

Notes for Southern Mountains Homeless Coalition online/Zoom meeting
Region 2 in the N.C. Balance of State Continuum of Care (CoC) for Homeless
May 7, 2020, 9:30 AM Kristen Martin hosting

Persons attending: Kristen Martin and Emily Lowery (Regional co-leads), Stephanie Gilliam, Alyce Knaflich, Amanda Stancil, Jessica Rice (Veterans Services of the Carolinas), John Lauterbach, Carrington Cosby, Jennifer Drum, Sarah McDaniel, Nikki Kilgore, Grace Whitney, Chris Berg, Beth Branagan, Kim Berry, Bri Griffin, Teena Willis, Trisha Eklund, Michael Absher, Tammy Phillips, Renee Urban, Sandy Devoid (Pisgah Legal) (24 total attendee count per Zoom software)

Minutes of previous two meetings: Kristen asked for any corrections or comments on the March 5 or April 2 minutes of the Coalition, as distributed. None were offered, so the distributed versions are adopted by common consent.

Kristen as facilitator went over the ground rules.

Balance of State (BoS) Steering Committee met in April and May. Kristen provided summaries, Emily also was on the calls:

April Call: The Funding and Performance subcommittee reports it is compiling raw data to create a dashboard.

A draft version of funding priorities for the upcoming 2020 CoC (Continuum of Care) grant cycle was set out. It includes maintenance of essential infrastructure (HMIS, Coordinated Entry); provision of PSH (Permanent Supportive Housing) across the CoC areas; provision of additional RRH (Rapid Re-Housing); insuring all funds are used well; enabling reallocations of funds from projects with low spending rates and/or performance to other productive uses.

Processes to develop a CoC Scorecard and enable Project Reviews for the grant cycle are underway. Priority needs were identified based on PIT Count information from 2019. Priority 1 is to insure more Permanent Supportive Housing, PSH. (Due to our region submitting 'more observations than surveys' in the 2019 PIT Count, making our chronic need unclear, no Priority 1 need was assigned here.) Priority 2 is to add more RRH/Rapid Re-Housing slots to meet needs, and our region is eligible for this priority, as we have no current RRH funded by CoC grants. (Our regional RRH is funded by the separate ESG grant system and other resources). Priority 3 can be for additional PSH housing where need is not clearly required per PIT. We therefore can submit projects for priorities 2 and 3. Carrington explained the specifics for chronic need that makes PSH projects a recognized priority. These priorities cover both new and renewal grant requests.

May Call: The Steering Committee adopted a 2020 Anti-Discrimination policy: [<https://www.ncceh.org/files/10688/>] All CoC or ESG applicants must have adopted policies covering the BoS provisions; other provisions to address discrimination are also allowed.

A website was posted about a recent anti-discrimination policy webinar: <https://bit.ly/2zlhEE7>

The statewide Bringing It Home: Ending Homelessness conference (May 20-1) is canceled.

Coordinated Entry: The CE evaluation (not yet made final) has been delayed. CE Meeting schedules by regions were discussed; this region continues to meet 2x/month, but if added funds become available additional CE meetings may be announced.

ESG 2019 awards were reviewed, noting that the next ESG allocations may be restricted if the prior awards are not fully spent – our region spent 100%, so we will not have that happen. Three regions look subject to reallocations, so there may be increases for other areas. NCCEH and state ESG are working on ensuring their requirements don't seem to conflict.

Racial Equity: Stephanie Gilliam said three goals are set. 1. That COVID-19 response is equitable across BoS. 2. That the CoC Scorecard includes an equity focus. 3. That the annual racial equity report is completed. The scorecard treatment planned is as a bonus for better equity showings in 2020, though later it will be a regular scoring feature. Carrington said that shows how applicants have an equity responsibility, but does the region have one also? Kristen said the region would be expected to adopt a statement developed by NCCEH- we have generally taken up such policies late each year when we are organizing our new leadership team. Kristen and Emily encourage additional fund applicants- the region will work better if more cooperators are involved. Anyone looking into that needs to review the various NCCEH policies in place, as most will be required for any applicant. Stephanie added that getting all the documents in Spanish is our goal locally, in lieu of NCCEH action on that. Kristen hoped NCCEH as originator will address that. Our area programs may translate to other languages also as we see needs, or to accommodate disabled people. Kristen asked for questions-- none were offered.

