

MINUTES

ASSET Administrative Team
November 3, 2021, 12:15 p.m.
United Way of Story County

The ASSET Administrative Team meeting was called to order at 12:18 pm by Chair Ashley Thompson with the following present: Nikki Fischer, Jean Kresse, Anneke Mundel, Jenny Schill, Sandra King, Lydia Youngquist, Keith Hobson (via phone) and Administrative Assistant, Pandora Lamar.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of minutes for September 1, 2021 was moved by Jean and seconded by Sandra; motion was carried unanimously.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

Jenny Schill reported a balance of \$2,869.32.

4. OLD BUSINESS

None

5. NEW BUSINESS

Budget Books

Pandora reported that the budget book is ready for printing with the exception of a couple of items. The placement of Scorecard reports with the ABF 5 budgets was discussed. Some have agency wide data and some only have program data. Anneke will review Scorecard placement. Anneke suggested that in the future each program have their own narrative instead of combining them as some did this year. She will consult with the developer on adjustment of the margins on Scorecard that would make it more legible for binding. For printing, a divider should be inserted between each agency, so they start on their own page and not on the back of another.

Agency Liaison Visits

Pandora reported that we have received liaison reports for YSS, RSVP, Boys and Girls Club. She will send a reminder to all the volunteers next week that liaison reports are due on November 18. Several indicated that they are currently working on completing their report.

Update on Piloting the Priority Checklist

Anneke discussed the priority checklist. It was suggested by the Task Force that we develop a checklist both that facilitated agencies aligning their program budget requests with funder priorities and that would help volunteers/liasons determine alignment. Five agencies participated in the test pilot (YSS, Childserve, HSS, YSS and RSVP), and all indicated it was quite easy to categorize the programs they are being funded for. Several suggestions for improvement were: to organize the Priority Checklist by funder instead of area (health, education, financial); to add a comment section so the agency can provide more detail about why they feel the program is meeting funder priorities; and to ask agencies to list service code along with funded program name (ex/YSS completed it by funded program name and code which made it much easier to see where they were aligning with funder priorities). Anneke noted that several issues arose: Some marked alignment but do not submit data providing evidence of alignment. (ex/ =ChildServe indicated that they were meeting Story County's priority of providing food and nutrition, but we do not collect data on

that.) Some of the agencies were not sure if they were aligned or not. Some marked alignment with a funder from whom they do not receive/are not requesting funding. Some marked alignment but noted the wrong program (i.e., they do provide data for a given priority but from a different program than indicated). A question was raised for the next steps: should the checklist go back to the taskforce or should each funder review individually? Jean said each funder should review first to see if they feel the correct alignment is noted, but the checklist should also go back to taskforce for recommendations. Anneke said she would work with Deb on getting a meeting scheduled with the taskforce. Additionally, we could ask the agencies when they feel the Checklist might be most useful to them to complete—would a different time of year be better? Anneke said she would send an e-copy to the funders to let them review the checklists. Ashley thanked Anneke for her work on this.

Scorecard

- A. Outcomes data (formerly ABF-5(O)) placement for future years:** Anneke thanked Pandora for working with somewhat disparate data reporting (some agency-wide data, some combined data, etc.). Take-away for next year: make sure programs that combine data reporting have separate narrative sections. Each program’s narrative can then get placed right after the ABF-5. They should not have identical data showing up in multiple places.
- B. Adding Scorecard references to Budget Checklist and ASSET Reference Manual:** Anneke suggested adding Scorecard references to the budget checklist. It would have been helpful to have a few questions, like “are the 3 narrative sections complete?” “Is data reported for each of the performance measures?” “Does number of unduplicated participants reported on the ASSET budget match those reported on Scorecard?” Additionally, Anneke suggested we should add some instructions to the ASSET reference manual on this. Jean will review the reference manual for that.
- C. Scorecard and Data Discrepancies:** Anneke asked what we should do when/if we discover discrepancies between the number of unduplicated participants reported on Scorecard vs. ASSET budgets? Pandora sent out emails this year and forwarded responses to Anneke. What is guidance on this? Jean felt agencies should explain it, but how does that get into the budget book? If they do not want to change, it is automatically a question for the hearings. Something is bound to slip through the cracks when assembling the budget books. At some point we have to go with what we have received from the agencies and the budget has to be printed. If they come back with an explanation, that could be articulated to Pandora via email so it could be discussed at December meeting. Sandra suggested that we could preprint information in the budget book, so we have less information to check. There should be a way to reduce the back and forth with the agencies which involved a lot of extra time this year and did not work well. There is a short window for turnaround. Anneke asked if the explanations for discrepancies should come to funders directly. Should try to streamline.
- D. Moving Volunteer numbers reporting to Scorecard (effective FY21-22 reporting/ budget FY23-24 requests) -** Volunteer numbers are currently reported on bottom of ABF 3. Anneke suggested reporting on Scorecard instead, which would be a good idea because then we would also have an aggregate number of how many volunteers are used across the network, and we could monitor trendlines. Nikki and Jean agreed this was a good idea. We will need to update the reference manual and communicate to agencies at training in August.
- E. Rolling out new “Mid-Year Update” process -** We approved moving the mid-year update from a separate form to the Scorecard portal. Agencies will be asked to answer these questions; “Were you able to deliver programs as planned? If no, please elaborate on why not.”; and “Have you been able to conduct planned data collection to date? If not, what are your plans to remediate?” Number of clients served, and number of clients turned away. “Reflect on the first 5 months of this fiscal year”. Anneke

