

ORANGE COUNTY  
CONTINUUM OF CARE BOARD SPECIAL MEETING  
Thursday, December 17, 2020  
1:00 PM – 2:30 PM

**Webinar:**  
<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/694403981>

**Dial by Phone:**  
**+1 (312) 757-3121**

**Access Code:**  
**694-403-981**

## AGENDA

### Board Members

Jeanne Awrey, OC Dept. of Education

Matt Bates, City Net

Judson Brown, City of Santa Ana

Natalie Bui, Veteran Affairs CRRC

Donald Dermit, The Rock Church

Becks Heyhoe, OC United Way [Secretary]

Tim Houchen, Hope4Restoration

Patti Long, Mercy House

Dawn Price, Friendship Shelter

Albert Ramirez, City of Anaheim

Maricela Rios-Faust, Human Options [Vice Chair]

Soledad Rivera, Families Together of OC

George Searcy, Jamboree Housing

Tim Shaw, Individual [Chair]

Christina Weckerly Ramirez, Health Care Agency

Call to Order – Tim Shaw, Chair

Board Member Roll Call – Becks Heyhoe, Secretary

Public Comments: Members of the public may address the Continuum of Care (CoC) Board on items listed within this agenda or matters not appearing on the agenda so long as the subject matter is within the jurisdiction of the CoC Board. Members of the public may address the CoC Board with public comments on agenda items in the business calendar after the CoC Board member discussion. Comments will be limited to three minutes. If there are more than five public speakers, this time will be reduced to two minutes.

In order to address the CoC Board, members of the public are to enter their name and agenda item number in the GoToMeeting chat box to be placed in a queue. CoC Board staff will call your name in the order listed in the chat box.

### CONSENT CALENDAR

*All matters are approved by one motion unless pulled by a Board Member for discussion or separate action. The CoC Board requests that only pertinent information be discussed during this time.*

1. Approve Continuum of Care Board Meeting Minutes from November 18, 2020.

## **BUSINESS CALENDAR**

1. **Continuum of Care Manager Update** – Zulima Lundy, Continuum of Care Manager
2. **CoC Board Meeting Calendar** – Zulima Lundy, Continuum of Care Manager
  - a. Approve the CoC Board Meeting Calendar for 2021 calendar year.
3. **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) User License Fee Policy** – Zulima Lundy, CoC Manager and Erin DeRycke, HMIS Lead
  - a. Approve the HMIS User License Fee Policy as recommended by the Policies, Procedures and Standards Committee.

The HMIS User License Fee Policy is applicable to all agencies participating in the Orange County HMIS.

    - i. Agencies that receive state and/or federal funding that require HMIS participation will be charged for the number of licenses the agency has active at the end of the calendar year, based on the fee structure detailed below:
      1. 1 – 5 users: \$500 annually
      2. 6 or more users: \$2,500 annuallyIf a user has access to multiple agencies in HMIS, only the agency where the user is employed will be charged.
    - ii. Agencies that are newly awarded funding that requires HMIS participation during the calendar year will be required to pay \$500 prior to the awarded funding being implemented in HMIS.
    - iii. There will be no charge for agencies not receiving funding that requires HMIS participation.
4. **Policy, Procedures and Standards (PPS) Committee – At Large Membership Appointment** – Maricela Rios-Faust, Vice Chair
  - a. Appoint at-large member(s) to the PPS Committee per the PPS Committee Governance Charter.
5. **Review, discuss and approve recommendations for the 2021 Point in Time Unsheltered Count** – Zulima Lundy, Continuum of Care Manager

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, January 19, 2021, from 2:00 pm to 4:00pm

**ORANGE COUNTY  
CONTINUUM OF CARE BOARD  
Wednesday, November 18, 2020  
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM**

**Webinar:**  
<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/694403981>

**Dial by Phone:**  
**+1 (312) 757-3121**

**Access Code:**  
**694-403-981**

# MINUTES

## Board Member Names

Jeanne Awrey, OC Dept. of Education [Secretary]  
Matt Bates, City Net  
Judson Brown, City of Santa Ana  
Natalie Bui, Veteran Affairs CRRC  
Donald Dermit, The Rock Church  
Becks Heyhoe, OC United Way  
Tim Houchen, Hope4Restoration  
Patti Long, Mercy House

