

GNCOC Executive Committee

July 19, 2023

Attendees:

Wendy LeBlanc, Harbor Care; *Chair*
Ashley Jackson, Harbor Care
Pam Wellman, Family Promise of Southern New Hampshire
Bob Mack, Nashua City Welfare
Robin Malchanoff, ICA
Chertina Walker, ICA
Scott Wellman, Greater Nashua Mental Health; *Vice Chair*
Hannah Stohler, Marguerite's Place; *Clerk*
Khristyn Way, Harbor Care
Henry Och, Harbor Care
Meghan Morrow Raftery, ICA
Jane Goodman, Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter
Kathy Farland, Stepping Stones

Guests:

Bobbie Bagley, Nashua Department of Public Health
Jim Donchess, Mayor, City of Nashua
Barbara Costa, Community Policing Coordinator, Nashua Police Department
Emily Martuscello, Emergency Management Director, City of Nashua
Lyndsey Bond, Epidemiologist, Nashua Department of Public Health
Megan Caron, City of Nashua, Strategic Initiatives Analyst, City of Nashua

Minutes:

1. Wendy LeBlanc began the meeting at 10 am and led the group in introductions.
2. Wendy LeBlanc asked if there were any edits needed for the June 2023 Executive Committee minutes and requested a motion to approve the minutes.
 - a. Bob Mack pointed out a misspelling under section 8; "mad" instead of "made". The edit was noted and will be revised.
 - b. Bob Mack made a motion to accept the minutes. Scott Wellman seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Jane Goodman recused herself. The motion carried.
3. Conversation from City of Nashua Team
 - a. Mayor Donchess acknowledged the presence of encampments and homelessness in Nashua and shared some of the City's efforts to provide solutions. Present with him was Barbara Costa from NPD, and he shared that NPD has a team doing outreach, as well as Bobbie Bagley and a team from the Department of Public Health. They are present at today's Executive Committee meeting to share their concerns and find opportunities to collaborate, with the ultimate goal of getting people out of encampments and into housing.

- b. Emily Martuscello, Emergency Management Director: Encampments, including the Temple Street encampment, are being cleared out by private property owners. Nashua encampments are increasing in size due to individuals relocating from Manchester and Concord based on CSX (the railroad) expansion. Emily would like to better align the city's plan with our work, including ensuring the best use of city funds to support ending homelessness. Today is about short-term solutions, but we also need a coordinated plan in the long-term as well.
- c. Emily also expressed that they know that the HUD NOFO is out and offered to share the City's Full-time Grant Writer, Pamela Davies, as a resource to the process.
- d. Emily shared that the Nashua Police Department and Public Health Department have been doing a daily count of unsheltered individuals in the encampments and have been able to collect a significant amount of data points. Yesterday, there were 74 individuals. Some of the key issues identified through this outreach include a need for case management and a more well-defined coordinated entry system.
- e. Bobbie Bagley, Director of Nashua Public Health shared those individuals in the encampment express difficulty in trying to find housing and identified the need for case management to help individuals access housing. An outreach coordinator can help make phone calls for individuals, help find housing and coordinate services.
- f. Wendy LeBlanc shared appreciation for the City team's presence and wanted to be clear that we are also all facing a lack of affordable housing, access to rentals, and rising rental costs for clients within our programs as well.
- g. Emily Martuscello shared that the State just set up the Housing Champions fund for 5 million dollars, which can assist with planning and adjusting zoning codes. This is being spearheaded by Julian Long. If there are opportunities for the city to support us in our work, they are willing to help make it happen at the State level.
- h. Hannah Stohler shared that one way the city could support our efforts is by funding a designated Coordinated Entry position, to help answer the phone line, input individuals into HMIS and add them to the Coordinated Entry list as appropriate, triage, provide resources and referrals, etc. Hannah explained that different agencies are volunteering staff time to complete this, but we do not have a consistent, full 24/7 phone line response.
- i. Wendy LeBlanc provided context on the NOFO process; the NOFO funds are used to refund programs that currently exist, in Nashua this is Permanent Supportive Housing programs. Bonus project funds are available but depend on the strength of the application. We have not received Bonus funds for the last few years based on our scoring. Wendy expressed that we would love to have the support of the City's grant writer.
- j. Wendy LeBlanc, Ashley Jackson, Pam Wellman and Hannah Stohler have been participating in a HUD Sponsored project for DEI to learn how to assess our data to identify inequities in our systems and make community wide improvements.

