

Southern Mountains Homeless Coalition (Region 2 Balance of State or BoS)
February 6, 2020 - Blue Ridge Community Health Services (BRCHS), Hendersonville
Eleanor Meloun Community Room, 9:30 AM

Facilitation was by Co-lead **Kristen Martin** in Hendersonville. She reviewed ground rules for the meeting: Personal conduct to be professional; disputes to be aired outside of the meeting.; only one speaker at a time.

January 9 meeting minutes: **Kristen** asked for review comments on the distributed minutes. None were offered. The distributed version was approved by common consent.

January Balance of State Steering Committee Call: Awards are announced for Tier 1 of the Continuum of Care (CoC) grant cycle, including funding for Thrive's work in two grant applications (a proposal to consolidate to one grant has not been confirmed yet). No notices were issued about Tiers 2 and 3 as yet.

CoC 2020 grant cycle is beginning with a mandatory webinar on February 27 – this information will be forwarded to new prospective applicants.

Funding Priorities (a BoS committee) also meets Feb. 27. They'll review HMIS, PIT, and other data and make recommendations to Steering Committee to be considered March 3.

An Emergency Shelter Learning Collaborative is underway in Region 5. They are looking at low-barrier shelters and their services, and attempting to identify models for easy access to housing.

Support letters for applicants for grant-per-diem programs (Veterans housing) were approved (not in SMHC area). Also, a Burlington Development Corporation grant was renounced and will go to request-for-proposals from other providers (for activities in that region).

A Steering Committee training is set for the end of March, but location is unclear. Emily or Kristen will attend.

Stephanie Gilliam said a Racial Equity webinar is set for March 11, 10-11:30 AM; and related in-person training on March 27 at a location to be determined. Anyone interested can join an email list to follow up. It was asked whether diversity extended to groups other than Census race groups; at this time it is those groups only.

Children and Youth Subcommittee: Beth Branagan is ill, but reported they have 40 participants and two co-leads (Beth and Kim Guice). They will work on comparisons of McKinney-Vento served children across the four counties with PIT counts. It was asked if there would be PIT count volunteer prospects among the Children and Youth committee attenders.

Coordinated Entry: Kristen said BoS is launching a 'rolling evaluation' of the entry processes, to attempt to better assure the most adequate assistance is being delivered. It will cover both RRH (rapid re-housing) and PSH (permanent supportive housing, which (in March 2020) would look at any people assisted in the past year).

Veterans Subcommittee: **Alyce Knaflich** said demand seen by Aura Homes is levelling off, but no outreach is being conducted. She's working with four women in Henderson, one in Rutherford, and two in Transylvania. She cited a Coalition of Women Vets study using 2016 data, estimating that across the 100 counties about 7.5% of women vets are experiencing homelessness. This study is being coordinated with the Institute of Government. Alyce asks why the vet programs are not doing more to reach out to women vets- there is a high suicide rate. She recommends all shelters doing intakes and any serving agency, ask women if they have ever served (and their branch), also (at service agencies) How is your housing situation? That should include VA servers.

Brenda Ploss concurred with Alyce and noted that caregivers for women vets tend to be women. She notes that Ellis Pender of NC Works is now active at the Veterans Restoration Quarters near the Oteen VA. He comes from veterans-service organization work in Wilmington. Also, NC Works in Brevard is offering finance/budget training through OnTrack.

Emily and Kristen are seeing staff turnover issues at state veterans' providers.

Point-In-Time Count: **Emily** attempted to check in with a webinar last Friday but had technical difficulties. The PIT Application "closed" last night. The count is at a very-preliminary state for reporting, with de-duplicating and cross-referencing observer surveys with shelter surveys ongoing. That said, our Regional count is 143 unsheltered (up 101 over last year. It may drop some with more process checking.

Caution: For now the leads urge that field PIT or other surveyors **not** share locations with Census workers. In other parts of the state there are reports that sharing has led to targeting of campsites for closure and to arrests. **Sarah Kowalak** urged that this be sent around to all PIT coordinators as advice from NCCEH. Their GPS-savvy app could be a source of abuse. Alyce was concerned about use by ICE.

More on PIT: Last minute volunteers were found for Polk county. Sarah K. asked if we were getting questions from NCCEH about having too many in the count vs. the surveys that were done. Emily, Kristen and Stephanie are still working on de-duplications per GIS info. "We may be right under the threshold" for needed match to surveys.

Feedback: We should figure out a better way to monitor cars where people may be asleep. This could be done by adding in-place teams to stay at popular locations such as WalMart.

The regional meeting was adjourned. Next meeting is March 5th, at BRCHS Community meeting room in Hendersonville at 9:30.

Henderson local announcements:

Aura Homes has a February 22 workday at the Middlebrook Drive site, to tear out and install a roof. They will get volunteers through the United Way volunteering website.

A community input session is February 17, 2 PM at the City Operations building about a zoning variance for a proposed 80 unit complex on Duncan Hill Road (at Signal Hill). This is tax-credit 'affordable' housing.

Alyce recommended weekly phone conferences sponsored by NC Housing Coalition. A current concern is proposals to permit revisions to leases that reduce tenant rights. Calls are Tuesdays at 9:30 AM, currently at 712-770-5505 using code 532454.

Another new proposal is for 78 units on Chimney Rock Road at Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church. Check with planner Daniel Haven for info.

Sarah spoke of nc360.org as considering extension of 211 service to EMR's (physician referrals). Brenda Ploss asked if they are vetting organizations that want to be included. Marla is able to answer questions and concerns regarding HIPAA rights per Kristen. Alyce and Brenda share a concern about risk for defrauding of vets.

With respect, Chris Berg, coalition secretary