Dawn Price, Friendship Shelter  
Albert Ramirez, City of Anaheim  
Maricela Rios-Faust, Human Options  
Soledad Rivera, Families Together of OC  
George Searcy, Jamboree Housing [Chair]  
Tim Shaw, Individual [Vice-Chair]  
Christina Weckerly Ramirez, Health Care Agency

### Call to Order – George Searcy, Chair

Chair George Searcy called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

### Board Member Roll Call – Jocelyn Gaspar, Continuum of Care Specialist

Present: Jeanne Awrey, Matt Bates, Judson Brown, Natalie Bui, Donald Dermit, Becks Heyhoe, Tim Houchen, Patti Long, Dawn Price, Albert Ramirez, Maricela Rios-Faust, Soledad Rivera, George Searcy, Tim Shaw and Christina Weckerly-Ramirez

**Public Comments:** Members of the public may address the Continuum of Care (CoC) Board on items listed within this agenda or matters not appearing on the agenda so long as the subject matter is within the jurisdiction of the CoC Board. Members of the public may address the CoC Board with public comments on agenda items in the business calendar after the CoC Board member discussion. Comments will be limited to three minutes. If there are more than five public speakers, this time will be reduced to two minutes.

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- Callie Rutter commented on the need for more representation from people with lived experience in the CoC Board membership.
- Pat Davis spoke in support of recommended actions to be considered by the CoC Board, including the recommendation for establishing a Lived Experience Advisory Committee, and congratulated Tim Houchen on his new role serving the CoC Board and representing persons with lived experience.

- David Duran congratulated Tim Houchen as the new CoC Board member representing persons with lived experience and commented on shelters' compliance with the County of Orange Standards of Care.

### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

*All matters are approved by one motion unless pulled by a Board Member for discussion or separate action. The CoC Board requests that only pertinent information be discussed during this time.*

#### **1. Approve Continuum of Care Board Meeting Minutes from October 28, 2020.**

Matt Bates motioned to approve the Consent Calendar. Maricela Rios-Faust seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

### **BUSINESS CALENDAR**

#### **1. Director of Care Coordination Update – Doug Becht, Director of Operations, Office of Care Coordination**

##### **a. Project Roomkey**

The Office of Care Coordination (OCC) has ramped down the operations of Project Roomkey. The OCC continues to provide Project Roomkey to individuals who are sick or symptomatic for COVID-19. Emergency shelter operators, hospitals, law enforcement and County contracted street outreach can continue to refer individuals experiencing homelessness who are sick or symptomatic with COVID-19 illness through the same referral line that was established. For any questions regarding access to this resource, please email [carecoordination@ochca.com](mailto:carecoordination@ochca.com).

##### **b. Project Homekey**

The County of Orange (County) has finalized the Standard Agreement with Jamboree Housing Corporation (Jamboree Housing) for the operations of the Homekey Program at the Stanton Inn & Suites and the Tahiti Motel. The County will be working with Illumination Foundation to transition the operations of the Stanton Inn & Suites site from Project Roomkey to Jamboree Housing and American Family House as Homekey programs effective November 25, 2020. The target population for the Homekey Program is individuals and couples who are experiencing homelessness and have underlying medical conditions and/or are age 65 or older. Referrals for the Homekey Program will be made through the Coordinated Entry System.

##### **c. Yale Navigation Center**

On November 17, 2020, the Board of Supervisors approved the contract with People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) to operate the Yale Navigation Center. The Yale Navigation Center will provide shelter and supportive services for up to 425 individuals, including couples experiencing homelessness in the Central Service Planning Area. The shelter team within the OCC will be working with the Midnight Mission on a phased transition plan for Courtyard Transitional Center participants.

##### **d. System Mapping Survey**

The Commission to End Homelessness and the OCC are leading a collaborative effort to map the Homeless Services System across the county to better understand the resources/services available, build partnerships and utilize the information to better serve those experiencing homelessness. The OCC will work with Housing for Health OC, Mind OC and 2-1-1 Orange County (211OC) on data analysis and will be looking for participation from services providers across the county in completing the System mapping Survey. The survey will be distributed in December and initial findings/analysis will be presented at the February 2021 Commission to End Homelessness meeting.