The good news is that our data does not show significant differences in outcomes for different racial identities across our community. This data, however, only accounts for those who are successfully accessing our services and does not speak to those who may have barriers accessing our systems. We will be assessing this. Barbara Costa from NPD shared that a State report in March came out analyzing access to shelter. This report also expressed the need for a streamlined Coordinated Entry process.

- k. Wendy LeBlanc shared that we are encouraging people to call 211 since our 877 number isn't currently staffed 24/7.
- l. Bobbie Bagley: The Bonus Project has an opportunity for someone who will do HMIS; The group clarified that all agencies funded (and many voluntarily) input into HMIS.
- m. Wendy LeBlanc clarified that they have released the NOFO with an overview but have not yet released the questions. This afternoon, we are having our NOFO Subcommittee Kick-off meeting. Kyle Farrell, Senior Grant Writer at Harbor Care has researched why we have lost points as a program and has suggestions for how to improve our application to retrieve these points. Wendy shared that it is unlikely that we will receive Bonus Funding this year. Emily Martuscello shared that if we do not get funding for Coordinated Entry or any other bonus projects through the NOFO, they can support us by going to the Governor and requesting these funds.
- n. Henry Och: In response to the mayor's initial comments on substance use disorder within the encampments, Henry shared that Harbor Care has launched a new program, a partial hospitalization for SUD Treatment. It is a step down from full residential addiction treatment. They have set aside three properties in Nashua, within the three multifamily properties, we have up to 27 beds to support partial hospitalization program. The model is one where individuals live for 4-5 weeks while they receive 20 hours of outpatient treatment at their federally qualified community health center. The goal is then to transition to a next step housing situation, with the ability to stay longer dependent on their clinical treatment plan. They opened up their first recovery house on Palm Street on July 10. This was a "soft launch", for people who are already clients of Harbor Care. The formal launch will be this fall. Henry also shared that their residential treatment facility at Amherst Street has 50% of the beds offline as they undergo renovations. Once this is complete, they will have 20 beds back online in January – February.
- o. Hannah Stohler expressed that the coordination of street outreach and subsequent funding by the City of Nashua would be helpful – there are multiple agencies in the city doing this work so coordination would ensure we are not duplicating efforts. Bob Mack clarified that while there are many agencies doing outreach, many are focused on subpopulations so they cannot always help all. Bobbie Bagley commented that duplication here isn't necessarily bad, just requires coordination.

- p. Pam Wellman expressed that diversion and prevention services, alongside a deep dive into case management, is essential for successful outcomes; few people cannot successfully move from encampment to successful independent apartment living without it. Barbara Costa shared that Family Promise's Diversion and Prevention program has fabulous outcomes.
 - q. Bobbie Bagley shared that Public Health recognizes the critical importance of case management.
 - r. Wendy LeBlanc invited the City of Nashua representatives present to participate in our Outreach Subcommittee.
4. Executive Committee and Subcommittee Restructuring
- a. Wendy LeBlanc shared that through our recent HUD TA and our participation in the HUD DEI series, we have learned that our Executive Committee is larger than necessary and that our subcommittees aren't functioning optimally. The GNCOC Leaders (Wendy, Scott, and Ashley) along with Hannah and Pam (DEI Series participants) propose that we evaluate our Executive Committee Structure, determine who needs to be at the table, and then choose a subcommittee to participate in, so that the Executive Committee can focus on strategy and governance. We were initially under the impression that we needed all service providers required by HUD present at the Executive Committee level, but now understand that we only need them in wider representation of the COC.
 - b. Hannah Stohler shared that a learning from the DEI series is by restructuring our Executive Committee and pushing administrative work out to committees, we make space for better leadership equity at the Executive Committee level, opening up slots for community members representing diverse populations who are interested in supporting the work. Hannah proposes that each subcommittee chair have a slot on the Executive Committee board, and then we designate other subpopulations we want represented and recruit those. They can, but do not have to be from agencies.
 - c. Our current subcommittees are:
 - i. Coordinated Entry – cochaired by Doug Howard and Denies Jackson
 - ii. Homeless Outreach Committee – cochaired by Kristen Kittredge and Sue Mead
 - iii. Employment Committee – chaired by Tom Lopez
 - iv. Youth Committee – chaired by Mike Apfelberg
 - v. Statewide Veterans Committee – Khristyn Way – Khristyn shared that the statewide committee suffices, and we do not need our own local committee. Conversation determined that we do not need this as a GNCOC Subcommittee.
 - vi. Healthcare Services Coordination – chaired by Bob Mack and Mark Perkins, established to coordinate services for medically needy people experiencing homelessness. Meets the last Thursday of every month virtually from 9 am – 10 am.

