMIS? I have only been doing just our basic services. I am not doing any rental assistance or anything because I don't have those resources, but on our basic service side, our meals and things of that nature. Is ADFA still wanting us to enter that information in?
- Mark answered, "I think it's beneficial to add that information in so that we sort of have that list of services that we have provided and that history of services that we have provided. I don't believe they're looking for that specific information if it's not attached to money used from grant. But I think just for as a continuum it's good to enter that information. The reason is because when we run some of our reports to send into HUD, it just kind of shows a little bit more data. I think that the more data showing what services we provide, the population that we serve, the betting funding we're going to get in the long run.

Coordinated Entry –Josephine Flowers I will share that we completed our testing phase through the last day was March 31st for the vulnerability assessment tool. So right now, we're asking that if you have any information that you have completed on someone that you may have come in contact with that was homeless. If you have that information, if you will go ahead and get entered onto the mass spreadsheet that we have so that we can have that information. Looking at or starting to look at what some of the other organizations around the nation are doing with their coordinated entry so we can see how to move to the next step and eventually get an assessment tool in HMIS.

VI. Old Business

- Committee Meetings - William Tollett, Sue has sent me a list of all the committee members. The committees need to begin interacting with each other and working in their specified area. So, while the committee really needs to elect a committee needs to elect a committee chair. I am asking for now if the first person on that committee be a temporary chair and act to get your members together by phone or by zoom and begin meeting and elect a chair. Then once a chair is elected for

your committee, please send an email to both me and Sue. Why are the committees important? Well one, they are engaging members of the BoS from across the state. It also allows the BoS to function in a more cohesive manner and we have a commitment within our planning grant, where our committees are supposed to be meeting and updating the board as far as progress or programming components we are working on. Have new developments of reaching people whatever they might be. It is vitally important, and we want to be in compliance with our grant. I am sending out a committee list along with the current members.

VII. New Business

- Committee Meetings – William Tollett wants to talk about committee meetings. Sue reminded us at our last meeting and spoke to us regarding the need to reactivate our committee participation that is part of planning grant that we are a recipient of and with all the sorts of turmoil over last year as we had so many transitions in leadership, the committees were not very active except for coordinated entry. And so, Sue sent those out. And then Loren followed up information on that just to let people know who's serving on those committees and to begin meeting. I'd like to hear from the different committees. Have you all met? Are you looking at meetings and scheduling meetings. I'll start first with rank and review. This year, there is not going to be a new NOFO drop. It's a continuation year. And so, I'm going to be sending out a meeting request for us just to look over rank and review the process we go through and see if this is the time we need to make any adjustments, but we will not be meeting for the purpose of actually reviewing and ranking grants. I do want to say and remind our membership, as Loren has done as well, if you're requesting a letter of support from the balance of state, you have an attendance requirement that you have to meet in order to be in good standing. And so, unfortunately, we were not able to issue this past NOFO for a couple of entities because they did not meet those qualifications. But that's rank and review. Loren, could you talk about Pitt? I know you're going to sort of coordinate that as we're as a committee, if you want to give some kind of an update on that.
- Loren Morphey, So I will be glad to be the chairperson of the Pitt committee. I'm already doing it. So, it just kind of makes So I'll reach out to the PIT committee with any questions or concerns or any updates that we need to be aware of. However, Mark and I met with SimTech Solutions. So, when everyone uses the Counting Us app, they're the app designers that we are contracted with. Mark and I met with them earlier this week. And we have until the end of the month to submit all the PIT and HIC count information. So, I think we're in pretty good

shape. We have a lot of data. We have one of the best Pit counts that we've had in a decade or maybe ever. So, I'm super proud of that. And it just really shows that, you know, our need in this area. So, congratulations to everyone. I'm just incredibly proud. And like I said, we have until the end of the month to submit all the information I might be in contact with you needing some kind of specifications, but I will not wait until the last minute to reach out to you.