Children and Youth Homeless Action Coalition 'CYHAC': Beth said the May meeting will be Thursday the 14th at 10 AM, by Zoom – an email has gone out. The group hopes to hear what all parties are doing about COVID, including all four counties. Please let your contacts know of this, especially in Rutherford or Polk. We'd like to hear about food distribution, providing diapers, baby needs, or efforts for child care. Let's touch base to share ideas or strategies. Kristen is aware of announced schools' and community partners' work on food distribution; does anyone on the call need that info? Renee Urban asked for that. Grace Whitney asked about emergency child care: Do we see such needs? If so, are there barriers appearing that hinder access to the care? Kristen reported our general awareness of first-responder and emergency personnel made able to access this care as essential... and homeless families are eligible without regard to COVID guidance. The child-specialist agencies are getting this word out, but other service outlets may not. Are there any questions? Grace said DCDE would appreciate feedback, and especially if there are 'child-care deserts' – as they could work on capacity. Kristen said the capacity is here, but getting the message out may not be as reliable. Michael Absher said there was word coming out from the state about continuing availability of free child care, at school level. Only Hope is working with Boys and Girls Club about provision. Michael is not hearing of a lack of care providers, as Alice's Playground is able to take more. Kristen confirmed that all providers staying open have capacity, confirmed by Child and Family Resources. But the messages only say that essential personnel can get child care. Grace said Beth and Kim are making use of these in some cases to aid family stability- the subsidies are available. Renee can use a Henderson food link Michael put up in chat, or Kristen or Emily can send other source contact info. Beth reported day care service helping a family otherwise living in their car, and more such service is available. Trish Eklund asked about setup of a Google Drive listing of resources available on an ongoing basis – Kristen doesn't have time to work on that, Trish or volunteers are welcome to do so. Updating regularly goes to 2-1-1, for hours or access; while all homeless documents are accessible at NCCEH.

Coordinated Entry: Stephanie is organizing that for the region. Kristen said there are 235 households (with 423 individuals) on the by-name list. The region got about \$7000 in rapid extra funds from ESG, and some private-grant help to Thrive allowed outreach to five listed households, one of which is now housed. There are indications that more legislation will bring more resources. We'd like to be prepared to place quickly as that happens, so please make us aware of landlords willing to rent units. Do not hide these providers, share your knowledge! CE happens by phone, then some signatures get rounded up in 24-48 hours. Next CE meeting is Thursday the 14th, at 11. The Zoom info has already gone out. Tammy asked if Coordinated Entry is available in Rutherford or Polk. Thrive as CE lead Thrive often makes the placements (does contact work etc) but at times also partners with Blue Ridge Health, Safelight, United Way-Rutherford, The Haven. These agencies are trained, and can do the assessment.

Veterans: Amanda Stancil (828-273-3266) remains the VA point of contact for referrals 'in the counties that have vouchers'. She does the triage for those that could benefit at the walk-in clinic. The VA will continue to have the late-summer Stand-Down, but this year as a virtual event, Sept. 11th. Details to follow.

Alyce: Two veterans over 80 died with COVID in Buncombe, one at the VA. [Limited space is? May be? available at Aura Homes in smaller apartments. - poor phone connection]. She's concerned the state is opening up from Shelter in Place too soon.

Jessica: Veterans Services of the Carolinas offers Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) assistance. They've gotten emergency housing funds. Rules are changing to allow more hotel time. The added money and changes means they can review vet cases previously denied or where case funding caps had been reached. Potential evictee rules as well as homeless-vet rules have both changed, so please re-up clients that may have had past denials.

Michael: The Veterans Healing Farm is still operating as normal, with updates being posted on Facebook.

COVID responses: Henderson: Trisha Ecklund at Blue Ridge is doing pre-entry COVID testing for anyone wanting to check-in at the Rescue Mission, at 7th Ave clinic, with about 24-hour turnaround.

Kristen – shelter service which is non-congregate: The FEMA funded shelter opens today. Referrals must come only from Pardee, AdventHealth, Blue Ridge, Free Clinic or the Health Dept. There is a tiered system for intake/service. Unsheltered people testing COVID-positive get served first.

Transylvania: Emily said two plans (non-congregate shelter in a hotel; and a place for COVID-positive people to quarantine) broke down when the reopening plans were announced. Beds had been separated further, and sheets for separation hung. The family shelter continues its previous operation plan.

The Haven guests have all been able to get COVID tests at Blue Ridge Health. They will be able to get intake prospects tested prior to moving in.

Rutherford: Kristen said Suzanne Porter has worked with their Emergency Services director. We do not have an update from them.

Polk: Kristen: They have a small homeless population, and two churches as shelter providers. No details.

Alyce Knafllich recommended we keep track of emergency back-up possibilities as the COVID situation may require further measures. Kristen noted that County Emergency Services Directors have that as part of their job. Kristen takes that as our requirement to do lots of educating of those offices as to the populations we work with. That looks preferable to our coalition developing separated plans. They have the authority, so they should implement.

Renee Urban said VAYA Health has dropped plans to pursue congregate housing further. It was to be done with FEMA, but the program seems designed for situations where a unit needs repairs or has been destroyed. We are still talking through it today, but that's where we are now, it would be a lot of work to try. The VAYA line keeps us updated with resources at DMH. Kristen confirmed that the Henderson work absorbed about 100 hours with Blue Ridge, Pardee, Free Clinic, Advent, the Health Department, the Red Cross...and others. To put people in a hotel, as Emily said. Kristen will try to get an update from Suzanne for Rutherford County and put that out.

