

Committee on Ending Homelessness
Minutes of the January 4, 2006 Meeting
Nashua City Hall, Room 208

Present at the meeting:

Bob Mack, City Welfare; **Mike Perez**, New Hampshire Legal Aid; **Laura Nault**, NAG; **Tony Epaphras**, SNHS; **Linda Newell**, Community Serv. Council; **Ruth Lee**, Soul Purpose; **Linda Jeynes**, Nashua Urban Programs; **Eileen Brady**, Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter; **Donna Juskiewicz**, Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter; **Mary Andosca**, Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter; **Lori Cardin**, Nashua Children's Home; **Klaas Nijhuis**, Harbor Homes, Inc.; **Peter Kelleher**, Harbor Homes, Inc.; **Miles Pendry**, Harbor Homes, Inc.; **Jean Russell**, Harbor Homes, Inc. – Maple Arms; **David Cull**, Soul Purpose; **Barbara Corman**, Greater Nashua Interfaith Hospitality Network

Note: Action items are noted in the following minutes with asterisks (*).

Bob Mack called the meeting to order at 9:15 am. Held quick round of introductions, then December 7th committee meeting minutes reviewed and accepted.

Project Homeless Connect:

Bob opened a discussion on the success of the Project Homeless Connect day. Planning committee for PHC (wrap-up) is scheduled for January 10th 2006

Prevention Strategy:

Bob (Prevention Strategy Committee chair) reported on status of Revolving Loan Fund; work is ongoing and the committee is looking at completing some grants to local banks for approximately \$15,000 seed money. Bob confirmed that they are focusing on rental assistance now as well as mortgage assistance, and some discussion about lack of documented need for both ensued. Bob stated that the committee hopes that in the next few months this project will be up and running.

Tony Epaphras recommended focusing on mortgage assistance primarily. Discussion ensued about the fact that no low-cost housing (which would be available to homeless families) can be found in the local real estate market, and what that means for this project.

Bob explained why it is difficult for municipal agencies to be useful to people going through the foreclosure process.

Peter Kelleher questioned the general usefulness of using mortgage assistance as a tool in preventing homelessness. Will it help such a limited number of clients that time and resources are best used elsewhere? Bob explained that this is a trial project and, in addition, is only one item in a menu of programs, and that it could possibly help prevent select clients from needing to tap other local resources.

Mike Perez suggested that the Revolving Loan Fund focus on emergency housing for families, specifically.

*Peter suggested that the committee contact the NH Community Loan Fund as another possible resource for funding this project. Bob took action item for this.

Eileen Brady noted that a Housing Forum meeting for a state-wide project [similar to Action item 1.2.4] is planned for Monday January 9 at 1 pm at the NH Charitable Fund offices in Concord and asked if anyone could attend (no commitment could be made from members present).

*Eileen will email the Housing Forum information to the entire committee.

*Eileen will draft a Letter to the Editor to highlight positive coverage of the homeless issue.

*Peter took action item to call Jennifer S. (RLF committee chairperson) to discuss considering other funding resources to move the Revolving Loan Fund to the next level. (To be done by next meeting)

Eileen recommended that the Ending Homelessness Committee produce/present an annual report to the public (in later discussion this was referred to as an “annual report card”). Discussion ensued about the committee’s structure and the need to keep refining the existing Ending Homelessness Plan.

* Lori Cardin will schedule a meeting once the Committee has a “report card” to present to the Board of Alderman and other town managers.

*Klaas noted that he is willing to write a template for letters to possible funding sources asking their for commitment to treat this as a priority project. He suggested he could finish this task within a two-month timeframe, and committed to completing this task by March '06.

Eileen noted that the State ICH has accomplished Action item 1.4.2 in the Plan regarding web site cooperation.

*Peter agreed to contact Fanny Mae for follow-through on Action item 1.4.2. (To be done by next meeting)

Peter mentioned that it would be useful to have data on the number of evictions that occur each year and the demographics associated with those evictions. This information could be used to measure whether eviction numbers are increasing or decreasing.

*Mike Perez of NH Legal Aid agreed to investigate whether evictions information is public record in NH and see if he can obtain the required information.

Mike also stated that he would like to give an overview of NH Legal Aid services to the general GNCOC as well as discuss with this committee how Legal Aid can help with specific issues. He will be added to the agenda to present at the next GNCOC meeting on Feb 1st.

*Lori Cardin offered to assist the committee in requesting \$1,000 seed money from the City of Nashua. She will work with Mike P. on drafting language for legislation to approach the Alderman with this request.

Peter made the motion to adjourn, motion was seconded, adjourned at 10.15 am.

Next EHC meeting: Thursday Jan 26, 2006 at 8.30 am at Harbor Homes.

Next GNCOC meeting: Wednesday Feb 1, 2006 at 8.00 am in City Hall Auditorium.

Minutes prepared by Barbara Corman/ GNIHN