VIII. Committee Reports

- Steering Committee Updated – Mark Sniff, the last meeting we had, we kind of just went over on finalizing our SPM reports, which we as a continuum have submitted already. So, our assistance performance measures are completed. We did work on the Arkansas Management of Information Systems Policies and Procedures which we're all kind of signing off on to agree that that's kind of what we want in place. I could share that with anybody if they need a copy of that draft, but I believe at the next meeting we're going to look to kind of just finalize that and that's kind of all we went over and then you know some of the information on reporting that ADFA is wanting from us. That is what the last meeting was about.

IX. VIII. Other Coalition Updates

- Okay. Thank you so much. And then lastly, the executive planning committee, that committee is made up of the leadership of the Arkansas balance of state, Debbie on there and we do need to take some time to actually schedule some meetings to look at a review of our policies and procedures that have been ratified by our continuum and to learn in developing a strategic plan. And that strategic plan is helping to identify housing gaps, establishing some strategic goals and steps that we want to move forward with. We're also charged with reviewing the NOFO funding and partnerships that come through Rankin Review Committee and so that will be a section we will not be working on because this is not a NOFO year for us, but I will send it a questionnaire out to look at dates and times that may work for us best to meet by Zoom and we'll get that scheduled on the calendar.

X. Coalition Reports

- ARVAHAN – Rashad Woods - And so, yes, so we're just trying to figure out some great plans during a time of no funding and trying to figure out how we can be a better resource to people. And yesterday I got about 15 phone calls for housing. That's the norm and all that stuff. But they were from Mississippi, Texarkana, Texas, Oklahoma, and different stuff like that. And they're saying DHS is telling them to come my way to call us to get them housing. So, we let them know that, hey, we only do a catchment area and try to find those resources. So, I don't know if that's the thing that we're

going to be looking at this year to really hone in on a housing resource list. I know we have one, but maybe a more up-to-date that we can just send out to people when they're looking for support instead of saying, hey, take this number down, but can you send me your email? I can send you this link. But that's what we're looking at. And what our van is really on our three counties that we do serve is having that resource that is text-able and also by email. Email about the different areas and also homing in on what money can be used in what time. And so usually our hot and heavy time is the summertime, and we burn through all our regular ESG funds when we had it in the summer. Well, then we have two other organizations that are privatized and they're like, hey, then if we can hold our money back and just use it in the wintertime, that will kind of leverage the funds in those areas. The biggest thing we're seeing is that clients are going to get help from one organization, turn around and get help the next couple of months after that. So instead of letting the dollars last longer, they're hitting it all at once. And so really working all together, that's kind of being more to do the strategic planning, the policies and stuff during this downtime with no funds.

- Loren Morpew asked Rashad if they will be meeting monthly and if he could add her to the meeting
- Yes, since we really don't have funds, no one else does around us, we're looking at more quarterly, given that the time to be able to, unless it's against the policy, but I didn't see that anywhere, we're just going to do quarterly and then try to work on those policies and resources during that downtime. So right now, from last month's meeting to June, we're doing resources. Gaining the resources really have a detailed description on what they can provide.
- BBMNS – Cassie Johnson, we had a lack of local participants in attendance. We learned that Arkansas Legal Aid now has an Eviction Grant. She said that if there is an eviction situation to send them to them and they will see if they can help them. Loren Morpew hit on the Pit Count.
- Delta Hills – Kemmy Antoine, we met on the 17th. We had six members attend. I think it was extremely productive. We were able to discuss the wrap-up of Pit count. We also discussed resources in specific counties that was challenging and how we were unable to get a point of contact within specific counties. So, it allowed us to identify exactly where there was a need or us to have individuals have more resources. With that, we were also able to begin creating a resource excel spreadsheet where I have further gone in and narrowed it down to different types of benefits, whether it is a food resource or a homeless shelter or anything for Medicaid or Medicare, SNAP, WIC, and so on. That has also been shared with our team. On top of that, our resource page also provides private funding. I know it's very difficult right now for individuals to get funding so what we were able to do is just provide

them with a list of different types of fundings that they could tap into as a form resource and how they could like spread that or even how they could go in together and bid for specific private funding so that has also been provided to them. And in addition to that, we also have different resources that also assist them with finding different opportunities that are not just locally but federally. We are trying to increase our member participation.

