**GNCoC General Committee Meeting Minutes**

December 4, 2024

1. **Call to Order**
	1. Wendy LeBlanc called the meeting to order at 9:00 am and led attendees in a round of introductions.
2. **Approval of Minutes**
	1. Wendy LeBlanc asked for approval of the November 6, 2024 General Committee minutes. A motion was made by Mike Apfelberg, seconded by Scott Wellman. The motion carried unanimously.
3. **Strategic Planning Update/Survey**
	1. Wendy LeBlanc introduced Andy Armstrong and Mike Williams, who were selected by the Executive Committee to lead the Strategic Planning for the GNCoC.
	2. Introductions
		1. Andy Armstrong is the Senior Minister of First Church of Nashua. First Church Nashua is the oldest church in Nashua and the third oldest in NH, established in 1685. The congregation’s stated mission is to address hunger and homelessness, and his position as Senior Minister is to participate in this work in the community. He is on the board of Family Promise, and the Front Door Agency is housed in one of their buildings, and First Church was one of their founding organizations. First Church congregants provide volunteers to many organizations in the CoC, and they have dedicated 1/3 of every capital campaign for the past 30 years to support their community outreach. They are on the cusp of another campaign and hope learnings from this strategic planning process can inform how they direct their resources to our biggest need. Andy also does consulting, so when he heard we were in search for a Strategic Planning Consultant, he jumped at the opportunity. He is a Billy Joel fan, an avid biker, and frequents local diners.
		2. Mike Williams is the founder of Doing to Done LLC. Prior to this he was CEO of a midsize company and an Organizational Design Leader for GE, Zappos. He is a strategy consultant for individuals, teams, and organizations, specifically helping to develop strategies and workflows. He is a Swiftie, is an open water swimmer (swam from Alcatraz to San Francisco) and loves coffee and conversation. Andy brought Mike into the process because Andy has worked on big, challenging problems throughout his career and has experience helping large groups collaborate to define a shared purpose.
	3. Why Now? The Case for Strategic Planning
		1. Very few communities have the level of collaboration that we have here in Nashua; this strategic plan will give us the opportunity to maximize our collaboration. Our hope is that with the Strategic Plan we can listen, learn, and develop a strategy that allows flexibility and adaptability to continue to improve homelessness in our community amidst changing trends.
		2. History:
			1. 1995 GNCoC formation
			2. 2007: First Strategic Plan
			3. 2010: Plan Update
			4. 2024: Current State
	4. Timeline for Process
		1. Phase 1: Collaborative Insights Gathering; December to February
		2. Phase 2: Clarity mapping; February to April
		3. Phase 3: Strategy formulation; April to May
		4. Phase 4: Strategy approval and adoption; May to June
	5. Today: Collaborative Insights Gathering – Please take the survey provided today. Next, we will be invited to join different conversations based on results of the survey. Wendy will share the link to the survey with the full CoC listserv.
		1. Focus Groups, Interviews, and 1:1 Conversations: Andy would like to interview clients currently experiencing homelessness as well so that their voices are centered in the strategic plan.
		2. Andy will be at these meetings and our Executive meetings, but in the meantime, please reach out to Andy or Mike to have coffee and talk more about your thoughts.
		3. Mike and Andy led an activity to help identify the purpose of the GNCoC by having attendees raise hand in to vote on which word they felt most defined the purpose of the GNCoC. The words were: Change, Inform, Improve, Inspire, Deliver, Liberate. Most people raised their hands for “Improve”.
4. **Winter Warming Centers/Overflow Shelters**
	1. City of Nashua put out an RFP for a warming station for the winter. There was no response, so the City will be facilitating one in the Elm Street Cafeteria. The opening date is still TBD as they are recruiting and hiring staff. The hours of operation are:
		1. 7 pm – 7 am and operating through April 2025
		2. Low-barrier model
		3. The cafeteria will be locked off from the rest of the school, as youth sports and theater activities will remain scheduled. The warming station has its own entrance and separate bathrooms.
		4. Recovery resources will be available onsite and referrals to Community Health Workers can be made. Community Health Workers will connect individuals to any additional agencies as requested. Public Health will enter data into HMIS/CE as they will be taking attendance at the warming station.
	2. Jane from NSKS shared that staffing has been very difficult, so similarly to City of Nashua their open date is to be determined pending hiring and training staff. She reached out to Emily at Emergency Management to see if utilizing the National Guard for a couple of days while they work to staff would be an option. The Daytime Warming Station is planned to open this Thursday, and they have successfully hired a staff member for that. They hope to have the overflow shelter open by next week, but have to ensure adequate staffing due to safety of their staff. Those seeking overflow are amongst the most challenging shelter guests.