##### **e. Public Comments:**

- Callie Rutter advocated for more funding opportunities for permanent housing.
- Nikki Buckstead thanked Doug Becht for the Project Roomkey update for individuals and shared an update on the COVID-19 alternative shelter placement efforts of the Family Solutions Collaborative that includes serving 12 households for a total of 50 persons.
- David Duran recommended the CoC Board communicate with the Commission to End Homelessness and the OC Housing Finance Trust on Housing First.

## **2. Continuum of Care Manager Update – Zulima Lundy, Continuum of Care Manager**

- a. CoC Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)  
The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has not provided an update on the CoC NOFA. There is current legislation being considered by Congress.
- b. Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Round 2  
The California Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council released the NOFA for HHAP Round 2 on November 13, 2020. The Application is expected to be released soon and due no later than January 29, 2021. The HHAP Round 2 allocated to the Orange County CoC will support the Homekey Program Operations per prior approved CoC Board action.
- c. COVID-19 Homelessness Response Funding  
Expenditures to date will be paid with Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding through December 2020. Letter of Agreements for the provision of Alternative Shelter Placement will continue to be an available resource to the Continuum of Care Providers. Funding must be fully expended by June 30, 2022.
- d. Request for Proposals (RFP) Update  
The COVID-19 Homelessness and Prevention Response RFP review is underway. Applicants will be notified when funding recommendations are being considered by the CoC Board. The Coordinated Entry System (CES) for Individuals RFP has closed and review is underway.
- e. Racial Equity Update  
The OCC has received feedback on the proposed Scope of Work. The assessment will require HMIS data to be provided, therefore, a recommendation for HMIS data release is forthcoming.
- f. 2021 Point in Time Count  
HUD released guidance on how to safely conduct the unsheltered count during the COVID-19 pandemic. HUD detailed data collection considerations, including:
  1. Exception allowance to some or all the count requirements
  2. Methodology changes to maximize safety2-1-1 Orange County has started communicating the process and timeline with shelter providers for the sheltered count.
- g. CES for Individuals Migration  
211OC and BitFocus are working on the last phase of the CES for Individuals migration into HMIS. The migration will take place in mid to late December. CES for Individuals is expected to be live in HMIS by January 2021. The CES team will be communicating the timelines and deadlines to all CES Partners via email. There will be a two week pause in data entry and updates during the migration to avoid duplication information. CES functions will continue using the latest Prioritization List during the two-week pause. Once migration is completed, new assessments will be entered into CES through HMIS.
- h. Proposed HMIS User License Fees Structure Policy  
The Policies, Procedures and Standards (PPS) Committee had an additional discussion on the proposed HMIS User License Fee Structure Policy. The deadline for feedback on the proposed policy was extended to end of day on November 25, 2020. The final proposal will be presented at PPS Committee in December 2020. Any questions or feedback can be directed to the HMIS Help Desk or [carecoordination@ochca.com](mailto:carecoordination@ochca.com).
- i. Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week  
The week of November 15-22, 2020 is Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. The OCC thanked all homeless providers, street outreach staff, case managers and all Executive Directors for all their hard work and commitment to ending homelessness.

## **3. New Continuum of Care Board Members Welcome and Introductions – George Searcy, Chair**

- a. Tim Houchen representing a seat for persons experiencing homelessness or formerly homeless shared an introduction about himself.
- b. Christina Weckerly-Ramirez representing an at-large seat prioritizing Behavioral Health expertise shared an introduction about herself.
- c. Soledad Rivera representing an at-large seat prioritizing Health Care expertise shared an introduction about herself.

## **4. Policies, Procedures and Standards (PPS) Committee Recommendations – Tim Shaw, Chair**

- a. Tim Shaw, Chair of the PPS Committee, provided an overview of the proposed Lived Experience Advisory Committee and its goals. The Advisory Committee will function as an advisory group to the CoC Board. Membership will be comprised of members with current or past experience of homelessness. The Advisory Committee membership will use this platform to provide feedback and recommendations to the Orange County CoC.
- b. Action: Establish a Lived Experience Advisory Committee to be chaired by Tim Houchen.

