



## HOMELESS SERVICES NETWORK MINUTES

June 23, 2016 / 8:30am – 10:00am

Hope Haven Conference Center

### ATTENDANCE

#### VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

1) Rita Rabie	Carolinas Care Partnership
2) Davena Mgbeokwere	Charlotte Family Housing
3) Tony Marciano	Charlotte Rescue Mission
4) Mary Gaertner	City of Charlotte
5) Rebecca Pfeiffer	City of Charlotte
6) Anisse Avery	Community Link
7) Ben Johnson	Community Link
8) Kay Blake	Community Link
9) Kim Scholtz	Community Link
10) Madeline Harvey	Community Link
11) Nyesha Mendoza	Community Link
12) Qadriyyah Moore	Community Link
13) Tameka Gunn	Community Link
14) Pat Krikorian	Florence Crittenton Services
15) Loretta Tillman	Innovative Community Resources
16) Barbara Cross	Mecklenburg County Community Support Services
17) Courtney Morton	Mecklenburg County Community Support Services
18) Meg Robinson Arnold	Mecklenburg County Community Support Services
19) Cindy Seeley	Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services
20) Lakesha Brown	Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services
21) Lavern Weathers	Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services
22) Shakirah Francis	Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services
23) Tara Chance	Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services
24) Anita Leach	Men's Shelter of Charlotte
25) Brittany Tillman	Safe Alliance
26) Kathy Gauger	Safe Alliance
27) Harry Mack	Salvation Army Center of Hope
28) Traci Carter	Salvation Army Center of Hope
29) Kelly Lynn	Supportive Housing Communities
30) Pamela Jefsen	Supportive Housing Communities
31) Angelique Marcus	UNCC Urban Institute
32) Mike O'Sullivan	Unitarian Church Universalist Church Advocacy Group
33) Allison Winston	Urban Ministry Center
34) Cassie Hazelip	Urban Ministry Center
35) Lisa Marx	Urban Ministry Center
36) Shamika Murray	Urban Ministry Center



- 37) Justin Markel
- 38) Kirsten Sikkelee

Urban Ministry Center HHH  
YWCA

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| 39) Estelle Collins   | Another Choice for Black Children               |
| 40) Deborah Albritton | Another Choice for Black Children               |
| 41) Vincent Hope      | Bank of America Student Leader Intern – YWCA    |
| 42) Victoria Xu       | Bank of America Student Leader Intern – YWCA    |
| 43) Janice McNeely    | Changed Choices                                 |
| 44) Maria Huidobro    | City of Charlotte Intern                        |
| 45) Bridgett Williams | Discovery Home Care                             |
| 46) Unitie Mance      | HomeCare for the Carolinas                      |
| 47) Jamie Matteo      | Mecklenburg County Behavioral Health Department |
| 48) Stephen Valder    | Mission Gathering Charlotte                     |
| 49) Steven Tilley     | Mission Gathering Charlotte                     |
| 50) Kay Johnson       | NC DAAS   |
| 51) Phyllis B. Finch  | Victory Christian Center                        |

**WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & MARCH MINUTES**

- Meeting called to order by HSN Vice Chair, Pam Jefsen, at 8:30am
- April meeting minutes were approved by vote.

**VICTORIES**

- Urban Ministry Center will open the Moore Place Expansion with 35 additional units with the goal of trying to have every new unit filled by early August. (Justin Markel)
- Safe Alliance now has a Coordinated Assessment staff person onsite for a number of hours every few weeks. (Kathy Gauger)
- Hope House Foundation moved a family into their program that they met at the HSN agency fair. (Debbie O’Handley)

**GENERAL UPDATES**

- **National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) Conference Scholarship (Kelly Lynn)**
  - The [NAEH Conference](#) will be held from July 26 – 28, 2016 in Washington, D.C.
  - HSN awarded 2 scholarships for 2016: Emma Foster from Florence Crittenton and Allison Winston from Urban Ministry Center.
- **May HSN Agency Fair Recap (Courtney Morton)**
  - The May HSN Agency Fair was well attended with over 75 people and well represented with 75% of HSN Agencies hosting tables at the fair. Fair attendees included staff from HSN Agencies and those not part of the network as well as community members. Feedback was received by attendees through an electronic survey and some of that feedback has already been incorporated into the 2017 planning. Additional feedback



can be sent directly to Courtney Morton. Courtney thanked the agencies and staff who hosted tables at the fair, which contributed to a successful event.