- Eastern Arkansas – Josephine Flowers, so our last meeting was this past Tuesday. And we worked on several things. One of the things that I want to share is that since we did the redrawing of the regions, and I'm giving this report on behalf of our chair, Jennifer. So, since the redrawing of our region, we've been really doing some outreach to try and get members from all the regions to participate. In the local homeless coalition. We're happy to report that we finally got two participants from St. Francis County. We only have one county that has no, we have two counties that has no representation. So, we're working on that. Also, we talked about the impact of the flood and weather that just happened. It was brought to our attention that the emergency service workers, because they were working 24-hour shifts to try and assist people during the weather, said that there was a great need for them to just kind of pick up a hot meal and keep going. And so, we talked about getting that information after the fact from our local emergency service department. So, one of the things that we did just while we were in that meeting, we created a group through GroupMe that we could use to contact each other because people are generally not checking their email when they're off. We got that created. And also, our chair, Jennifer, did a lot of work on developing a website for East Arkansas Local Homeless Coalition. She debuted that. It is a work in progress. She showcased a form where if anyone visited the website and wanted to become a part of the coalition or doing work with us, there's an information sheet that could be completed and sent back to the coalition so that we would have their contact information. And I think, let me peek at my notes, I think that's what we covered. She shared the letter of participation to get funding from the balance of state as well. And that was our meeting.
- Mississippi – Lisa Willard, so we haven't had a meeting for April. And like the other gentleman said about doing a quarterly meeting, is that permissible? We have all the ways to connect the county members with the resources, but unfortunately at this time, none of the resources have any funding to help the clients. Yeah, we have a new program called 100 Families that our community college has taken on, and it's a real neat program where the clients sign up into a database and then from there, they are spread to all the agencies in town, you know, based on the needs of the client. So we have, you know, high-tech database and tracking and all of that, but you know it's frustrating because we do not have the funds to help anyone with housing

and then if we did right now the housing is so difficult to come by you know the clients are getting frustrated because they feel like they've been given the runaround but you know right now we just don't have any funding.

- NEA – Lauren Morphew, if there's no one available I can give an update from them they met last month, and we went over the pit count and they're also trying to grow their LHC the director I mean sorry is Heather and she's new as well. So, we're working on strategic planning and things like that with her. She is also asking to meet quarterly, but they have a pretty good turnout with judges and lawyers and things like that in their area. I was pretty impressed and they're pretty strategic. So, we're definitely going to build NEA LHC, and I think someone wants to speak. Desiree? Yes, thank you.
- RHC – Shelley Faulknor, I'm with, I'm in the RHC. We don't really have a group as far as that goes. Me, I work at the Salvation Army and me, and a team of people and volunteers usually handle the pick count, but I haven't been able to garner any interest from any of the places I've been told to contact in the other five counties we serve. So, if there's anybody in Little River or Lafayette, or Howard, Miller County, Sevier, or Hempstead, then message me somehow so that we can start a meeting. I didn't know how else to do it, I'm sorry. I feared there were a lot of people on here, maybe I was missing them. Because the first responders and the churches and the stuff in those counties are not responding to any invitations to get an LLC together.
- SWAP – Livvey Rurup, we haven't met for April yet. We are meeting next week. But at our last meeting, we had quite a few new people, well, a few new people join us. We had the new Community Resource Center director join us. Drake, who was mentioned as the case manager for Home Art earlier. We're getting some growth. Since the last time we've created a Facebook page, we're not so dependent on emails. We got a chair for our Outreach and Education Committee, so we're going to start posting information there. We're going to update our webpage that's hosted by United Way pretty soon, so people, again, have another way to engage with us other than Facebook and email. We're doing a lot of member outreach right now. We're discussing ways to really support the Community Resource Center to make it sustainable past its one-year funding with the city. We're also working on just expanding those committees. We're going to start doing a lot more outreach on who might be interested in getting in there so we can have more regular committee meetings in between our monthly meetings and we are at the beginning stages of planning like a homelessness kind of summit or symposium, get all the players together to see how we want to align more and coordinate more especially if now if we're going to have the wonderful space of the center which is, you know, pretty much in the heart of our town.

