



Cecil County Inter-Agency Council on Homelessness
Minutes
6/17/15

Attendees: Gwen Parrack, CCHD; Shelly Gullede, CCHD; Earl Grey, Cecil County Housing Agency; Pat Marks, Meeting Ground; Susan Lebowitz, UBCSS; Mike Brandon, The Paris Foundation; Julie Wright, CCHD; Jean Marie Donahoo, Union Hospital of Cecil County; Dotty Fritz, Immaculate Conception Church; Marianne Redding, CCHD; Lori Goldsmith, Deep Roots; Stephanie Garrity, CCHD; Gladys Lacey, Meeting Ground; Rose Capriotti, DSS; Joan Swanson, CCPS; Shenise Daughtry, Mary Randall Center

Stephanie informed the group that County Council Manager, Jim Massey, requested from the health department a presentation on homelessness in Cecil County. Stephanie suggested this be delivered during a Board of Health meeting that happens during the council's Tuesday morning work session. County Executive Tari Moore would also be present. The group will have about an hour to present. Stephanie requested the group's help in brainstorming on how this hour will be spent. Suggested topics included coordinated assessment, addressing the federal myth of ending homelessness, as it is a choice for some, addressing concerns about providing services without enabling, as well as possibly addressing local housing barriers such as legal issues, credit history, utility barriers, etc. Mike Brandon suggested sharing some success stories as part of the presentation. Stephanie may use the past three year's PIT survey to show homeless trends. It is important to acknowledge how many agencies in the county work together to address the issue of homelessness. Stephanie encouraged all to attend the board of health meeting. There is no date set as of yet. The date will be shared once it is scheduled.

Shenise from Mary Randall Center shared the 2014-15 Rotating Shelter Report with the group. The rotating shelter operates from November through March. There were a few new implementations for the year which included: drug testing as an assessment and awareness tool, Peer Recovery Advocates on site, Push for Progress, and better partnerships with other local agencies. There were 7,876 signed in volunteer hours, 2,640 dinners prepared, 2,640 bed nights, and 84 unduplicated guests recorded. Possible plans for the 2015-16 season include expanding Peer Recovery Advocate availability, escorting clients to area NA/AA meetings, holding NA/AA meetings on site, offering training opportunities (Narcan, Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) etc. to volunteers, and recruiting more overnight volunteers. Shenise welcomed any additional ideas from the group and advised to contact her with suggestions.

Gwen reported that Cecil County is registered for the FY16 Continuum of Care grant competition. The RFP has not yet been posted.

Gwen reported that the Vulnerability Scale for Coordinated Assessment is complete. Jason will be adding the form to the HMIS database. The next step is for the subcommittee to create a cheat sheet/ guidelines for directing individuals to the most appropriate form of shelter/housing partially based on their vulnerability score. Coordinated assessment will be implemented in stages with the Permanent Supportive Housing programs being the first to be implemented using this new process.

Gladys gave an overview of Open Table, a new initiative being led by Meeting Ground. This will be a faith based group that serves as mentors. Each group of mentors will take on a consumer for one year and provide informal support with the goal of helping individuals increase self-sufficiency.

Lori reported that Deep Roots went from serving three families to 12 families in the last 60 days. Four families have transitioned into permanent housing. All families served in this program must have children. There are currently three families in the program with both parents. Deep Roots is currently looking for more live in volunteers. The program is currently preparing a few more apartments for families. Lori expressed interest in getting the Deep Roots volunteers trained in MHFA.

Mike informed the group that Paris Foundation will be offering Vacation Bible School next week. He also reported that beginning July 11th and then every 2nd Saturday of the month, thereafter, they will offer a Book Mobile Program from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm and currently still need volunteers for this program. On August 8th, the Paris Foundation will be holding a Back to School Bash, along with the Book Mobile program. Long range, the program looks to focus on the economic impact volunteers have on the community.

Dotty reported that for two weeks in August the program will be providing school aged children with book bags filled with school supplies. The Paris Foundation and the Help Center will also be helping with backpacks and school supplies some time later in the summer.

Earl informed the group that Cecil County Housing Agency's funding is likely to be unchanged heading into the next fiscal year. Waitlist for section 8 housing remains at approximately three years.

Shenice reported on the Sharing is Caring program. This program involves a weekly speaker who shares their testimony regarding their faith before a group to provide inspiration to others. Shenice welcomed any interested leaders to contact her.

Joan reported 700 students were tagged as homeless last school year. She also reported that some of the Cecil County Public Schools will be offering breakfast and lunch throughout the summer beginning June 22nd. Joan will be retiring and Kyle Longeway will be replacing her as the homeless liaison for CCPS. Joan was elected to the board of directors for Meeting Ground so she will still be involved with community efforts regarding homelessness.

Marianne reported that the CSA is out of consumer support funding until FY16.

The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, August 18th, at 1:30 pm**, in the Cecil County Health Department auditorium.