

Greater Nashua Continuum of Care

Meeting Minutes of March 2, 2016

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

Ana Pancine, Chair called the meeting to order at 8:05 A.M. Introductions were made by all.

The minutes of the February 3, 2016 minutes were reviewed. Candace Gebhart noted two typographical errors. A motion to accept the minutes as amended was made by Barbara Alves and seconded by Candace Gebhart. The motion passed.

Ana reviewed the meeting format and offered an apology that today's speaker cancelled last minute so there was no time to line up another presentation. Therefore, we are going to committee reports again this month and have extra time for announcements and discussion.

Ana passed around the sign-in sheet and asked people to add their name if not already on the list, if they want to be on the email distribution list.

**Committee Reports:**

**Board:**

Ana gave an overview of our last meeting which was primarily utilized to talk about the need to update the website and to include Coordinated Access (CA) features. The group appointed Kevin O'Meara as the Chair of an ad-hoc website committee, as this is his area of interest and expertise. The Board talked about funding possibilities for both the website and CA needs. As the Citizens Bank grant application turned out to not be a good fit, the group decided to come up with a work plan and associated costs for the website and CA, and then once we have that, look at local banks or other foundations that might provide funding for the project(s). Melissa Sullivan asked about how the Community Relations committee will be involved with this and Kevin stated that he intends to reach out to them to see who wants to work on this in a coordinated fashion. Melissa also offered to work on the grant application once we get to that point.

Wendy also shared that the Board appointed Rick Rutter as Co-Chair of the Ending Homelessness Committee.

**Ending Homelessness Committee:**

As Bob was away this week, Rick shared that there was not much to report since the last EHC meeting was primarily follow-up from the earlier GNCOC meeting, talking about the Point In Time count and the Project Homeless Connect event.

**Community Relations:**

No report- no new activity.

**Data Gathering:**

Abigail Alicea reported that she had nothing new to report. Peter Kelleher shared that in general, the data shows that the numbers are moving in the right direction, in regards to lowering the number of homeless persons in our community.

**Employment Connect:**

In Tom Lopez' absence, Magaly Rios reported that this month's meeting will be on March 15<sup>th</sup>, the third Tuesday of the month as opposed to the standard second Tuesday. It will be held at 2:30 at the Soup Kitchen on Quincy Street. She also shared that they are trying to recruit employers to participate in their committee, to better understand their needs, and also they are looking for more employment agencies to participate.

**Other Groups:**

Laurel Redden shared that the vote on one of 2 Medicaid reauthorization bills is thought to take place next week on Wednesday. One bill is a straight reauthorization, the other introduces additional pieces such as work requirements and co-pays.

Laurel also shared that Housing Action is going to be starting a Medicaid Institute with an info session on Friday, 3/18/16. This is a 6-month training with in-person and webinar components allowing agencies to develop a business plan to allow them to possibly bill Medicaid for supportive housing services. See Laurel for more information.

Also, Housing Action is sponsoring "Home Matters in NH" April 11-15 which will offer events, announcements, etc. Laurel will give more info next month.

**Announcements:**

Peter Kelleher shared that a group has been working with the Governor for the past 17 weeks on efforts to get the number of veterans in emergency shelters as low as possible. At the beginning of the process there were 37 vets in NH shelters. As of last night there were 14 statewide. Nashua shelters have zero veterans. Initially, 11 shelters statewide had veterans, now only 6-7 do. Robert from the VA added that they are developing a Release of Information and confidentiality agreement to be able to communicate with all veteran-serving agencies statewide. Peter expressed gratitude to all the shelters in the GNCOC for helping with this process. They are working on creating a Memorandum of Collaboration so that if a veteran arrives at a shelter, the staff can contact Harbor Homes' Supportive Services for Veteran Families program 24/7 to get the veteran into transitional or permanent housing immediately, rather than enrolling them at the shelter.

Amy Brody, VA employment coordinator, shared that their data is excellent. In the first quarter, they had 67% of veterans exiting the program with employment, vs. the goal of 45%. Permanently housed veterans with VASH subsidies have a 65% employment rate. She also talked about an upcoming workshop for veterans regarding employment. She is going to send the flyer to Ana to share with the group.

Sue Mead shared that there is now a military liaison at all community mental health centers. She also talked about an event on 4/9/16 at the VFW in Merrimack from 12-5 being held to provide military culture training and military families in general. It is a Welcome Home event for veterans and families. She will share a flyer with the group. Also, she told the group that of the 117,000 NH service members, only 30,000 are getting their healthcare from the VA.

Tom Doucet shared that H.E.A.R.T.S. peer support program is celebrating their 5-year anniversary in June. They were originally part of Harbor Homes until they were able to establish themselves independently. He told us that their crisis respite program is working with many NH hospitals to receive referrals and that they have served approximately 25 people since August. He also indicated that H.E.A.R.T.S. is looking for Board members.

Maura McGowan from the Front Door Agency stated that they have an opening in their transitional housing program for single moms who are looking to improve their situation. Applications are available online.

Bob Keating reminded the group that there will be an event of the Ending Homelessness Fund on 3/16/16 from 5:30-7:00PM at 45 High Street to discuss the Housing First model. While geared towards community providers, all are welcome.

Liz Fitzgerald stated that the United Way is forming as group in partnership with NH Listens to explore early childhood issues and to create a plan to address what is important to parents and educators. The launch meeting is Monday 3/7/16 at 1:00. Folks can let Liz know if they need more information.

Liz also mentioned the One Greater Nashua coalition and wondered if they can present at a future GNCOC meeting. When asked what One Greater Nashua is, Liz explained that they recognize diversity as a strength and has a three pronged approach: economic opportunities, creating a strong sense of welcome to the community, and diversifying leadership and youth leadership.

Liz also brought some discount prescription cards that is a supplement to regular insurance and said that she can give out as many as people want.

Dan Weeks shared that there will be a heroin epidemic awareness walk called Awareness is Human, taking place on Saturday 3/19/16 from 11-12 at Greely Park.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:45 AM.

Minutes taken by Wendy LeBlanc, Southern NH HIV/AIDS Task Force