



# North Carolina Balance of State Continuum of Care

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## NC BoS CoC Project Review Committee Meeting

September 7, 2018

**Current Members Present:** Carl Thompson, Andrea Merriman, Jacquetta Bullock, Ken Becker, Deniece Cole, Parker Smith, Angela Battle

**NCCEH Staff Present:** Brian Alexander, Ehren Dohler, Bagé Shade, Jenn Von Egidy

### Project Application Appeals Process

- The Steering Committee met on Sept 30 and approved the Project Review Committee's recommended priority listing. North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness (NCCEH) staff notified all applicants via email whether they were included in the ranking list. Those not included in the CoC application were given the reasons, a copy of their scorecard, and the appeals process.
- The appeals process was approved by the Steering Committee in July 2018. The appeals process states, "Appeal letters must present additional information or explain extenuating circumstances that address the deficiencies in the project application. Letters requesting an appeal without additional information will not be considered."
- The Project Review Committee will review the appeal letters received and decide if they want to accept the appeal and amend the priority list. If the priority list is amended, the Steering Committee will need to meet to approve the amended list.
- Brian gave further explanation of the responsibilities of the Project Review Committee when deciding on the outcome of the appeals received. The Project Review Committee should consider if there was some part of the process that was not followed; or was there something that was missed that is a problem with the process itself.
  - Project Review Committee should take this into consideration that all other projects were scored based only on the information they submitted, so any new information submitted during the appeals process could give appealing agencies an unfair advantage over those who were not able to appeal, since projects are not able to appeal their score or ranking.
- A Project Review Committee member asked for clarification: "We cannot look at additional information provided by applicants, if it was left off the original application. We are actually looking at the process used by the Project Review Committee and not any additional information submitted by the project?"
  - Brian responded: What is turned in by the submission date is what is scored. To review new information could be unfair to other projects that submitted their materials by the submission date. The Project Review Committee should consider these questions:

- Were they given the same chance as other applicants?
- Did the CoC miss something during the process?
- Did the CoC unfairly remove them from the competition?

### **Appeals Received from Applicants**

- Allied Churches of Alamance County (ACAC), in Region 6, submitted appeal letters for their 2 projects:
  - 2015 CoC ACAC Rapid Rehousing Renewal project
  - ACAC CoC RRH New, a new project to be considered if there is bonus funding or reallocated funding.
  - Neither project was included in the Project Priority Listing in the CoC Application due to low performance on the scorecard.
- Diakonos, in Region 4, submitted an appeal for the Fifth Street Ministries Permanent Supportive Housing Program, a new project.
  - Diakonos was not considered due to low performance on the scorecard. Diakonos was missing 2 documents in their application submission:
    - Policies and Procedures
    - Sample lease
- The Project Review Committee considered each project individually. Brian made a point to say staff will not comment because the decision to overturn the original decisions to include these projects in the final CoC consolidated application lies with the CoC.. However, staff can answer questions.

### **Allied Churches of Alamance County: 2015 CoC ACAC Rapid Rehousing Renewal Project**

- ACAC submitted an appeal letter and their policies and procedures. This project was fully reallocated and funding was allocated to new projects.
- Ken asked about the first statement in the appeal letter that states ACAC was indirectly informed of the problems with their project application and that they would not be selected to be in the CoC application.
  - Brian replied that the HUD requirement is to provide notification to projects if they were accepted or rejected from the CoC application at least 15 days prior to the submission of the application.
  - No other applicant was notified until after the Steering Committee approved the final list of projects to be included in the CoC application. However, per CoC policy, the Steering Committee approval meeting was an open meeting, so ACAC heard of their reallocation on that meeting.
  - Formal notifications went to all applicants, including ACAC, between August 30-31.
  - Allied Churches of Alamance County was sent their formal notification on August 31.
  - A copy of this email was sent to the Project Review Committee with the appeal information submitted by ACAC.
- Parker: The letter from ACAC letter states that their application had a lot of flaws. It seems like that there is not much we can do considering there is not a reason to appeal.



- Deniece: If we already went through the motions of the process, and we agreed the scorecard showed they were not able to perform as necessary, why are we considering this appeal? We already determined there are other projects in Region 6 that can perform better. We really can't reconsider them based on their appeal letter. We should not be considering this.
- Carl: He stated that he is a member of Region 6. He knows the folks at ACAC, and they do good work. However, it seems that what we have before us, we only have one decision that we can make if we are not allowed to review the materials.
- Ehren clarified the PRC can look at the materials, but the CoC needs to decide if there was something in the process that warrants the appeal. Did the CoC do anything wrong? Did the PRC score something incorrectly?
- Carl wonders if there are extenuating circumstances that warrant our review of the materials. Is not having a professional grant writer a credible extenuating circumstance?
  - Ken stated that every other applicant had the same dates and information for how and when to submit.
  - Deniece clarified that an extenuating circumstance is something unforeseen that happened to prevent them from submitting appropriate materials. If they do not have the proper people in place to write a grant, can we rely on them to have the proper people in place to run the project?
  - Parker stated this seems like the threshold question and suggested a straw poll:
    - Was the lack of a grant writer an extenuating circumstance?
- Jenn conducted a straw poll on whether the lack of a grant writer is an extenuating circumstance. Unanimous consensus that a lack of a grant writer is not an extenuating circumstance.
- A motion was made to deny the appeal submitted by ACAC for the 2015 CoC ACAC Rapid Rehousing Renewal project [Becker, Cole]. All in favor, none opposed.

#### **Allied Churches of Alamance County: ACAC CoC RRH New project**

- Staff solicited comments or questions about whether this project's appeal needs additional conversation beyond the consideration given to ACAC's renewal project appeal. None expressed.
- A motion was made to deny the appeal submitted for the ACAC CoC RRH New project [Becker, Thompson]. All in favor, none opposed.

#### **Diakonos: Fifth Street Ministries Permanent Supportive Housing Program new project**

- Diakonos submitted an appeal letter, sample lease, and policies and procedures. This project was not selected for the CoC application.
- Andrea reviewed the letter submitted by Diakonos and stated that she does not see an extenuating circumstance. They did not try to give an excuse and just said, "I don't know why."
- Parker asked for clarification if Diakonos is saying they did submit this information, or they didn't submit the information but now have it.
- Brian replied that Diakonos emailed NCCEH staff to state they did submit the missing documents. Brian confirmed that Diakonos did not submit policies and procedures or a sample lease. Brian reviewed the original submission form and triple checked to make sure it was not named wrong or attached to another document. These forms were in fact missing from their submission. Brian informed Diakonos staff member Michele Knapp that these



documents were not included in the submission of their application. Carl: stated that this is a similar decision to the previous appeals. There is not an extenuating circumstance to warrant an appeal.

A motion was made to deny the appeal submitted by Diakonos for the Fifth Street Ministries Permanent Supportive Housing Program new project [Becker, Cole). All in favor; none opposed.

**Next Steps**

- NCCEH will notify the agencies that submitted an appeal for their projects that the appeals were denied and the Project Priority List will remain unchanged.
- NCCEH will notify the Steering Committee on September 11 that the Project Priority List stands as approved and all appeals were denied.
- NCCEH will move forward with the current Project Priority List to complete the CoC application.

