

Committee on Ending Homelessness
Minutes of the November 5, 2008 meeting
City Hall, Nashua

Present at the meeting were: Bob Mack, Wendy Furnari, Eileen Brady, Linda Jeynes, Jerry Leclerc, Peter Kelleher, Lori Lonsdale, Laura Nault, Candace Gebhart, Anne Quinn, Jessica Karwatske, and Katie Merrill

The meeting began at 9:05 with introductions.

Minutes from the October 1, 2008 meeting were not available for review so were tabled until next meeting.

Discussion took place regarding the Early warning system. This goes along with the Homeless Hotline as a method for community members to report incidences of homelessness. We need to promote this and the Community Relations committee should work on this. Eileen suggested contacting Dan Gorenstein from NH Public Radio.

Bob showed us a report from Springfield Mass. about a facility that would be great to replicate in our community. Wendy suggested that the upcoming Neighborhood Stabilization Project funds might be available for this kind of thing.

Bob discussed and held up a draft of the Plan to End Homelessness that the Data Gathering Committee is working on. They are working to pull out the accomplishments and use bullet points for the action steps. Bob asked us to look at Section H of the current plan and see if anything jumps out at us and bring info to next meeting.

Eileen mentioned that there will be a new HUD Director appointed soon and we need to educate newly elected legislators. She will follow up with Joan Schulze to schedule a Legislative Affairs subcommittee meeting and will also remind her about Project Homeless Connect and see if she still wants to coordinate to have legislators at the event.

Discussion took place around having additional consumer focus groups. Eileen said it is important for our clients to feel that they are heard. It was suggested that Bernie Bluhm from NH DHHS Bureau of Homeless and Housing (who had presented at this morning's GNCOC meeting about a consumer survey project they are working on) be included if he wants. Topics should include health care and mental health parity and should extend to transitional housing program consumers as well. Eileen, Katie and Candace will work on coordinating the groups after the first of the year.

We discussed the Linkability program and Peter stated that they are working to build community interest and will be launching in mid-spring. The goal is to develop a community learning and innovation center to improve client education and employment skills and is for those with disabilities. Bob asked if anyone knew anything about the Employment Opportunity Center but no one did.

Jerry reviewed the Help card and we discussed possible changes. He will email a template to Bob that will be distributed to his group for review. He will try to have St. Joseph pick up the cost again.

During a brief discussion on needs for computers and training to use computers, Jessica mentioned that the Nashua Public Library offers free computer classes.

The question of an employment services committee was raised. Eileen noted that it is an ad-hoc committee. How do we include this in the 10 year plan?

We discussed the challenges of transportation and Wendy brought up her concern of no public transportation to the Methadone clinic. Lori mentioned that there may be another Methadone clinic opening in Nashua.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM

The next meeting will take place on December 3, 2008 at 9:00am in the City Hall auditorium. PHC will be later that day but will already be set up.