Vice Chair Tim Shaw motioned to approve the recommendation. Becks Heyhoe seconded the recommendation. The recommendation passed by unanimous consent.

- c. CoC Board Comments
  - i. Judson Brown, a member of the PPS Committee, recommended a stipend for attendees of the Advisory Committee.
  - ii. Dawn Price offered her support and recommended geographical representation.
  - iii. Natalie Bui praised the recommendation and recommended a veteran seat be included in the membership of the Advisory Committee.
- d. Public Comments
  - i. Callie Rutter praised the CoC Board on the recommendation.
  - ii. David Duran agreed with Judson Brown and Natalie Bui's recommendations
  - iii. Michele Musachio and Diane Nied, both from the League of Women Voters, support the item and offered their support for the item.

## 5. Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Capital Request for Proposals (RFP)

### Funding Recommendations – Zulima Lundy, Continuum of Care Manager

- a. The HHAP Capital Project RFP aimed to increase the number of available emergency shelter beds and/or permanent supportive housing unit for persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness by creating new beds and/or units or expanding capacity within existing projects. Covenant House California's proposal will develop an emergency shelter program in the City of Anaheim and will feature 25 beds for transitional age youth. The City of Costa Mesa's proposal will develop an emergency shelter program in the City of Costa Mesa to provide 72 beds for individuals experiencing homelessness in the Central Service Planning Area.
- b. Amended Motion: Judson Brown made a motion to approve the HHAP Capital RFP funding recommendations to the following agencies as recommended by the RFP Evaluation Panel in collaboration with the Orange County Health Care Agency and request the City of Costa Mesa increase the bed capacity in the emergency shelter, as detailed below.
  - i. Covenant House California - \$650,000 in HHAP capital funding for the development of an emergency shelter for transitional aged youth
  - ii. City of Costa Mesa - \$2,529,126 in HHAP capital funding for the development of permanent emergency shelter serving individuals experiencing homelessness in the Central Service Planning Area and require the creation of 17 additional beds for individuals experiencing homelessness in the Central Service Planning Area to meet requirements of Federal lawsuit.

Becks Heyhoe seconded the motion for discussion. Judson Brown, Natalie Bui and Tim Houchen voted in favor of the amended motion. Jeanne Awrey, Matt Bates, Becks Heyhoe, Dawn Price, Albert Ramirez, Maricela Rios-Faust, Soledad Rivera, Christina Weckerly-Ramirez, Chair George Searcy, and Vice Chair Tim Shaw voted against the amended motion. Patti Long abstained from voting. The motion failed.

- c. CoC Board and OCC Comments:
  - i. Jason Austin, Director of Care Coordination, commented on the amended motion and the RFP process, noting that the County has concerns over placing such pressure on providers and applicants the County works with, particularly on an already submitted proposals in response to an RFP.
  - ii. Several CoC Board members expressed their concern over the 17 additional beds in the amended motion such as the structure's capacity, COVID-19 restrictions and the need for additional funding to create the additional beds.
- d. Public Comments:
  - iii. Susan Price, Assistant City Manager for the City of Costa Mesa, addressed the concerns raised by the CoC Board and noted that the proposal under consideration builds critical infrastructure for the System of Care.
  - iv. Carol Jacobs from the City of Newport Beach commented in support of the City of Costa Mesa's proposal and highlighted their partnership with the City of Costa Mesa. Carol Jacobs additionally shared an overview the efforts by the City of Newport Beach to site and develop an emergency shelter program, that in the end was unsuccessful.
  - v. Callie Rutter advocated for more housing opportunities.

- e. Original Motion: Approve the HHAP Capital RFP funding recommendations to the following agencies as recommended by the RFP Evaluation Panel in collaboration with the Orange County Health Care Agency
  - i. Covenant House California - \$650,000 in HHAP capital funding for the development of an emergency shelter for transitional aged youth
  - ii. City of Costa Mesa - \$2,529,126 in HHAP capital funding for the development of permanent emergency shelter serving individuals experiencing homelessness in the Central Service Planning Area

Vice Chair Tim Shaw motioned to approve the recommendation. Maricela Rios-Faust seconded the recommendation. Patti Long abstained from voting. The recommendation passed by unanimous consent.

