

Minnesota Stewardship Council Q & A

September 2012

What is Stewardship Council?

The Stewardship Council members represent the stakeholders involved in the development of supportive housing for previously homeless persons, including those created by the Minnesota Business Plan to End Homelessness. The Stewardship Council addresses requests for technical assistance throughout the seven county metropolitan area and greater Minnesota. The members believe, to actually increase in the supply of supportive housing units, it is also necessary to preserve the existing supply of affordable supportive housing units.

The Council membership includes housing development and human service representatives from federal, state, county, city, and private philanthropic agencies, as well as from Minnesota's Business Plan to End Homelessness. The Stewardship Council also works closely with non-profit agencies that offer training and technical assistance to owners; such as Hart-Shegos & Associates, Minnesota Housing Partnership, Corporation for Supportive Housing, and others.

What is the purpose of the Stewardship Council?

The mission of the Stewardship Council is to preserve supportive housing serving homeless individuals, families, and youth through cooperative problem solving to address the capital, service, and operating needs of the development. The hope is the Council will serve as a forum to share knowledge, shape policy, and explore alternatives, to preserve and stabilize housing through the effective and efficient utilization of all available resources.

Does the Council have funding?

The Council primarily leverages member's knowledge, experience, and existing streams of service and operating funding to stabilize properties. The Council may occasionally acquire small amounts of public or private funding contributions to provide a onetime infusion of operating or service funding to allow organizations time to stabilize operations and identify mainstream funding resources.

How is a property referred to Stewardship Council?

A service provider, owner, or funder may request assistance from any member who will instruct them to complete a Stewardship Referral Form. The form is sent to the Council Chair to the agenda to determine if the request is appropriate and if the essential individuals and resources are available.

What occurs at a typical meeting?

The meetings open with current events of interest for the preservation of supportive housing in Minnesota. Next, development updates are given and discussion is open for suggestions and recommendations.

Each development referred to the council is assigned a lead staff who typically represents the agency with the most capital funding in the property. At each meeting, the development's lead reports on the current status and next steps. Then the discussion is opened to Stewardship members to share their individual knowledge of a property and relevant resources and brainstorm alternatives and options to correct the current issues.

Referred properties may be assigned a Technical Assistance Committee (TAC) which will meet outside the Stewardship Council to investigate the issues and recommend options. The TACs are organized by the lead staff assigned to the

property and will include supportive service representatives with knowledge of the property, expertise in the population served, and/ or past, present, or potential service or operating funding connections to the property.

What is the lead staff's role?

The lead staff is responsible for monthly reports to Stewardship, coordinating TAC meetings, engaging the owner or sponsor and key parties in considering all options, and actively developing a technical assistance or stabilization plan.

When is a development referred to Stewardship Council?

The development must provide housing with supports to previously homeless persons as its primary purpose, be financed by one of the Stewardship Council stakeholders, and require assistance to preserve the supportive housing, due to:

- An operating or service coordination, monitoring, or performance related issue.
- A loss of operating, rental, or service funding.
- An owner or organization is experiencing circumstances that may impact the continued viability of the supportive housing.
- A lack of necessary services which threatens the viability of the development.
- A physical condition that is undermining the financial status of the project.

When is a service provider referred to Stewardship Council?

The service provider must provide assistance or services to previously homeless persons as its primary purpose and after considering all resources and options remain at risk of terminating services for development (s) financed by one of the Stewardship Council stakeholders and/or permanent loss of limited or irreplaceable resources, such as:

- Rental or Operating Assistance
- Federal, State, or local Funding for Services

Confidentiality

The information discussed at the Stewardship Council is considered sensitive and is protected to ensure against any possible communication outside the meeting that could result in significant harm, embarrassment, inconvenience, or unfairness to a resident, owner, service provider, or development. Any information provided shall be kept confidential and will be protected with appropriate administrative, technical, and physical safeguards to ensure security and confidentiality are maintained at all times. Only the principal members of the Stewardship Council will be present for development discussions.