- Toadsuck – Lauren Morphew, I can update for them. They met last month, and the same thing, we went over the PICT account. They have pretty good turnout and Miss Spring is interested in learning the strategic planning things and the, you know, governance charts and things like that. So, they're open to being on board and that was really about it. We mainly discussed the pit count and their areas for growth.

XI. Other Coalition Updates

- Loren Morphew, I received a report earlier this week that the administration has ordered a federal hiring freeze and directed agencies to initiate reductions in force called RIF. What they're doing is they're doing that through reorganization plans. So according to the guidance provided to agency heads, the plan should focus on maximum elimination of functions that are not statutory mandated. So, they're getting rid, obviously, of technical assistance. They did that effective immediately and some supplemental programs in HUD are going to probably go away quickly. They're going to consolidate management layers and reduce positions that are not critical. They're going to close and consolidate field offices where needed and reduce the use of outside consultants and contractors. So, that's something to just be mindful of. So, if you receive home funds or CDBG funds in your area or in your LHC, you may or may not have a field officer available to you. We already don't have technical assistance. So that's just something to be mindful of. We don't have specifics, obviously, but at least they're letting us know that they are going to downsize quickly. Grantees. Or community planning development grantees can expect notification of fiscal year 25 grant allocations for CDBG and home funding by May 15th. So, then you know next month so then your consolidated plan annual action plans will be due 60 days after that. So, if you need assistance in writing your CDBG plans Um, please reach out to me because I specialize in that as well. So, um, try to, yeah, we're, we're definitely expecting a decrease in CDBG funds in our areas, and I'm not sure who all has CDBG funds in their LHCs, but the City of Hot Springs is an entitlement city. I'm also the CDBG administrator, so I know this, um, but we're definitely going to get a decrease in funds. I would not be surprised if the CDBG program was no longer with us in the next couple of fiscal years. So, there's something to plan ahead on. Yep, those are my HUD updates. But like I said, if anyone needs assistance maintaining their CDBG program and getting plans written, things like that, please feel free to reach out to me. I've already worked with the EAR, LHC a little bit, Miss Marilyn on her plans but that's just something that I am passionate about and if it's another avenue another resource that we can hang on to as long as we can let's hang on to it.
- Loren Morphew - I forgot to mention earlier, whenever I started the strategic plan phase one with all the LHCs is I did request that everyone have an internal LHC

resource directory. So, start to identify, you know, what services are in the area of your LHC, what resources are available, things like that. So, everyone should be working on just a local resource directory. United Way always has a good one, but unfortunately there's not, it didn't look like every single LHC had access to a United Way resource directory.

- William Tollett - Our last thing we want to talk about is our annual meeting this fall. If you would be willing We'd like to try to keep it centrally located, so something along Interstate 40. Or Interstate 30. And you have a facility large enough and if you would reach out to Loren or myself. And if you'd be willing to host the meeting. If we do not hear from a member, then Loren and I will be working on securing a location for our annual meeting. And the annual meetings are so good. We're able to meet in person, we're able to interact with one another, put eyes on each other. So, we will look at a tentative date to try to get save the date out to everybody and then do updates along the way in regard to that annual meeting and provide additional information as we move forward. Any other reports, comments before we adjourn. Our next meeting will be May the 8th, which is the second Thursday of the month. It'll come earlier in the month. But May the 8th will be our next meeting for the Balance of State and the executive committee meeting will be the first.

XII. Next Balance of State zoom Meeting

- May 8, 2025 @ 11:00 am

XIII. Meeting Adjourned

Submitted by Cassie Johnson, ARBoS Secretary.