

Greater Nashua Continuum of Care Meeting Minutes

City Hall Auditorium

August 7, 2013

www.nashua-coc.org

Wendy LeBlanc, Chair called the meeting to order at 8:00AM. Introductions were made by all, and the attendance sheet passed for signatures. Newcomers were asked to add their email to the attendance sheet if they would like to be added to the GNCOC mailing list. Wendy explained the format of the meeting. August is a month with report outs from various committees.

The minutes of June 5, 2013 meeting were reviewed. A correction was provided indicating that the Employment Connect Event (rather than meeting) is to be held on 9/24/13. A motion was made by B. Alves to accept the minutes, as corrected, seconded by C. Gebhart and the minutes were approved unanimously. There was no July 2013 meeting.

Committee Reports:

Executive Committee: W. LeBlanc reported that there was no July meeting. In June the committee discussed several items:

- HUD requirement that a letter of support be provided to Greater Nashua Mental Health Center relative to a tenant move. This was discussed as a concern as to whether HUD would be requiring these letters each time a tenant moves.
- United Way provided the funding for the COC to hire a VISTA volunteer for one year, specifically to assist with the implementation of the new regulations required of the COC under the HEARTH Act. Unfortunately the COC is still searching for a VISTA volunteer.
- The NOFA bonus and planning projects were not funded in the last NOFA COC application and therefore the COC will not be able to refund the VISTA cost to the United Way.
- HEARTH implementation is taking a lot of time, particularly the coordinated assessment requirement. New guidelines have been put together by an ad-hoc committee for review by the executive committee, which will then be presented to the full COC members for approval.
- Focus of the bi-monthly COC presentations is intended to focus on ending homelessness. Many groups are asking to present, however there are limited time slots and therefore the EC is working to focus on the best use of the time allowed to continue to meet the HEARTH Act new requirements and the issues of concentrating on ending homelessness.
- Reminder that the October meeting a slate of officers will be presented for a vote. The EC will present that slate, however if anyone is interested in a leadership role, please reach out to W. LeBlanc or someone else on the EC committee so that you can be brought forth to the EC for review and consideration.
- B. Mack reported that this was the first year in a very long time that the COC was not awarded a bonus project. Tier 1 projects were funded, and renewal projects in Tier 2 funded. HHI took a hit of \$35,000 to their various projects that had been in place for a while to allow for a new project (PH 12A) to be awarded. So, although a new project, there was no new additional money awarded.

Ending Homelessness Committee: B. Mack reported they last met in June. Discussion items were:

- Primary discussion was about the centralized intake coordinated assessment efforts and how this COC is very good about connecting people to resources in our community.

- Providers indicated that they had been fielding calls from other areas of the country (such as the mid-west and other regions) about moving homeless people in the GNCOC catchment area.
- Security deposit resources were reviewed.
- Discussion regarding rents being high in this region along with unemployment and that seems to be a disconnect with homeless people considering moving here from other regions.

Community Relations: W. LeBlanc reported the group meets quarterly. The new logo and brochure has been completed with the assistance of Nashua High School North and they plan to finalize and get onto the website by October. She also indicated that Miles Pendry continues to update the COC website on behalf of the COC as best he can, however the COC is looking for someone to take this project on. They also discussed that they are going to hold off on presentations to groups outside the nonprofit arena until the new HEARTH rules and changes have been implemented so that future presentations to outside groups will have the up to date information included. The group is also seeking sponsorships or help with various printing and supply costs.

Legislative Affairs Committee: E. Brady indicated that September is when new legislation needs to be submitted, and recommended that people contact their local representatives to let them know of any legislation that one feels should be brought forward in the next session. Lori Wilshire for local legislative affairs was not at today's meeting. W. LeBlanc thanked the representative, Peter Clark from Senator Shaheen's office regarding their work on the T-HUD Bill 1754, which has to do with match funding NOFA funding. P. Clark indicated that the bill did not come up for a vote in the last session. The bill would eliminate the match requirement. E. Brady also shared that the HIPPO magazine has been publishing a series of articles on homelessness that have been well done and recommended people read the articles.