will draft an email for Pandora to send. Pandora will send an email to agencies this week as a reminder—re midyear report is due and then another reminder sent the first week of December. Scorecard office hours have been posted on the ASSET calendar, if anyone has any questions or concerns.

6. ASSET Board Agenda for November 18, 2021

Keith called into the meeting and agreed to run the ASSET Board meeting on November 18 because Ashley and Nikki are out of town.

Items to add to the agenda:

Call to Order

Treasurer's Report

Old Business

Scorecard Work Teams (Anneke)

New Business

General update from Karla

Administrative Team Report

- Recap the process for the volunteers and any of the agencies attending. We should restate that this is a funder driven process, they determine allocation amounts, priorities, and approve the recommendations from the volunteers. We need to remind all of the process because this year there was more resistance this year to fulfilling budget information requirements. Nikki commented we need to remind volunteers what we are looking at over the next couple of months. We should stress that it is particularly important to have all of the volunteers present at the December and January meetings because the funders are depending on input from volunteers to make allocation decisions. Keith will present this and asked that Jean email the main points to cover to Keith and will also share these with the Adm Team. We will want to stress the important contribution volunteers make. Sandra said that Story County has had an online application for a volunteer for several months and that position has still not been filled. It is becoming more challenging to recruit volunteers because of the time commitment.
- Highlights from Liaison reports (Pandora)
- Discussion of Liaison report process for the volunteers. Pandora will organize the reports into PDFs by area and email them to volunteers and everyone on the Adm Team. We can note on website that the reports are available if they contact Pandora.
- Note Location for December 9 meeting will be the Ames City Council Chambers.
- Results of Funder Priorities Checklist Pilot (Anneke).

7. ADDITIONAL ITEMS/CONCERNS

Pandora was asked by a volunteer to send out a survey to agencies on the ASSET process. Jean communicated to the volunteer that these requests need to be reviewed by the ASSET Adm Team. Jean let Pandora she would not send surveys out unless the request came from either the Board or the Adm Team. Any survey that is sent out on behalf of ASSET needs to be approved by all the funders.

Jenny met with ACCESS in her role as a liaison. Tess (Executive Director) alluded to a need for a lot more community discussion on the need to provide emergency shelter in Ames. She said they are seeing a

significant increase in need and the entire community needs to be more involved in the conversation about this issue. Tess also commented that the ASSET process is becoming more complicated and is taking too much staff time. Their funding is diminishing, and they have less staff. They need to devote more staff time to providing services. It took two of her staff two weeks to complete the application. She indicated that having the cells locked required them to enter the same data multiple times when they would prefer to copy and paste. She indicated that their budget was sent back for revisions four times and the last time they only had a week to complete the revisions. They experienced some issues with the units of service on the spreadsheet because their fee-for-service model does not align very well and makes it look like they are declining in numbers of people served, but actually they were increasing units of service. They feel the units of service versus costs and time do not provide an accurate picture. Jean noted that if they copy and paste there is more of a risk that they might be pasting the incorrect information. For example, on ABF 5 the equation uses total expenses to calculate units of service. If they want the reimbursement to be higher, they will need to lower the number of units of service they provide. Jean said this is an issue and asked if we could negotiate a different cost per unit. Jean said there does need to be discussion about finding a different way to calculate unit rate, but how to do that is unclear at this point. Tess also indicated that they are considering not applying for ASSET funding because of the aforementioned issues. Jean said that this may well mean that the shelter in Ames would be closed because of the way the State regionalizes ACCESS type services. If ACCESS does not get the State shelter dollars, they would go to the Fort Dodge shelter instead. Tess also commented on issues with Scorecard. Scorecard is now required as part of the ASSET process. United Way switched to a reimbursement model that has caused issues for some, but United Way needs to account for dollars spent and will always require Scorecard, whether or not an agency is applying for ASSET funding. As far as the unit rate goes, we could add a question to the budget sheets about how accurate (from the agencies' perspective) the fee for your services is, so agencies could offer explanations if they felt it was not. Deb, Sandra, and Jean will meet with Tess to discuss the issues she has expressed concerns about.