- **Coordinated Assessment (Pam Jefsen)**
  - Coordinated Assessment Oversight Committee has been working since April 2015 to improve and revamp its system for rapid re-housing. The committee received assistance from the Corporation for Supportive Housing in order to create an effective and efficiency system. As a result, a demonstration project was launched in June 2016 for families who are homeless or within imminent risk of becoming homeless in 14 days. Families will be prioritized for rapid re-housing and rapid re-housing providers committed to using a common application to streamline the process. Rebecca Pfeiffer stated that she would re-send the lunch and learn invitation that will cover the new changes with rapid re-housing with families on June 29<sup>th</sup> from 12pm to 2pm.

#### **HARD TO SERVE CLIENTS IN HOUSING**

Kay Johnson, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Shamika Murray, Urban Ministry Center  
Kathy Gauger, Safe Alliance  
Mary Gaertner, City of Charlotte

- Kay Johnson provided an overview of the Targeting Program, which is a specific program for persons with disabilities accessing housing that started in 2005.
  - Kay emphasized the importance of utilizing Fair Housing Laws for accessing housing:
    - Persons can ask for a reasonable accommodation or modification
      - Modification means something like a ramp, grab bars in restroom, or a parking space in the parking lot.
      - Accommodation has to do with the finding the nexus between the reason for denying a housing application and the person’s disability. A person applying for housing who does not meeting the selection criteria can request an accommodation to show that any past behavior that is associated with their disability would not be a factor with their current housing (for example, they may now have a payee or now have rental assistance when they did not before).
      - Examples of accommodations include: asking a housing authority to extend the search period to find the right housing (extra 30 days); asking for higher percentage of FMR because of the disability.
    - Kay shared that agencies can elect to be a “case management” agency on Social Serve—in order to set it up, contact Social Serve and get the password. By doing this, you can complete a search, save it, and then social serve staff can continue to work behind-the-scenes to find what you were looking for—which, might increase the success rate for locating housing.



- Shamika Murray shared tips for engaging landlords to help clients access housing:
  - Conduct searches where there are affordable apartments and consider bus lines.
  - Listening out for private landlords. Utilize SocialServe and other sources such as the newspaper for private landlords.
  - Don't call or send email to follow up—go to the property and speak to the person in the “back office” to talk about the housing application. Or, call the corporate office—find the person who can make the decision and who has the authority to accept the client.
  - Think about the landlord relationship as more than just a business relationship so that they will call when they need something.
  - Know what the landlord wants—for example, some say do not send a sex offender. Don't!
  - Know what you have—if you have the resources to do a background check beforehand, this will save money on the application fee; or try to talk to the client and explain risks.
  - Be open with landlord and tell them what they need to know—not everything—but to make the client shine and so the landlord knows they can work with you/program; talk about the support behind the client as a plus/selling point.
  - There is a common misconception that some clients do not pay certain fees like late fees; let the property know they are just like any other client—late fees, deposits all apply; talk about the initial inspection and annual inspection upfront.
  - Be persistent; you will receive a lot of “nos”; there are also people out there who are willing to help and invest.
  
- Kathy Bolster Gauger discussed various barriers that impact persons experiencing domestic violence when trying to access and maintain housing.
  - Many of the persons who enter Safe Alliance had no income and no work history; have never paid rent on own or maintained their own household.
  - Safe Alliance has worked hard to educate the police on not to arrest females when called to a domestic violence incident where the perpetrator was also attacked by survivor in self-defense; so that this charge is expunged and does not impact their housing application.
  - There is legislation in place to protect domestic violence survivor with regard to housing.
    - You can advocate for a survivor with an eviction record, when the eviction is domestic violence related.
  - Safe Alliance also works to support survivors after they access housing who continue to struggle with re-establishing relationships with perpetrators.
  