**6. Continuum of Care Board Officer Elections – George Searcy, Chair**

- a. Chair George Searcy led the election process for the CoC Board Officer positions including Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary.
- b. Chair  
Dawn Price nominated Vice Chair Tim Shaw. Christina Weckerly-Ramirez nominated Matt Bates. Both members accepted the nominations. The CoC Board members casted their vote. The newly elected Chair of the CoC Board for the term beginning December 2020 to August 2021 is Tim Shaw.
- c. Vice Chair  
Dawn Price nominated Maricela Rios-Faust. Soledad Rivera nominated Patti Long. Both members accepted the nomination. The CoC Board members casted their vote. The newly elected Vice Chair of the CoC Board for the term beginning December 2020 to August 2021 is Maricela Rios-Faust.
- d. Secretary  
Tim Shaw nominated Becks Heyhoe. Becks Heyhoe accepted the nomination. No other members were nominated. The newly elected Secretary of the CoC Board for the term beginning December 2020- August 2021 is Becks Heyhoe.
- e. Dawn Price motioned to ratify the 2020 CoC Board Officer Elections. Tim Houchen seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent.
- f. The OCC and the CoC Board members congratulated Chair George Searcy for his outstanding leadership as Chair of the Orange County CoC Board from September 2019 to November 2020.

**Meeting adjourned at 4:37 p.m.**

**Next Meeting:** December 17, 2020

## Agenda Item 2

**Date:** December 17, 2020

**Subject:** Continuum of Care Board Meeting Calendar

**Recommendation:**

Approve the Continuum of Care Board Meeting Calendar for calendar year 2021.

Date	Time	Location
Tuesday, January 19, 2021	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	GoToMeeting Dial by Phone: +1 (312) 757-3121 Access Code: 694-403-981
Wednesday, February 24, 2021	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	GoToMeeting Dial by Phone: +1 (312) 757-3121 Access Code: 694-403-981
Wednesday, March 24, 2021	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	GoToMeeting Dial by Phone: +1 (312) 757-3121 Access Code: 694-403-981
Wednesday, April 28, 2021	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	GoToMeeting Dial by Phone: +1 (312) 757-3121 Access Code: 694-403-981
Wednesday, May 26, 2021	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	GoToMeeting Dial by Phone: +1 (312) 757-3121 Access Code: 694-403-981
Wednesday, June 23, 2021	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	WebEx
Wednesday, July 28, 2021	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	WebEx
Wednesday, August 25, 2021	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	WebEx
Wednesday, September 22, 2021	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	WebEx
Wednesday, October 27, 2021	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	WebEx
Wednesday, November 17, 2021	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	WebEx
No meeting in December 2021	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	WebEx



**Date:** December 17, 2020

**Subject:** Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) User License Fee Policy

**Recommendation:**

Approve the HMIS User License Fee Policy as recommended by the Policies, Procedures and Standards (PPS) Committee.

The HMIS User License Fee Policy is applicable to all agencies participating in the Orange County HMIS.

- i. Agencies that receive state and/or federal funding that require HMIS participation will be charged for the number of licenses the agency has active at the end of the calendar year, based on the fee structure detailed below:
  - 1. 1 – 5 users: \$500 annually
  - 2. 6 or more users: \$2,500 annuallyIf a user has access to multiple agencies in HMIS, only the agency where the user is employed will be charged.
- ii. Agencies that are newly awarded funding that requires HMIS participation during the calendar year will be required to pay \$500 prior to the awarded funding being implemented in HMIS.
- iii. There will be no charge for agencies not receiving funding that requires HMIS participation.

**Background:**

When the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) transitioned from the Adsystem software vendor to Bitfocus Clarity, the Orange County Continuum of Care (CoC) governing board was notified of the change in user license fees. At the time, the CoC governing board agreed to revisit the HMIS user license fees when the CoC was close to surpassing the number of licenses in the original contract 2-1-1 Orange County (211OC) has with Bitfocus. The Orange County CoC surpassed the number of licenses in the original contract in July 2019.