Bridge Home is requesting \$45,000 in emergency funds for shelter services right now. The Story County Board had some questions about this which Sandra posed to The Bridge Home but has not received answers for yet. Bridge Home is receiving \$79,000 this year for rapid rehousing but did not request funds for next year and moved those funds into other programs. Bridge Home also asked for \$.5 million more to provide services this year. Anneke reported that The Bridge Home data does not indicate they are providing more services but serving fewer. One explanation might be that they are providing different levels of service. Jenny said that while they indicate they need more staff to meet demand for services, they are now housing staff in space that was previously used to provide emergency shelter. Jody (Bridge Home) is saying that they are seeing more families, so maybe the shelter they have is not meeting those needs. Needs should be prioritized to include; emergency shelter, transitional living for kids, rapid rehousing, or for The Bridge Home. This core service (emergency shelter) is needed in the community and then we can establish rapid rehousing. There are limited dollars to provide services. Jean reported that United Way took the majority of funds it received and allocated it to rent and utilities service instead of shelter. County Supervisors should be driving the larger community conversation to address these needs along with joint ASSET funders. One of Jenny's recommendations was to direct all of ASSET funding towards shelter. Jean will take this issue to the United Way Board and ask for more direction for the volunteers.

Ashley reported on her liaison visit with NAMI during her liaison visit. They did not discuss how services lined up with ASSET funder priorities, nor has she been able to obtain more details. Angela (NAMI) commented that the money they get may not be worth the effort of reporting requirements.

Pandora will send an email to Liaisons to let her know if they are experiencing any issues scheduling meetings with agencies or any other obstacles to completing their reports. There is a need to be cognizant of the agencies time issues, but the visits to need to get completed in order to have reports available to share with all of the volunteers. The liaison reports share information with the other volunteers to consider when making funding recommendations.

1. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. November 18, 2021 – Liaison Reports Due
- b. November 19, 2021 – Deadline Restated Budgets Due
- c. December 15, 2021 – Mid-Year Updates Due
- d. January 7, 2022, 11 am – 1 pm – Scorecard “Office Hours” (optional) – Virtual
- e. January 21, 2022 – Recommendations Posted

2. MEETING DATES

- a. December 1, 2021 @ 1:00 pm – ASSET Admin Team Meeting – United Way
- b. December 6, 2021 @ 4:00 pm – Education Work Team Scorecard Review – Zoom
- c. December 7, 2021 @ 5:00 pm – Financial Stability Work Team Scorecard Review – Zoom
- d. December 9, 2021 @ 5:00 pm – ASSET Board Meeting – City of Ames Council Chambers
- e. December 9, 2021 @ 6:30 pm – Health Work Team Scorecard Review to follow ASSET Meeting
- f. January 5, 2022 @ 4:30 pm – Agency Hearings – CityChurch, 2400 Oakwood Rd
- g. January 6, 2022 @ 4:30 pm – Agency Hearings – CityChurch, 2400 Oakwood Rd
- h. January 10, 2022 @ 4:30 pm – Education Work Session – CityChurch, 2400 Oakwood Rd
- i. January 12, 2022 @ 4:30 pm – Financial Stability Work Session – CityChurch, 2400 Oakwood Rd
- j. January 13, 2022 @ 4:30 pm – Health Work Session – CityChurch, 2400 Oakwood Rd
- k. January 20, 2022 @ 5:00 pm – ASSET & Joint Funders Meeting, 2400 Oakwood Rd

Meeting adjourned at 1:52 pm.