- Mary Gaertner provided an update on the status of the new community Landlord Consortium project.
  - Utilizing a model grounded in the experience and lessons learned from other communities, the proposal for this landlord consortium will have three components including the landlord / property manager, provider and client.
  - The goal is to have a project manager who would take the lead in bringing all of the work from each agency together so that could collaboratively educate all of property managers on different housing strategies and programs.



- The Landlord Consortium project applied for CoC dollars in the last NOFA competition and received about \$111,000 to use to leverage more funding in the community to get matching dollars.
- The project had a focus group with landlords and received feedback that included having a supportive system for the landlord that comes with the client and having a damage insurance fund.
- The work of the project will need to navigate existing relationships between providers and landlords so that the consortium be more successful operating from a systems perspective.
- The project needs and wants continued buy-in from community. Mary formally requested support from HSN in the form of a Letter of Support.
  - Pam Jefsen introduced the request and opened the floor for conversation. A motion to create the Letter of Support was made and seconded with no discussion against. The motion was voted and approved. Pam shared that the HSN Executive Team would follow up with Mary.

#### **UPDATES FROM HSN AND NON-HSN COMMITTEES**

**HSN Advocacy Committee:** Mike O’Sullivan shared progress on some of the committee initiatives:

- Regarding the position that HSN adopted against the City Council proposal to eliminate garbage collection from multi-family homes: Mike shared that an increase was made across the board for everyone, not just apartments. Mike shared that HSN’s role played a critical role in this result.
- Regarding the work on diversion from the court system for persons experiencing homeless—outside of budget requests, there have been practices put in place by police: metro and central divisions now have a referral form when they encounter an individual because of an infraction, they can now make a referral instead of arresting them. The referral goes to the outreach team. Since this process began in December, there have been 55 contacts and 5 have been housed as a result.
- Advocacy Meetings are held at McCreesh Place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month.

**HSN Coordination of Services in Housing (COSH):** Kathy Gauger shared update on work:

- Committee members decided to keep meeting on a quarterly basis with next meeting in August.

**HSN Unaccompanied Youth Homelessness:** No update.

**Housing Advisory Board of Charlotte-Mecklenburg: Continuum of Care (CoC) Committee:** Rebecca Pfeiffer provided updates on activities from the Continuum of Care:

- Rebecca expects HUD will release the CoC funding application in the next few weeks—Rebecca shared that the community applies and it takes multiple people to complete.
- The community will be reporting system performance measures to HUD within the next month which will serve as a baseline to HUD; these performance measures will come out of HMIS. In order to have good data, Rebecca shared that it is important that providers work on data quality.
- CoC’s next meeting is July 13<sup>th</sup> from 2-3:30pm at Hope Haven.



### **Housing First Charlotte-Mecklenburg**

- There have been 323 individuals housed with 344 individuals left to house on the registry.

### **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Housing our Heroes:**

- There have been over 400 veterans housed with between 30 and 40 left to house on the registry.

### CHALLENGES

- Case Manager needed at YWCA (Kirsten Sikkelee)
- Case Manager needed at Safe Alliance (Kathy Gauger)

### NOTE ABOUT DUES AND CALENDAR

- Overall, HSN dues to go to support meetings and promote awareness about homelessness; they cover food; provider scholarships for the Chair, Vice-Chair, and two other NAEH scholarships. Any questions on the balance can be sent to Chris Prysock, Treasurer.
- Note the calendar changes with July, August and September changing topics.

### ADJOURN

- Meeting adjourned at 9:47am.
- Minutes submitted by HSN Secretary, Courtney Morton.

**Next Meeting** – Thursday, July 21, 2016