

**Greater Nashua Continuum of Care  
Executive Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
February 10, 2010  
[www.nashua-coc.org](http://www.nashua-coc.org)**

**Call to order:** 8:35 a.m. by Chair Wendy LeBlanc.

**Present:** Wendy LeBlanc, Annette Escalante, Meghan Bilz, Bob Mack, Candace Gebhart, Peter Kelleher, Mariellen Durso, Barbara Alves, Lisa Christie, and Lori Piper.

**Minutes of January 13, 2010 (handout):**

Candace Gebhart motioned to accept the minutes of the January 13, 2010 meeting, Meghan Bilz seconded, and the motion carried.

**Topics of Discussion:**

W. LeBlanc shared a request from a Continuum member to shorten the length of the general CoC meetings to allow for networking to occur prior to 9 a.m. It was determined that it would be difficult to accommodate that request as the meeting agenda is often filled for the full hour. It was suggested that networking could occur for those that would like to participate prior to the start of the 8 am meeting.

M. Bilz reported on her discussions with the Milford Planning Board where she sits as an alternate. It was suggested that the CoC should consider revisiting the rural towns in the GNCOC catchment area to provide an update educational session on the mission of the GNCOC, and the importance of the partnership of the towns in the GNCOC. W. LeBlanc agreed to take this suggestion to the Community Relations Committee which holds the responsibility for keeping the towns informed and involved.

W. LeBlanc asked the Executive Committee what they would like to see as topics of discussion for future executive meetings. She was looking for feedback. The following were suggested:

- The HEARTH Act
- Political climate and its impact on the COC constituency
- Continued work and discussion on the Ten Year Plan

**Ten Year Plan** – B. Mack reported on a recent regional meeting of the ICH held in Boston. It was a strategic planning session to share what portions of plans have been implemented and to discuss what the next steps are. Both B. Mack and L. Christie reported that in regards to the HEARTH Act, it appears that HUD is looking to the CoC's to have more structure and formalize processes, however funds are not available to necessarily support these efforts. It was suggested that both Gina Shaak (TAC) and Michele Cushion (HUD) meet with the Executive Committee to explain in more detail the specific changes that the HEARTH Act will be expecting from the regional CoCs. W. LeBlanc will contact these parties and arrange for them to make a presentation at a future Executive Committee Meeting.

M. Durso and B. Mack suggested and have offered that they will try and meet with the two hospitals and other health providers to discuss the challenges that everyone is seeing with homelessness, and to see how all parties might be able to work together. M. Bilz indicated that the Manchester COC has a formal discharge planning group that works with the Manchester hospitals and prison on this issue.

P. Kelleher encouraged a recalibration of where we are on our 10 Year Plan, given that we are about eight years in. Possibly a conference of some sort to discuss the accomplishments and the remaining challenges and action steps needed.

**Consolidated Plan** – A letter was sent by the CoC to the Mayor and Director of Community Development to encourage that action steps of the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness are incorporated into the consolidated plan. L. Christie indicated that L. Wilshire will be keeping this group and the general COC informed on this issue.

B. Mack indicated that in recent discussions in the City of Nashua regarding the Consolidated Plan that it was reported there are over 100 homeless students in Nashua. P. Kelleher asked if there was a way to get the homeless coordinator to the school systems more linked in with the COC. W. LeBlanc suggested that the Community Relations Committee follow up with this, and M. Durso offered to provide her contacts of the various schools leadership for that committee to contact.

**Other Discussion Items:**

M. Durso reported that they are seeing a 40% increase in homelessness at her agency. That there is a tremendous amount of doubling up of families taking place. They are also seeing the ‘new’ poor at the health center – families and individuals in the past who have had medical insurance, now find themselves without, and are not familiar with the process. Also commented that a higher level of homelessness is being seen in the Caucasian population, that culturally other ethnic groups appear more willing to double up and take in family than the Caucasian population.

P. Kelleher reported on a recent breakfast meeting that the Partnership for Successful Living held for the aldermen. It was well attended and the discussion centered around educating the new aldermen about the organization as well as the general COC, and the importance of all parties collaborating on community efforts.

P. Kelleher indicated that the DHHS Director, N. Toumpas will be holding a Nashua meeting to discuss the concerns surrounding the budget cuts at DHHS. Peter indicated that there will be a 2% cut of all shelter contracts, and that SOAR monies have been cut by \$26,000. Both of these cuts are final. It was also indicated that \$400,000 is slated to be cut from HIV funding.

L. Christie suggested that the new library director be invited to an Executive Committee Meeting.

Finally, anyone that can help the families of the Pine Street fire on 2/7/2010 should contact Ashley at the Nashua Red Cross office.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Lori Piper, SVP, Merrimack County Savings Bank