

GREATER NASHUA CONTINUUM OF CARE MEETING MINUTES

Nashua City Hall Auditorium
September 4, 2013 @ 8:00AM
www.nashua-coc.org

Wendy LeBlanc, Chair called the meeting to order at 8:05AM. Introductions were made by all, and the attendance sheet passed for signatures. Newcomers were asked to add their email to the list if they would like to be added to the GNCOC mailing list. Wendy explained the meeting format for new attendees. The minutes of August 7, 2013 were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Barbara A., which was seconded by Candace G. Minutes were approved.

Wendy introduced this month's presenter, Justin Kates, Emergency Management Director for the City of Nashua.

Presentation: Emergency Preparedness

Justin indicated that Nashua is the only city/town in the state with an Emergency Management Director. Other communities depend on police/fire department personnel to perform these duties. Presentation centered on programs Emergency Management is currently involved in and how those programs can support vulnerable populations. In emergencies, these populations become even more vulnerable. Emergency Management is interested in finding out where gaps are and working with area organizations such as those represented in the GNCOC to fill those gaps.

Justin provided information on several websites where people can get information on emergency preparedness: <http://www.nashuanh.gov/EmergencyManagement>; www.ready.gov and www.readynh.nh.gov. He indicated that the Red Cross has a program where organizations can check their level of preparedness – www.readyrating.org.

Justin cited several opportunities where local residents can be more involved. CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training is being offered beginning September 14 and offers 20 hours of free training for those interested in learning how to better help themselves and their community in the event of a disaster. Work also continues on building a VOAD (Volunteers Organizations Active in Disasters) group that can/will provide mutual support in an emergency. The group meets quarterly.

In addition to using social media to keep residents informed, the city has established an emergency info line that is open during disasters – 589-3456. Nashua residents can also sign up for the new CodeRED system that will provide updates via phone, text or email in times of disaster. The system is scheduled to start soon and individuals can sign up at the city's website.

The Second Annual Family Emergency Preparedness Day is scheduled for Saturday, September 7 at Pheasant Lane Mall.

Those in attendance had several questions, including asking if homelessness as an issue could be considered a disaster in itself. Justin indicated that the Nashua Fire Department could handle minor chemical spills in answer to a question on that subject. Justin indicated that being able to meet the needs of special populations in shelters is being addressed through the recruitment of trained volunteers from who have the technical experience in working with those populations.

Recognition was given to the need for a way to keep those with no phones or computer access informed during an emergency was acknowledged. Plan is for Emergency Management to work closely with organizations involved in the GNCOC to address those concerns.

HEARTH Update

Three ad hoc committees established by the Executive Committee are working to make sure the Greater Nashua Continuum of Care is in compliance with the new HEARTH regulations.

- Maryse Wirbal reported on the work being done at the state level to develop a centralized intake system as homeless individuals and families enter the system. Several models are being looked at including establishing one physical intake location, having multiple points of entry into the system (what Nashua currently has) and using 211 as a point of entry that would, in turn, refer the individual/family to the appropriate local organization. One challenge that has been identified is how those organizations that don't receive federal funding can be integrated into a centralized system. Those on the ad hoc committee feel that we have a successful process already in place; group will wait until State decides what their plan will be and follow up accordingly.
- Ana Pancine provided an update on work being done to align the guidelines of our local COC with those contained in the HEARTH. Committee has been comparing the local document against those items contained in the Federal Register and making necessary changes to bring the two in line with one another. The Executive Committee is reviewing this work at the monthly meetings and when it is complete, will bring it to the entire Continuum for discussion and approval.
- Annette Escalante provide update on progress being made in expanding the board to include representative from populations not currently represented per guideline include in the Federal Register. Two target groups are police and education. Individuals are being contacted within those two groups to get representation.

COCs have two years to implement the HEARTH changes; we are one year into the process.

NOFA (Notice of Funds Available)

NOFA is expected to be announced shortly – at which time the GNCOC will begin the formal application process. \$1.8M came to Nashua last year. There is a lengthy application process to get the money, but everyone benefits from the process.

Announcements

- We are still working on getting VISTA to support the work of the GNCOC in the coming year. United Way is providing the funding for the position. A candidate has been identified and an offer has been made to that individual.
- New officers will be elected at the October meeting. Slate presented by the Executive Committee is comprised of Ana Pancine and Cate Sementa, Co-Chairs; Abigail Alicea, Vice-Chair and Beth Todgham, Clerk. Nominations can/will be accepted from the floor at the meeting; Wendy requested information in advance if someone would be placing a name in nomination so that the election runs smoothly.
- Wendy announced that the HIV/AIDS Walk is scheduled for Saturday, September 7 at Greeley Park.
- Sylvia Gale announced that Bridges will hold the Kelly Mann Memorial 5K and 3K Walk on September 28. If anyone is interested in displaying a lawn sign, please contact her at sylviagale4@comcast.net.

- Kyle Beaulieu provided information about a new Granite Leaders program offered through the NH Coalition to End Homelessness. The program is for the homeless or formerly homeless; program goal is to increase their capacity to take on influential roles on issues pertinent to their lives. Contact Kyle at kbeaulieu@fitnh.org for more information.
- Beverly Doolan announced that the Obesity workgroup for the CHIP (Community Health Improvement Plan) is holding a “Walk a Mile with the Mayor” on Saturday, October 5, Complete details: <http://www.nashuanh.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=Jrv734A3Kng%3d&tabid=37>
- Tom Lopez announced that the Employment Connect event will be held in the City Hall Auditorium on September 24 from 9am-1pm. There are city-wide block parties scheduled for Saturday, September 28.
- Glenny Liranzo from the Front Door Agency announced that the next session of the Financial Literacy program has 20 participants. The program is held two times a year.
- Eileen Brady mentioned an event sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy on Human Trafficking. Contact Eileen at eileen@nks.org for more information.
- Liz Fitzgerald announced that United Way will begin their 2013 campaign with the 22nd annual Day of Caring scheduled for Wednesday, September 11.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:58 AM.

Minutes taken by Beth Todgham, Southern New Hampshire Services