Since July 2020, the Office of Care Coordination (OCC) and 211OC have been working closely together to evaluate the current usage of HMIS user licenses in the Orange County CoC. This includes reviewing the number of participating agencies, the number and type of HMIS user licenses, the number of projects in HMIS, number of HMIS program enrollments and more. In October 2020, OCC and 211OC had developed a couple recommendations on how to move forward with a proposed HMIS user license fee structure.

On October 19, 2020, OCC and 211OC presented two proposals for the HMIS User License Fee Policy to the Policies, Procedures and Standards (PPS) Committee and detailed the mechanism for feedback and questions. The presentation was provided by Erin DeRycke, HMIS Lead, and detailed an initial proposal.

As a follow-up to the meeting, the proposal was emailed by 211OC and OCC to all HMIS agency users and executive directors requesting feedback and suggestions on the proposed policy. The deadline for feedback was set for November 4, 2020, for review at the PPS Committee in November 2020.

During the PPS Committee held on November 10, 2020, 211OC reviewed the feedback received to date and shared a second proposal for the PPS Committee's consideration. The second proposal was emailed by 211OC and OCC to all HMIS agency administrators and executive directors requesting feedback and suggestions.

On November 18, 2020, the proposed HMIS user license fee was shared with the CoC Board during the CoC Manager's Update to remind the CoC Board members and participants to submit feedback by November 25, 2020.

Following the feedback from users and the community, the proposals were updated and shared at the CoC Executive Director meeting on December 3, 2020. The CoC Executive Directors feedback was incorporated, and the final proposal was shared with the PPS Committee on December 8, 2020.

Final Proposal: The HMIS User License Fee Policy is applicable to all agencies participating in the Orange County HMIS.

- i. Agencies that receive state and/or federal funding that require HMIS participation will be charged for the number of licenses the agency has active at the end of the calendar year, based on the fee structure detailed below:
  1. 1 – 5 users: \$500 annually
  2. 6 or more users: \$2,500 annuallyIf a user has access to multiple agencies in HMIS, only the agency where the user is employed will be charged.
- ii. Agencies that are newly awarded funding that requires HMIS participation during the calendar year will be required to pay \$500 prior to the awarded funding being implemented in HMIS.
- iii. There will be no charge for agencies not receiving funding that requires HMIS participation.

The PPS Committee took action and approved the final proposal to be agenized at the December 17, 2020 CoC Board meeting.

**Analysis:**

Approval of the final proposed HMIS User License Fee Policy will cover the additional costs that 211OC is incurring on behalf of the Orange County CoC that are not covered by the original contract with Bitfocus. Upon approval by the CoC Board, the HMIS User License Fee Policy will be implemented in January 2021. The HMIS agency users will be notified about the changes on the HMIS Licenses and will have 60 days to submit their payment. 211OC and the Office of Care Coordination will reevaluate the proposal and implementation in Fall 2021 to ensure the fee structure continues to meet the CoC's needs . Any revisions will be taken to the PPS Committee.

**Date:** December 17, 2020

**Subject:** Policy, Procedures and Standards (PPS) Committee – At Large Membership Appointment

**Recommendation:**

Appoint Matt Bates and Christina Weckerly-Ramirez to the PPS Committee as At Large Members.

**Background:**

The Governance Charter for the PPS Committee details the membership as following:

- The PPS Committee is chaired by the Vice Chair of the Orange County Continuum of Care (CoC) Board.
- Additional PPS Committee membership is comprised of the chairs of any ongoing committee as well as no fewer than one and no more than two At Large Members of the CoC Board.

During the November 2020 meeting of the CoC Board, the CoC Board officer election was held. The PPS Committee Chair Tim Shaw was elected as the new Chair of the CoC Board and Maricela Rios-Faust was elected as the new Vice Chair of the CoC Board. By becoming the Vice Chair of the CoC Board, Maricela Rios-Faust will now be the Chair the PPS Committee.