	3. Wendy indicated that Bobbie shared that NSKS is the priority as they both look for staffing. Jane appreciated this but indicated it is challenging as the City is compensating at a higher rate.
	4. Hours for NSKS Daytime Warming Center will be 9 am – 4 pm.
	5. Bob Keating invited others to come up with collaborative options to get the overflow shelters open as soon as possible.
	6. Mike Apfelberg shared he has volunteered in an overflow shelter, and that the paradigm that all staffing for these shelters need to be paid is incorrect, so long as trained staff are present.
	7. Iraida Munoz suggested creating a call to action to attract existing City Workers, the option to split up 12 hour shifts into 4-hour shifts, and to encourage nonprofits and for profits to incentivize their employees to participate by providing gift cards. She acknowledged that the challenge is training staff/volunteers adequately to be safe working with this population.
	8. Jane Goodman shared that volunteering within the shelter isn’t an option for NSKS, but it could be for the city.
	9. Don from Gate City Co-op shared that Goodale’s provides paid volunteer hours for their staff and suggested we compile a list of organizations who compensate for volunteering and encourage them to have their employees sign up to assist.
	10. An attendee suggested that we identify someone from within the unhoused community who would be interested in and eligible for this employment.
	11. Sue Mead offered to train volunteers/staff once they are identified.
	12. Wendy LeBlanc said please tell interested volunteers/prospective employees to contact LaTonya Muccioli.
	13. Mike Apfelberg asked where we send people for warming center/overflow shelter in the interim. A Community Health Worker suggested reaching out to other shelters or exploring the warming center in Manchester.
	14. Mark Perkins shared that the Baptist Church at 50 Ash Street will be providing a daytime warming center again. Bob Mack confirmed that the contract is being finalized and it will be announced when it opens.
5. **Encampment Updates**
	1. The City of Nashua shared that they are aware of approximately 10 active encampment sites, and aware of 5 of those encampments have active substance use. Revive and Public Health have been cleaning up discarded syringes
	2. Encampment closures:
		1. The Library encampment closed 11/7. This site has permanent signage in accordance with NH RSA Section 236:58 Camping Restricted.
		2. The Fields Grove (aka Salmon Brook) encampment was closed on 12/1. The clean-up efforts are still being coordinated. This encampment posed a safety risk due to illegal burning incidents and the lack of an access road for emergency responders.
		3. Walden Pond: there were two encampments in this area, one off of Lock St and one off of Sanders Street, both on private property. The Lock Street encampment as posted, new fencing has been installed, and has been cleaned up. The Sanders Street encampment property owner is working with Nashua Police on required signage and trespassing requirements.
		4. Community Health Workers provide education and resources to all encampment residents prior to closures.
6. **Announcements**
	1. There will be no January CoC meeting due to it falling on January 1, 2025.
	2. There is a City of Nashua Financial Empowerment Center informational gathering at the library today at the library at 11:30 in the activity room.
	3. Don from the Gate City Bike Co-Op shared that Brian Law from Law Logistics provides the building for 68 Hours of Hunger and the Bike Co-Op.
	4. Mike Apfelberg thanked the community for supporting their warm clothing drive. They were able to provide warm clothing to the City of Nashua to give out during their outreach work. He also thanked Joanne Perez from Family Promise for supporting with Holiday Needs.
	5. Donna Marceau thanked all who filled out the transportation survey and encouraged those who had not to do so.
	6. There is a Veterans Program run by Tom Lopez collecting donated holiday decorations. The bin is outside the Mayor’s office. They are also accepting gift card donations.
	7. Bob Mack shared that Merrimack Welfare coordinator Pat Murphy is retiring and Sandra DeLosa will be leaving Nashua City Welfare to take on her role.
	8. Mike Apfelberg shared that Heidi Young is also retiring from her role leading youth programming at DHHS.
	9. Jane Goodman shared that there was a memorial service for Denise Jackson on the Friday after Thanksgiving. There has been email conversation regarding whether the CAR line was currently being covered, and Jane confirmed that it is currently being covered. Susan Stelmach, current Shelter Staff, will be transitioning into the NSKS Outreach Coordinator role. She is currently answering the phone.
	10. Chertina Walker reminded everyone that the PIT (point in time) Count will be occurring on January 22, 2025, and you will hear from her soon with information on trainings and office hours. Bobbie Bagley will coordinate efforts with the outreach committee in January.
7. **Holiday Networking Party**
	1. Wendy LeBlanc adjourned the meeting and invited all to engage in a holiday party.