- vii. NOFO Committee – not formally in our bylaws. Kyle Farrell from Harbor Care will be very involved. A suggestion was to have grant writers across agencies participate in the NOFO Committee. The first meeting is today (7/19) from 3pm – 4 pm virtually.
- viii. Data Committee – Kyle Farrell will be chairing.
- d. Bob Mack stated that it would be great to reinvigorate the employment committee and expand it beyond the yearly Employment Connect event.
- e. Wendy LeBlanc shared that if there were to be a merger committee, she is not comfortable leading that conversation. The group determined we table this conversation and revisit once our committees and executive committee have been reshaped.
- f. Pam Wellman stated that we used to have a wrap around committee and asked if we should have this as a subcommittee. The group determined we could do it on an Ad Hoc basis. Conversation was had about confidentiality restrictions around case conferencing and wrap around meetings.
- g. Megan Caron asked about how we coordinate services for the 74 individuals currently in encampments, and asked about confidentiality, HIPPA, and Releases of Information. We discussed the use of HMIS as helpful, as clients sign a partnership agreement. Nashua Police Department are becoming HMIS licensed which will help.
- h. Jane Goodman shared kudos to the many outreach workers doing the work and shared the coordination she is already seeing happen at the Day Café in action between Harbor Care, NSKS, Adam from Day Café, different outreach workers throughout the city. Many outreach workers know the same individuals which makes collaboration less complicated.
- i. Robyn Malchanoff stated that having a designated person who was inputting into Coordinated Entry in HMIS while also triaging our Crisis Assessment line would be great. Other COCs do have this. Bobbie Bagley suggested we include this in our NOFO application as a bonus project. Discussion about previous application for this by NSKS was had.
- j. Hannah Stohler suggested that for the restructuring of our Executive Committee and Subcommittees that we have each committee chair sit on the Executive Committee, ask existing Committee members to participate in committees and choose whether to stay on Executive Committee or not, and then determine who else to add to the Executive Committee to diversify.
- k. Jane Goodman asked if there is guidance from HUD on who needs to be on our Executive Committee. Wendy LeBlanc responded that HUD states that there are people who should be “at the table” but no definite standards or guidelines. What we have learned is that we used to have “everyone” and that is not required.
- l. Bobbie Bagley asked if we would have a DEI or JEDI committee. Wendy stated that since this is very linked to data, we could convert our Data committee to a Data and Equity committee.

- m. Ashley Jackson reminded the group that we also have a Persons with Lived Experience Committee and have discussed having a BIPOC committee. Wendy LeBlanc shared the previous conversations that have occurred on how to compensate Persons with Lived Experience for their participation. The Balance of State have private funds from an MCO to pay for this compensation; our Youth Action Board is compensated through a grant from NHCF via Stepping Stones.
 - n. Emily Martuscello stated that once we restructure committees, she will ensure there is city participation at all committees.
5. August Meeting
- a. August meeting topic is about Housing resources. Agencies providing Shelter, Transitional Housing, and Permanent Supportive Housing are invited to speak for 5 minutes. Please send Wendy PowerPoint slides.
 - b. Wendy LeBlanc to share on subcommittees and encourage participation at the September meeting.
6. Wendy LeBlanc adjourned the meeting at 11:28 am.