

Greater Nashua Continuum of Care
Meeting Minutes
June 2, 2010
www.nashua-coc.org

Call to order: Chair Wendy LeBlanc called the meeting to order at 8:10am. All present introduced themselves, and visitors were welcomed.

Minutes from the meeting of May 5, 2010 were reviewed. There were no changes made. C. Gebhart motioned to accept the minutes. C. Furlong seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

W. LeBlanc explained to newcomers that the format for the meeting is committee reports one month, and the following month presentations. June 2010 is the month for committee reports.

Committee Reports:

W. LeBlanc reported for the Executive Committee – She indicated that there will be no meetings of the GNCOC in July. She relayed that the EC had approved the request of the Community Relations Committee to invite local town representatives from the CoC’s catchment area to the October meeting to work towards improving participation from the local communities at the CoC. A discussion took place, upon the request of the Ending Homelessness Committee, relative to the use of a Universal Intake Form. The EC has recommended that the Wrap Around Committee be tasked with the review of the form and conduct a small pilot of a sample form to determine its success and value. The majority of the meeting was spent reviewing the results of the meeting held by Urban Programs Manager, Carrie Schena about the Consolidated Plan and the concern that it didn’t address the needs of CoC clients. It was decided by the EC that a subcommittee of the EC would write a letter outlining our objections and suggested re-writes for certain sections of the Consolidated Plan. A discussion regarding the change in HUD’s homeless definition under the HEARTH Act was tabled due to time constraints and would be discussed at the June EC meeting. Candace Gebhart will be taking a leave from Sept – November and will return to the CoC and EC in December 2010.

E. Brady reported for the Ending Homelessness Committee - She indicated that the landlord workshop took place. They group discussed the Universal Intake Form and its merits. They expressed concern about the potential closing of Connections. They worked on the Plan to End Homelessness and brought Bridges Rape & Assault in to speak, as there are overlap with clients but Bridges is not part of the HMIS system. She indicated that the State budget is still up in the air and how it will affect many of the agencies of the CoC is unknown. She indicated that the Housing Trust Fund, on a national level, has passed the house, and will now go to the Senate. This is something the group has been working on for about 10 years.

P. Murphy reported for the Community Relations Committee – She followed up on W. LeBlanc’s comments regarding increased participation from the communities with the GNCOC. The committee will be sending invitations encouraging the community representatives (police, welfare, planning, selectman, etc) to come to at least one meeting annually and are specifically inviting them to the October meeting of the CoC to learn more about how they can benefit from participation with the CoC.

E. Brady reported for the Legislative Affairs Committee – Things are at an impasse at the State between the House and the Senate. It is very frustrating and there is a \$250Million+ gap of what the needs are versus the funds available to meet them. It is very difficult for advocates because there is an assumption that cities and towns will pick up the shortfalls that will occur, which is not the case. She reported that the human cost is not very evident in Concord and it appears that Concord is bogged down in paperwork. She indicated that it promises to be worse next year, regardless of what fix the house and senate finally come to for this fiscal year.

W. LeBlanc reported for the Data Gathering Committee – She indicated that there were many struggles with the PIT count for 2010, some mistakes were made and that will be reviewed to figure out how to avoid that in the future, but final numbers were provided to the State within the deadline. A handout was provided with details of the count data. The committee did not meet last month.

L. Newell reported for the Data Gathering Committee and HMIS - Ms. Newell indicated that the Housing Inventory Chart compiled by Data Gathering Committee was submitted. She provided a handout of the HUD outcome measurements through the HMIS system, and walked the members through that report. She indicated that they are working on data quality. AHAR is improving. E. Brady asked about looking at persons with disability income and not just earned income, which could positively impact certain results in the outcome measurements. P. Kelleher said that there will be a change to HMIS in July 2010, as Harbor Homes will be administering the Statewide HMIS Program from that point on, and he was looking for someone to join them to work this statewide program. B. Mack asked about how could we improve the numbers in 3.4. P. Kelleher suggested that one way would be to make sure that clients are placed on every available housing list upon entry to any agencies program. B. Mack also suggested that the Project Employment Connect taking place in Sept 2010 could be put onto the list and to track the outcomes from that endeavor.

Statewide Committees:

L. Newell attended the MCOC meeting. It was reported that the Homeless Service Center (a center similar to Connections in Nashua run by Harbor Homes), is being funded through the Manchester United Way and the City of Manchester opened and on its first day they served 130 meals, and provided showers to many. It is a collaborative effort of many groups. New Horizons has started a family meal program, and The Way Home had a ground breaking for a new apartment building that is scheduled to open in October 2010.

L. Newell reported that there was no **BOSCOC** meeting in May.

P. Kelleher reported there was no **ICH** meeting in May.

C. Gebhart reported that the quarterly meeting of the **NH Coalition to End Homelessness meeting** is 6/4 and is a training session on the Transgender community and will be held at 45 High St.

