

Committee on Homelessness Meeting April 2, 2003

Present at the meeting were: Klaas Nijhuis, Bob Marks, David Darling, Bob Mack, Maria Brown, Donna Juszkievicz, Carol Carberry, Eileen Brady, Sr. Sandra Morgan, Linda Jaynes and David Cull.

The meeting began at 9:30 am. K. Nijhuis handed out copies of last month's minutes and a "Homelessness Panel Discussion Outline". B. Mack motioned to accept the minutes; B. Marks seconded and the motion was approved.

K. Nijhuis lead the discussion and recorded the following on flip charts:

What is the Current System?

- Are we forced to live within the system?**
- What needs to change?**
- What choices do we have within the system?**
- Deal with on a case-by-case basis**

Panel to address:

- Tried and true solutions vs. considering what the problem is**
- Create solutions**
- Network; meet with people to work on solutions**
- Handout on the current situation stats (gaps analysis) agency stats**
- Quality is questionable**
- Come prepared to put forward proposed solutions**

Chronic vs. Acute Homelessness

Packet of statistics and disclaimers (and theory)

- Point of view: statistics on State – with Nashua as a subset**

By discussing the nature of the problem (the possible reasons/explanations) we might end up focusing on the past rather than the future. We need to focus on solutions.

Visual representation of homelessness in form of candies, flowers, mirrors that represent:

- Total number of homeless or**
- % of the population that are homeless**

Toot our own horn and celebrate our successes

- Case studies**
- What about apathy in the community: Other people will take care of it**
- Over committed volunteers**

Collaboration of individuals, agencies, market, government, and volunteer associations (civil society)

“We’ve been band-aiding” here is a permanent solution

Band-aid solutions don’t work when you are hemorrhaging

HUD Funding: Emergency Shelter Grant (old)

Permanent Supportive Housing (new)

Define who constitutes the current homeless vs. the pre- 1970’s

Act like a community

Also address substandard housing

Problem of the moving definition of what is substandard

We are in trouble with poverty – how poverty is interrelated with homelessness

Are we going to Reduce or End homelessness

Are we using a strategy of Overreaching, where we say we are going to end, but will settle for reduction of homelessness?

Need a solution that prevents them from becoming homeless

A new homeless population – unemployment, displacement

The recent – de-institutionalized

The Old – Those that choose to be “vagabonds”

What is the purpose of the panel discussion?

Things coming from grassroots vs. CoC process driven by HUD funding

Goal: A convener(s) emerges for each of the three CoCs

That convener might be an individual or an established, legitimated agency (Coalition to End Homelessness or CoC subcommittee

If it is CoC – we will need to ensure a process to bring in all

stakeholders, not just CoC members

Help those who don’t want to be homeless

Create permanent housing

Build infrastructure

To move people to empowerment

To provide supports for those who can’t

Eliminate those things that encourage dependency

Open up capacity in the existing safety net to address crisis situations

Have a sense of direction

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 am.