

## GREATER NASHUA CONTINUUM OF CARE MEETING MINUTES

Nashua City Hall Auditorium

December 4, 2013 @ 8:00AM

[www.nashua-coc.org](http://www.nashua-coc.org)

Ana Pancine, Co- 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. Ana explained the meeting format for new attendees. The minutes of November 6, 2013 were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Jerry LeClerc , which was seconded by Candace Cappio-Gebhart. Minutes were approved.

### Committee Reports

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, Ana Pancine:** Ana introduced Alyssa Gagne, the Americorps VISTA that the GNCOC was able to hire through the support of United Way. Alyssa started Thanksgiving week and has been watching webinars in order to acquaint herself with the work done by the GNCOC. She will be attending all meetings and involved with the NOFA as well as the Point in Time in January. Group extended Alyssa a warm welcome.

Ana also announced that the NOFA (Notice of Funds Available) has arrived and work will begin on completing it immediately. She announced that there are continuing questions on the environmental review as required by HEARTH – she continues to wait for answers.

**ENDING HOMELESS COMMITTEE, Ana Pancine:** Ana reported that the Ending Homelessness event was scheduled for December 4 here in Nashua. Bob Mack was at the church setting up for the event. There will be no Ending Homelessness meeting in January (meeting date falls on January 1).

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE, Pat Murphy:** Next meeting of the Community Relations Committee is scheduled for January 15 at 8:45 at Merrimack Town Hall. Group has not met recently although they have been working on updating the website. They will be re-vamping the presentations after Hearth Act material / guidelines have been updated and incorporated into them. The group is looking for ideas on where and to what groups these presentation can be made.

**LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS, Eileen Brady:** Topic of highest interest is that of Medicaid Expansion. It did not pass in the last session, but will be reintroduced in the coming session of the legislature. Eileen encouraged all GNCOC to contact their elected officials to urge passage of this measure. The reason for non-passage was political, but it was pointed out that affordable, dependable healthcare is a critical to other factors regarding homelessness prevention. **Peter Clark (Senator Shaheen's office):** Peter reported that current focus is on the budget and the upcoming 12/13/13 deadline).

**DATA GATHERING COMMITTEE, Wendy LeBlanc:** Wendy reported that the Data Gathering is doing prep work in anticipation of the upcoming Point in Time Count (scheduled for Wednesday, January 29, 2014). She explained that the information gathered from the PIT is required by HUD as they make their funding decisions.

On related notes, Peter Kelleher announced that plans were in the works to keep Harbor Homes open the night of the Point in Time Count as a gathering point for individuals. Services (food, medical support, etc. will be offered). Bob Keating mentioned that the Point in Time will be used as a backdrop for work being done to create/build an Ending Homelessness Fund in the Nashua region.

**EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE, Tom Lopez:** Tom reported efforts being made to transition the Employment Committee into a monthly Employment Connect format that would offered workshops and networking opportunities. Format would allow agencies to provide information on the services they provide and what their organizations are all about. Next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 10 at 2:30pm at the Adult Learning Center.

**HOUSING ACTION, Laurel Redden:** Laurel indicated that her group is watching regulations being considered at the state level, specifically in the area of Workforce Housing laws. She will keep the group

informed as these issues arise. She mentioned that a Wrap Around Services group has been formed in the area of Affordable Housing.

**SHELTER DIRECTORS, Olga Cruz:** Group met and discussed sheltered preparedness during an emergency. Only two shelters have a plan in place in the event of an emergency. Those who have plans were asked to share with others so the mechanics would be in place to help clients should the need arise. The Central Intake Assessment was also discussed at the most recent meeting but preparation of the NOFA is the priority at this time.

## NOFA Update

Wendy LeBlanc provided the group with an overview of the Continuum of Care application process and explained that the GNCOG exists as a HUD requirement of our community receiving funds. The award was \$1.8M last year and covered permanent/supportive housing and transitional housing projects, the employment program coordinated by Tom Lopez from the Nashua Soup Kitchen, the homeless outreach work done by Kathy Paquette of Southern New Hampshire Services and HMIS.

The NOFA is divided into two Exhibits. The first covers everything that the COC does and who is involved in the issue of homelessness in the community.

The grant application is due on February 3. An outside consultant has been hired to assist in the application process. The new HEARTH regulations are having an impact on the way the grant application will be framed. The information in Exhibit 1 will apply for two funding years. Exhibit 2 covers specific services offered by the funded agencies.

Projects need to be ranked and will fall into either Tier 1 or Tier 2 based how well they meet the funding criteria. The highest priority will be given to permanent housing/rapid re-housing programs; support programs have a low priority. Funding for the coming year has been reduced by 5% giving the community \$92K less than the current year. The funding reductions experienced last year were absorbed by Harbor Homes.

Wendy LeBlanc reported that the Executive Committee has established an unbiased panel (not connected with an NOFA funded program) that will review programs for the upcoming HUD funding cycle. This committee will rank the programs according to NOFA guidelines; entire GNCOG will approve these rankings before the NOFA is submitted.

Wendy directed members to the GNCOA website if they were interested in seeing previous years' NOFAs. She also announced that there would be no money available for bonus projects this year.

Wendy will take the lead on the NOFA grant application this year.

## Announcements

- **January 2014 Meeting Date:** It was noted that the date of the January 2014 would be New Year's Day. The January general meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 8 at 8:00am. The monthly Executive Committee meeting will immediately follow the general meeting. There will be no Ending Homeless Committee meeting in January.
- **Homeless Memorial Day** is scheduled for Wednesday, December 18 at 5:00pm at Main Street Methodist Church. Contact Eileen Brady if you have someone you would like recognized at the service.
- **Harbor Homes Opening/PIT on January 29:** Peter indicated that volunteers wishing to help out are welcome and should get in touch with staff at Harbor Homes. He also noted that advanced planning for the PIT is critical so that the count is accurate.
- **SNH Rescue Mission:** Rick Rutter announced that the Rescue Mission has made drop-in space available during the winter months for individuals to get in out of the cold. Space is available for men only. They will also be open the night of January 29 for the PIT.
- **Nashua Soup Kitchen/Christmas Baskets:** Olga announced that Christmas Baskets will be distributed from 9am-4pm on December 23 at the Soup Kitchen for people in the Greater Nashua area who cannot afford a holiday meal.

- **SNHS Homeless Outreach.** Kathy Paquette announced that area churches are making \$200 in \$5 McDonald's gift cards available during the winter months. They are available to individuals seeking shelter during the cold. Contact Kathy for more information.
- **2014 Free Tax Prep Information:** The Asset Building Coalitions is making the final revisions to the marketing material for the free tax prep sites that open in mid-January. Beth with email the English and Spanish versions of this material to the mailing list when it is available.
- **Nashua Soup Kitchen, Olga Cruz:** Olga announced a new 24-month program for transitional housing for families who are trying to make some progress in their lives. Two 2-bedroom apartments will be available soon.
- **Panhandling:** Peter mentioned that the issue of panhandling has become a topic of discussion in the community. The Mayor recently brought a group of service providers, the police and the business community to discuss the issue. Representatives from the ALCU were also present. Concern as a Freedom of Speech issue was discussed; specific concern was for aggressive panhandling, where it may become a case of criminal threatening, etc. One suggestion was for a great police presence in the downtown area to discourage the practice. This will continue to be a topic of discussion. Hudson is considering an ordinance against it.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:56 AM.

Minutes taken by Beth Todgham, Southern New Hampshire Services