

Committee on Ending Homelessness
Minutes of the March 31, 2005 Meeting
Harbor Homes, 78 Main Street

Present at the meeting were: Paul Bergeron, Eileen Brady, Maria Brown, Lisa Christie, Linda Jeynes, Donna Juskiewicz, Bob Keating, Peter Kelleher, Bob Mack, Susan Mead, Klaas Nijhuis, and Miles Pendry.

K. Nijhuis called the meeting to order at 8:40 am and had everyone introduce him or herself. Minutes from the February 24th meeting were reviewed. L. Christie motioned to accept, Donna Juskiewicz seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

L. Christie announced that the letters sent out by GNCOC and agencies in support of the Legal Assistance Office in Nashua have helped to get it passed in the senate. More work still needs to be done to make it happen.

B. Mack reported that the Ending Homelessness Plan was moving forward on track with strategies and activities but we may need to revisit some of the target dates to see if they need to be changed. We need to study progress and bring back a report to the whole GNCOC membership. It would be good to have it ready for the May meeting since it will help with the thinking about the SuperNOFA. He agreed to prepare a power-point presentation for the GNCOC meeting and to have a draft copy ready for this committee before then. There is a need for better tools to measure progress. B. Mack will contact the Hillsborough County Sheriff's office for eviction figures. K. Nijhuis will track information and progress on the Legal Assistance Office project.

B. Mack asked everyone to stay focused on issues around ending homelessness and not get sidetracked into wasting precious meeting time on lesser issues.

B. Mack said we still need to contact the Landlord Association and find a more effective way to get information to tenants about their rights, have packets made up for people receiving financial aide, and have training programs available for them. He will e-mail existing tenant's rights pamphlets to M. Pendry to be included on the GNCOC website. P. Bergeron added that he also has Landlord Survival Kits that will help landlord's in dealing with the problems they face in trying to keep tenants from being unnecessarily evicted. The idea of adding tenant and landlord tool kits to GNCOC website was discussed. Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter has such a kit for those at risk of homelessness.

In regards to economic empowerment of those at risk of homelessness, E. Brady mentioned that, as reported by Southern New Hampshire Services, the number of folks helped through earned income tax credit was up from last year's figure.

K. Nijhuis announced that the Town Manager of the Town of Merrimack is interested in getting involved with the Ending Homelessness Plan and in signing the Good Neighbor Agreement. It may be on the agenda for the meeting of the Board of Selectmen on April 21, 2005. K. Nijhuis asked members of the committee who live in Merrimack to come to that meeting to show support. It was suggested that he contact C. Ortega, President of the Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter. S. Mead said she would go too.

K. Nijhuis said that some committee members were unable to meet on the dates scheduled and wanted to know if we could consider alternate meeting dates and times. He will e-mail all members asking for better dates.

K. Nijhuis reported that work is progressing on the new Consolidated Five Year Plan for the City. A draft plan is expected to be ready on April 15, 2005. There will be a public hearing on April 25th at 7:00 in the Aldermanic Chambers about the Plan. He asked all to read it ahead of time and offer written input/advice/comments before the April 25th hearing. The final plan will be published on May 15, 2005.

K. Nijhuis announced that the SuperNOFA team would be meeting today to start work on next year's application process. The Ending Homelessness Committee will likely be asked to write a large portion of the document about the Ending Homelessness Plan. It will need to include the committee's goals and strategies; past, present, and future with a chart similar to the one used in the Plan. He will bring a copy for everyone to the next committee meeting on April 6th. Everyone agreed to help.

K. Nijhuis passed out draft copies of the GAPS report stating that based on data provided the count this year is at least 588 on January 25-26th.

P. Kelleher reported that he had met with staff at Rivier College about the Healthcare Training Initiative and found them to be very interested in linking up to do this. They would be willing to come and talk with anyone from the group interested in health care. P. Kelleher said they are looking for people to get involved and anyone interested should contact Linda Carter at Healthy at Home.

P. Kelleher said he was working on new a statewide application for Federal funding around housing for homeless with alcohol addictions to be available immediately after they have completed treatment. They would have to do a one-for-one match on the funding, but will try combining all three COC's in the State application to be divided between the three with approximately 30 units of housing each.

T. Epaphras was not in attendance to talk about housing for youth; it was agreed to table under the next meeting.

L. Christie volunteered to contact D. Villiotti from the Nashua Children's Home about attending meetings of the GNCOG.

K. Nijhuis announced that Neighborhood Housing Services is planning to convert the old Child Care Center on Shattuck Street into four units of work force housing and would move their office into that facility as well. They have run into some opposition from some of the neighbors who attended the Human Affairs Committee meeting to voice their objections. K. Nijhuis asked if everyone could help get the word out, sign a petition and let people know of the need to support this project with a neighborhood ward meeting at Mt. Pleasant School gym scheduled for 7:00 pm on April 11th.

Upcoming Meetings:

NH Coalition to End Homelessness, April 1, 9:30 am, Salvation Army Chapel,
Concord
Shattuck St. Apartments Neighborhood Meeting, April 11, 7:00 pm, Mt. Pleasant
School gym
Merrimack BOS, April 21, 7:00 pm, Merrimack Town Hall
CDBG/HOME Agency Presentations to HA, April 20, 7:00 pm, Aldermanic
Chambers
ConPlan Hearing, Human Affairs Committee Special Meeting, April 25, 7:00 pm,
Aldermanic Chambers

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 am

The next meeting will be April 6, 2005 at 9:00 am in room 208 of the Nashua City Hall.