Michael Absher is working with Manna Food Bank; Manna may go from biweekly deliveries to weekly based on CARES Act funding. An outreach market is also a likely additional feeding service, if there is

a likely opportunity contact Caitlin at Manna, Michael will give contact info to Kristen to allow sharing around. They will offer fresh produce from suppliers like Ingles or Publix. They went from 4 to 5,000 pounds distributed per week to 17,000.

We're awaiting word on continuation of the pool system through the summer.

Only Hope also has gotten a grant to assist homeless seniors (i.e. high school), arranging for special gifts.

Kristen saw some decline in requests at many local food sites this past week. That seems to mean the check supports are now getting through.

Alyce reports that Mills River and Bearwallow farmers markets are offering double food for Food Stamps purchases.

Grace asked how families are being served in cases where one member, say a parent, tests positive for COVID? Kristen said FEMA support may adjust to offer an extra room in that situation. It probably takes a case by case resolution. Trisha seemed to echo that regarding Rescue Mission intake families, that isolation of families is done for any with positive-COVID, and within households is better when feasible. Grace recommended contacting Beth or Kristen if there are problematic cases. Trisha offered to supply contacts among school nurses who may have help to offer.

Beth said the Transylvania child nutrition director was able to obtain food shipments to families not able to access nutrition sites or school-bus-stop deliveries. This would provide 350 families with a ten day supply of breakfast and lunch for kids every two weeks. This goes through the summer. Kristen asked Beth to stay in touch with Stephanie if Thrive served families are listed to get this help.

Sandy Devoid from Pisgah Legal said they are having a hotline available May 21st, from 8 AM to 2 PM, for anyone with legal issues affected by COVID; about housing, or employment. Spanish language is offered.

--Chris Berg, note-taker, Southern Mountains coalition

[May7 chat:]

[Download \(3 files\)](#)

Chat Messages

- Kristen Martin15:15
<https://wwwncceh.org/files/10688/>
- Michael Absher27:40
<https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fhendersonville.maps.arcgis.com%2Fapps%2Fwebappviewer%2Findex.html%3Fid%3D7f80480164c64e8daabf6306af8db629&data=02%7C01%7Cjconnet%40hvlnc.gov%7C5647488c2011438d2f0b08d7ebc417e1%7C9b395ddf4297428c97ec9225f7e4b6b1%7C1%7C1%7C637237099790072041&sdata=GYMfVyXmjy56j%2FBLIHoMR4KlnRQ6Y6OQYtA9YIH4lpM%3D&reserved=0>
- Michael Absher27:49
City map of Henderson county
- Trisha Ecklund28:36

Kristen, do you think we could create a google drive that everyone could access and we could add resources for our region on a continuous basis ?

- Trisha Ecklund33:23

:)

- bbranaga33:39

Beth Branagan contact info: email: bbranaga@tcsnc.org

- tammy phillips35:30

Is there coordinated entry in Rutherford & Polk County happening?

- bbranaga36:20

Trisha- we have a good start on a resource directory that we did as part of CHAC that we could share.

- Trisha Ecklund40:58

Beth- okay awesome if you want to send it to me via email I will get a google drive started to try I have some items related to Blue Ridge and certain contact info as well to start out with.

thanks! my email is tecklund@brchs.com

- Jessica Rice42:29

I'm here for Veterans Services of the Carolinas.

- Renee Urban01:04:33

I need to get off for a 10:30 meeting. Have a good day.

- Alyce Knaflich01:08:20

have a great da!!

From madeline to Everyone: 09:05 AM sorry my audio doesn't work. Madeline with Pisgah Legal

From Emily Lowery to Everyone: 09:06 AM hey alyce! good morning!

From Alyce Knafllich to Everyone: 09:17 AM aura home business as usual. put COVID 19 procedures in place at Apartment and checking in with veterans housed with necessary supplies.

From Kristen Martin to Everyone: 09:18 AM 828-273-3266 Amanda Stancil with VA

From Alyce Knafllich to Everyone: 09:22 AM forgiveness loans

From Teena Willis to Everyone: 09:23 AM I can speak to Rutherford since Suzanne isn't on

From Alyce Knafllich to Everyone: 09:27 AM aura home was approached for our facility

From Trisha Ecklund to Everyone: 09:28 AM
another thought possibly reaching out to the summer camps for kids that are currently empty??

From Teena Willis to Everyone: 09:34 AM
I have another call that I have to get on at 9:30 -Rutherford county update:

From Alyce Knafllich to Everyone: 09:46 AM
Is 211 going to increase case workers because here is a long wait time

From Sarah Kowalak to Everyone: 09:47 AM
Amanda.bauman@unitedwayabc.org for your 211 updates

From madeline to Everyone: 09:47 AM
I have a couple updates from Pisgah.

In terms of renters rights, the courts are not hearing cases except in emergency situations, which means that eviction hearings are not being heard so no one should be getting evicted right now.

We are doing a Facebook Live Housing Rights KYR at 2 p.m. today

From Sarah Kowalak to Everyone: 09:48 AM
www.liveunitedhc.org or www.cfhcforever.org for grant app

From madeline to Everyone: 09:49 AM
We are also available to help clients who need to file for taxes in order to get the stimulus checks