Previously, Maricela Rios-Faust served on the PPS Committee as an At Large member and with the transition, at minimum one and at maximum two seats are available in the membership of the PPS Committee

**Analysis:**

Appointment of Matt Bates and Christina Weckerly-Ramirez to the PPS Committee as At Large Membership will support the PPS in having different insights and expertise as it considered all proposed policies, procedures, and standards to be presented to the Orange County CoC Board.

Appointments made during the December 2020 meeting of the CoC Board, will be effective January 2021.

**Date:** December 17, 2020

**Subject:** Review, discuss and approve recommendations for the 2021 Point In Time Unsheltered Count

**Recommendation:**

Approve the Office of Care Coordination as the Administrative Lead for the Orange County Continuum of Care to request an exemption from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to not conduct an unsheltered count in 2021.

**Background:**

Given the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on November 16, 2020, released guidance for Continuum of Care (CoCs) on conducting the federal mandated bi-annual Point in Time (PIT) Unsheltered Count. The guidance recommends that CoCs should first and foremost prioritize the safety of volunteers, staff and people experiencing homelessness by following COVID-19 safety basics. The guidance on the 2021 PIT unsheltered count offers flexibilities including conducting an observation-only count, extending the PIT count activities timeframe, relying on more statistical sampling, or using Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) or other comprehensive datasets with the approval of HUD. The guidance notes that if an unsheltered PIT count is not possible, CoCs may seek an exception to some or all the unsheltered PIT count requirements. To request the exception, CoCs must submit a request for an exception and detail why the CoC cannot conduct the full unsheltered PIT count and what efforts a CoC is taking to understand the needs of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in their community. The guidance provided by HUD does not impact the sheltered count or the Housing Inventory Count (HIC) process, that traditionally occurs concurrently to the unsheltered PIT count.

**Analysis:**

After months of ongoing planning discussions, the Office of Care Coordination (OCC) which serves as the administrative lead for the Orange County CoC recommends requesting an exception from HUD to not conduct an unsheltered count in 2021. The recommendation to request an exception from HUD does not come lightly, as OCC recognizes the value in the data that is obtained through this effort and its impacts in local planning efforts that aim to address homelessness in Orange County. However, having reviewed the guidance provided by HUD, participated in technical assistance webinars with HUD and in regional calls with CoCs in central and southern California, forgoing the unsheltered count is the best decision for the safety and health of all. Additionally, the OCC does not feel that the Orange County CoC would have the confidence to say that a 2021 unsheltered count revealed a true comparison to past counts and a valid comparison to future counts given all the challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In discussing with surrounding CoCs, our peers have expressed the same concerns and are tackling the same challenges in Orange County. This includes, the current stay at home order and overnight curfew currently in place by the State aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19 as well as challenges to muster sufficient resources and volunteers. As of Friday, December 11, 2020, the majority of CoCs were taking steps to request an exception not to do an unsheltered PIT.

The following is the breakdown of the 14 CoCs in central and southern California, excluding Orange County CoC:

- Five CoCs – Los Angeles CoC, Pasadena CoC, San Bernardino County CoC, Ventura County CoC, and Fresno/Madera CoC – have requested an exception from HUD and received approval.
- Six CoCs are planning on requesting an exception are from HUD in the coming weeks. These CoCs are San Diego County, Riverside County, Long Beach, Santa Barbara County, Imperial County, and San Luis Obispo County.
- Two CoCs are planning on submitting HMIS data as count data per the guidance provided by HUD.
- One CoC is planning on conducting a service based count which aligns with past methodologies utilized.

On Monday, December 14, 2020, the OCC hosted a meeting of the 2021 PIT Count Advisory Committee. The 2021 PIT Count Advisory Committee was presented with an overview of the HUD guidance provided, the risk factors considered and the proposed recommendation of the OCC. The 2021 PIT Advisory Committee expressed their support and agreement with the recommendations of the OCC to request an exemption from HUD to not conduct an unsheltered count in 2021.

If the recommendation action is approved by the Orange County CoC Board, the OCC will email HUD requesting the exception and providing the required information as detailed in the guidance on Friday, December 18, 2020. The OCC will continue working with City Net and Covenant House California to identify opportunities to leverage the work to date to better the unsheltered population experiencing homelessness.