E. Brady reported there was no meeting in May of the **NH Housing Coalition**.

K. Merrill indicated that at the Shelter Directors Meeting they were pleased to learn that HMIS statewide would be handled by a central agency. She also indicated that their group had also discussed the possible use of the Universal Intake Form.

Updates to 10 Yr Plan Accomplishments Section:

W. LeBlanc commented that this will be a regular line item in the agenda going forward. That we need to do a better job of updating our accomplishments within the plan. She asked for any adds to the plan and the following suggestions were offered:

- Creation of the Fresh Start Program to provide home items
- The annual Homeless Project Connect Event
- Sue Mead is to send W. LeBlanc a few ideas that will be reported on at next meeting

Announcements:

Jerry Leclerc, of St. Joseph Hospital spoke about the upcoming Project Employment Connect for the homeless. He plans to meet with the Nashua Chamber of Commerce to see if he can get some buy in from them on this project. The planning is done, they are still looking for vendors for the 9/16/2010 event. They also need resource information as to who is providing what sort of services so that individuals coming to the event are prepared with such things as resume creation, haircuts, clothing, etc.

Barbara Alves of Marguerites Place, Inc. & MP Housing, Inc. reported that she has two families moving into permanent housing and therefore has two openings. She shared that Natalie Martin is a good contact from The Way Home, as they can provide security deposits quickly and are willing to reimburse agencies that front those deposits for clients.

B. Mack of City Welfare reported that on June 4th and 5th there will be a review session for Greater Nashua Workforce Housing Charette taking place in Milford and Litchfield where the general public is invited and can learn from regional planners and designers about designing attractive workforce housing. The Nashua Telegraph has an article about this in the 6/2/2010 edition.

P. Kelleher of the Partnership for Successful Living reported that Connections did lose all its funding from the State, which in this budget cycle was \$35K. This is after 26 years of funding from the State. They have had an anonymous donor write them a check for \$35K to keep the program open this next year, and they will keep it open on a shoestring budget of \$125K. He indicated that some changes are forthcoming and Connections will be closed from 6/7 – 6/25 while his staff attends a 3 week training session for a new team approach, following a successful model, known as the International Clubhouse Model. A group in Worcester, MA runs a very successful program using this model and they intend to switch to this format. P. Kelleher then introduced **Ken Lewis** and Ken mentioned the HEARTS program, which is a peer-support program that is now getting its own 501C-3 status after operating under the HHI umbrella. They are moving effective 7/1/2010 to 3 Pine Street Extension. **E. Brady** commented that she has a staff member that has worked under the Clubhouse model in MA and her staff member indicated to her it was a great model. P. Kelleher also invited the group to join the opening ceremonies of the Dalianis House on 6/18 @ 10AM, and indicated that they are now accepting any referrals for veterans and their families as this new location will be available shortly. He also commented on a new program that Keystone Hall will be operating for Recovering Pregnant and Post-Partum Women and their children, and they have already received four referrals for this program which they hope to have operational on 7/1/2010. He also commented on the Healthcare for the homeless clinic, and spoke about the complexity of the infrastructure and staffing. He wanted to

put out the message now that people who need primary care and are homeless that the clinic is open to them. HRSA is now being more broad in its interpretation of homeless to include transitional housing clients as well. **B. Mack** asked if there are any statistics on the diversion of patients from the hospital emergency rooms since the clinic opened. **P. Kelleher** reported that this will be happening as a requirement of the funding. It is a 2 year program funded under ARRA (temporary stimulus funds) and they will know in 6 months whether it will receive permanent funding.

B. Mack asked that **Germano Martins** speak about the District DHHS office and its Office of Minority Health. **G. Martins** indicated that they have hired a new minority health director, whose job it is to connect clients of the department with necessary services across the State. He indicated the Nashua District office is moving to 5 Pine Street Extension but date is not finalized. Caseloads are very high.

W. LeBlanc welcomed **Pastor Gwen Purushotham of the Main Street United Methodist Church** and asked her to say a few words. The Pastor indicated that she has been in Nashua for 2 years and she wants to connect with other community leaders. She indicated she came to learn about the group. A number of people in her church are on the edge of homelessness as they are unemployed. Her church also works with refugees, and they are working on sustainability – efforts for jobs, drivers licenses, education etc.

W. LeBlanc announced that the presenters in August will be Debbie Miller of Bonnie CLAC, now under a new name; and Ken Lewis of H.E.A.R.T.S. Peer Support Center offered to serve as a second presenter about this program.

There being no other announcements, the Chair reminded the members of the upcoming meetings detailed on the Agenda, and the meeting was then adjourned at 9:05 AM.

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