

Lead Agency Meeting
Minutes
November 26, 2003
City Hall, Room 208

PRESENT: Lisa Christie, Nashua Soup Kitchen Shelter, Inc., Chairperson
Klaas Nijhuis, Urban Programs
Sr. Sharon Walsh, MP Housing
Grace Hicks-Grogan, Nashua Housing Authority
Donnalee Lozeau, Southern NH Services
Bridget Belton-Jette, Neighborhood Housing Services of Greater Nashua
Shayana Owen for Mariellen Durso, Nashua Area Health Center
Peter Kelleher, Harbor Homes, Inc.
Mary Auer, Harbor Homes, Inc.

The meeting began at 8:00 a.m. There was a general discussion of available housing sites in Nashua and congratulations to Peter Kelleher for UNH Coordinator of the Year Award, to Donnalee Lozeau for obtaining funding for the proposed SNHS senior housing development on Temple Street, and to Sr. Sharon, who was nominated by the Mayor, approved by the Board of Aldermen, to the board of the Nashua Housing Authority.

Discussion of proposed revised By Laws and of HUD's four basic components for a CoC.

It was noted that the Nashua CoC is involved in all four areas. L. Christie requested members to read this section of the Federal Register/April 25, 2003, page 21582, III. Program Description: Eligible Applicants; Eligible Activities, for possible inclusion in ending homelessness plan.

Review of list from 10/29/03 meeting. (See Minutes)

a. Purpose - Lengthy discussion. D. Lozeau referenced the Operational Guidelines at the October 29th meeting and questioned the statement of "Purpose". General discussion of the words "that will assure ending homelessness" of it being too broad a statement setting us up for failure, as this is unachievable. Exchange of thoughts of using language that will engage the scope of the project and the entities involved, of HUD's four components: outreach and assessment, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent housing, and of inclusion in the City's Consolidated Plan. L. Christie requested everyone to come back at the next meeting with a proposed statement of "Purpose".

Discussion of emergency shelters and their current scope is being transitional housing and in some cases permanent housing – due to lack of affordable permanent housing.

It was asserted that the CoC should speak with one view, but not to stifle thoughts, ideas, and differing opinions. There was a comparison made between NH and MA – noting that NH is small enough to make a difference in homelessness and to get other entities involved. Nashua could be the first community to have workable plan and put it into place.

P. Kelleher stated that the subcommittee to end homelessness has been meeting and has extended its target completion date. This subcommittee has already developed 3 to 4 items in putting a plan together. If successful, this plan would be replicable. Discussion that we are already achieving some success as evidenced in fewer number of homeless. Mission, as stated in the Draft Bylaws is fine.

b. Classes of Membership. Intent is to be as democratic as possible in “enabling a voice at the table”. Purpose is to assure equity in advancing projects. Need to include churches and government. Definition of “Individual” = any person not associated with an agency providing services to the homeless.

It was agreed that an Agency will have two votes; an Individual will have one. Feedback from Mariellen Durso/Nashua Area Health, as reported by Shayana Owen, which states “Providers who provide services for the homeless directly should have two votes; all other members should have one – even if two representatives attend the meetings.” Discussion of original By-Laws whereby agencies received two votes. She also suggested that there be a three-year term “for the Executive Committee, that the officers should be agencies funded/who provide direct services to the homeless”. Discussion of the CoC, individual agencies, and the importance of collaboration that adds strength and avoids “turf issues”.

c. How Voting is Done (based on participation, etc.) Consensus was to delete “voting and non-voting” status from the proposed guidelines. It was suggestion that once finished, there will be a document for all to complete which will identify whether the person is an ‘agency’ or an ‘individual’. The definition of “Individual” will be taken from HUD’s definition.

Discussion of attending a certain number of meetings each year in order to vote. In M. Durso’s e-mail, it was proposed that “in order to vote – 50% attendance at Continuum meetings as well as 50% attendance on one Committee”. Discussion of knowing who is eligible to vote, of various ways in which to create the ballot and distribution for the NOFA. A suggestion was made to hand out the ballots at ‘check in’ and at the meeting prior to the vote to let CoC members know who is eligible to vote.

d. Annual Calendar and Sharing of Committee Minutes with General Membership: Discussion of having use of a web site as the central point for all committee meetings. P. Kelleher said that Miles Pendry/Harbor Homes could easily set up a site having access to the CoC members, but not to the general public.

e. Guidelines: General discussion of annual review.

Next meeting is scheduled for 1/6/04 at 8:00 a.m., Harbor Homes Board Room, 78 Main Street.