Data Gathering Committee: W. LeBlanc indicated there was not a report of a meeting, however she reiterated that as the HEARTH Act moves forward this committee is extremely important and more stakeholders attending this meeting will be critical to meeting the new HEARTH requirements. More to follow.

Employment Committee: T. Lopez indicated the group is focused on the 9/24/13 event which is primarily a job fair. They are looking for employers to register. They are asking partner agencies to donate \$25 to help defray some of the costs. The new location for the event is the City Hall Auditorium. Next meeting 8/13 at 2PM at the Adult Learning Center. St. Joseph Hospital would like to coordinate their 'Dress for Success' with this event.

Housing Action NH: L. Redden indicated that there was an increase of \$412,000 or 6.2% in the state's budget for emergency shelter grants, and she thanked the COC for their tremendous grass roots efforts with helping to make this happen. She indicated that the car registration bill passed and will be effective 8/26/13 and that the bed bug action law will go into effect 1/1/2014.

Shelter Directors Meeting: O. Cruz indicated that group met in July. Maureen Ryan from the state let everyone know that money from HUD is coming in late and that she is working on a mechanism to try and have the state fund the shelters, rather than the state having to wait for the HUD funding. Some delays are up to 6 months. She also indicated that the HUD emphasis is on rapid re-housing, therefore there are less dollars available for shelters. The coordinated assessment was discussed and the state is reviewing best practices. She also spoke about teaching landlords about the issues of homelessness and working to keep tenants in units. A presentation by NH Referral Education Assistance and Prevention Program on the services for the elderly was made. It is recommended that if one has a concern about lack of services for the elderly to contact the local mental health center and ask for a REAP counselor.

Updates to Accomplishments Section of the 10 Year Plan:

- Permanent Housing 12A

Announcements/Discussion:

- J. LeClerc read a letter from the Ann Marie House Board to let the COC know that Laurie Skibba has left as Executive Director to pursue other opportunities. June St. Laurent will be helping out while they search for a new ED.
- A CASA volunteer indicated that CASA is in great need for Guardian At-Litems to help abused and neglected children. They are having to turn cases away for lack of help. She handed out brochures about upcoming training sessions and asked that people reach out to friends, family, neighbors and encourage that people consider joining CASA.
- E. Brady let everyone know about the passing of Sr. Sharon Walsh; W. LeBlanc spoke about Sr. Sharon having been one of the founders of the GNCOC as well as co-founder of Marguerites Place, and B. Alves, CEO of Marguerites Place thanked all that attended the memorial honoring Str. Sharon. A moment of silence was held.
- B. Mack indicated that the wrap around committee has had referrals coming in and they are making progress with individuals. He recommended that all remember that this service is available and to utilize these resources.
- E. Brady indicated that the NSKS's backpack program is at Ledge Street on 8/20 starting at 9AM. This year identifying information is needed, to please contact the NSKS for details. She also indicated that a corporate donor is providing backpacks to children at the Mt. Pleasant School, therefore they are being taken care of outside of the Ledge Street school event. Also, there are multiple programs for backpacks around the city, including Citizens Bank, and Nashua Goes Back to School, which is the largest and is being held on 8/26. Discussion ensued about coordinating these various efforts going forward. E. Brady indicated it is often driven by the donor base.
- L. Redden indicated legislative deadlines are coming soon. HAC will be sending out a survey asking about priorities.
- W. LeBlanc invited all to attend the Tom Cash Southern NH HIV/AIDS Task Force three mile Walk on 9/7 at Greeley Park – a fun time for all.
- Brochures were provided on Hiring for our Heroes – a job fair taking place at the Nashua Armory on 8/8.
- K. Paquette requested that her cell number not be given out to clients. Please provide the 211 number or the Southern NH Services number to which she will respond.
- The AmeriCorps VISTA worker at More Than Wheels in Manchester introduced herself.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:00AM.

Minutes taken by Lori M. Piper, Merrimack County Savings Bank