

Somerville Continuum of Care Meeting

12/18/2018

- ❖ Point-in-Time Count: January 30 - 31
 - Arlington is doing the count earlier in the evening than Somerville and will have a police officer accompany them. It will be generally the same route as last year. A handout with more information was distributed at the meeting. In certain areas, such as over Route 2 near Thorndike Field, they will communicate with Cambridge teams to ensure they are not counting people twice.
 - Somerville is working with Cambridge for the count. The route is generally the same as previous years, but based on information from outreach teams, they will spend more time around the salt piles.
 - There have been discussions in the past about how close volunteers should get to those they are counting. One approach is to have outreach workers go first and communicate with counting teams about whether it's worth their time to come by.
 - Three counting teams will go to locations in Somerville, and the teams will be balanced by gender, level of PIT count experience, and Cambridge/Somerville affiliation.
 - The Somerville team has 7 volunteers, and they could accept up to 12. Let Heidi know if you are interested in volunteering.
- ❖ Jessica Alter is the new City of Somerville LGBTQ liaison. She was unable to be at the meeting. She has offered to provide trainings on how to ensure the work we do is responsive to the needs of LGBTQ individuals.
- ❖ Lisa Davidson has finished the CoC's LSA report, which used to be the AHAR. It was easier this year because it all went through HMIS. Information about this report was distributed in the meeting. The report indicates there are data "errors," which show up when data is not collected. For example, families' destinations are difficult to collect because once they leave shelter, they do not always follow up to inform shelters about where they have gone. Also, some agencies have no way to gather data on whether a family has suffered domestic violence. HUD may respond to the CoC asking for explanations about these errors.
- ❖ The state is working to launch a statewide homeless data warehouse of de-identified data about homeless clients. They want providers to dump all the data they have into the warehouse. Once the warehouse is operational, if a client has signed a release, all data attached to them can be identified, and it can be easier to document chronic homelessness and shelter/program history. Everyone needs to read the guiding principles in preparation for a vote in January about whether or not the Somerville CoC is going to participate in the statewide homeless data warehouse.
- ❖ Somerville Homeless Coalition is launching a program called Better Homes For with 7 units (3 units at 301 Medford St. in Somerville and 4 units at 20 Westminster in

Arlington). The housing authority is working with the Somerville Homeless Coalition to identify homeless families that are eligible to move into these units. The Somerville Homeless Coalition will provide supportive services.

- ❖ The Arlington Police Department received a grant on November 1 to identify homeless individuals who have been displaced from their preferred locations on the streets and to assist them in finding 1-bedroom units. The funding lasts until June 30, 2019 and involves talking to homeless individuals to see if they are willing to engage in the program and move into a unit and talking to potential landlords to identify units.
- ❖ Bridge over Troubled Water received a grant to assist the young adult homeless population.
- ❖ Somerville Homeless Coalition received a grant and hired an HMIS lead. Lisa Davidson will be leaving the Somerville Homeless Coalition on Dec. 21.
- ❖ Ellen Shachter, director of Somerville's Office of Housing Stability, is hiring an associate director, two caseworkers, and an intake coordinator. She will also release RFPs for legal services to represent tenants, intensive housing search services, and tenant organizers.