Wilson-Greene BoS CoC Regional Committee Meeting Minutes

Location: The Wesley Shelter, Wilson, and North Carolina

Date: February 19, 2013

Attending:

Candice Rountree – WCDSS (CoC Regional Committee President)

Howard Anthony – WCDSS (CoC Regional Committee Secretary)

Marty Stebbins – St. Timothy’s Church

Sandra Blazek – St. Timothy’s Church

Susan Parker – WCDSS

Riley Hottovy – WCDSS

Amanda Flory - WCDSS

Lynne White – The Wesley Shelter

Donna Pridgen – The Wesley Shelter

Linda Walling – Hope Station

Diane Kriesel - Veterans Residential Services

Sylvia Brewer – Veterans Residential Services

Claudia Baker – Veterans Residential Services

Candice started the meeting with introductions of all members. She included her “Thank you” for nominating her for the position of President last month and thanked Marty for her work as President over the previous year.

Agenda Item: The group talked about the BoS sub-committees. It is very important to have a representative on each committee so that we can be involved in every call. They have decreased the frequency of meetings from monthly meetings to quarterly. Amanda noted she is and is willing to continue on the rapid-rehousing committee and Susan will be the back up. Linda stated she would be willing to attend the data quality committee meetings and Candice will participate in the data calls also. Diane Kriesel will participate in the Permanent Supportive Housing Calls.

PIT: Marty passed out the summary of the event to members for review. Overall, a successful PIT event with all necessary paperwork turned in. The unsheltered count reflected the fact that we did not find as many people on the walk about. The soup kitchen and other locations caught most of the people to be counted. Next year we can expand to checking the Wal-Mart parking lot or other places where people may be sleeping in their cars. We did find some Spanish speaking people and it was suggested that next year we might want to add this to our PIT. Hope Station noted that they have a volunteer (Soraya Wright) who might be able to help next year with Spanish interpreting. This will be most helpful when working around the community. Unsheltered adults were counted but many younger adults were not caught because they were “couch surfing” and not in reach of our PIT. A couple of people during the count identified themselves as DV and three were noted as Mental Illness. Only one military veteran was identified/noted in the count. Marty noted that Saint Johns is now on board, Wesley shelter, Flynn Home and Hope Station are still onboard with this effort. All data was placed on an excel spreadsheet and Marty will send that out to everyone noting demographics and other information reflected in the PIT. The only trend she noted was many people were receiving food assistance but not a lot of people stating they were getting housing assistance. It was noted that police recommended that the PIT community search might be done later at night to possibly catch more homeless people/families. Susan and others noted that the partnership with the local police went very well with excellent officers helping. Linda asked if there might be bi-lingual police officers that might be available for future PIT events and this will be investigated.

Advocacy Updates: Senate Bill 6 to decrease the unemployment benefits. The BoS is asking that we contact our individual legislatures to voice our thoughts about the issues. Senate Bill 4 is being signed today and the expansion of Medicaid is not going to take place. Linda talked about asking Representative Susan Martin to visit Hope Station to see if there are any other resources available for some of her residents. Candice noted that WCDSS has an annual breakfast and Susan Martin was in attendance at the last breakfast.

Diane and Claudia attended the BoS CoC meeting in Rocky Mount and noted that they are not as organized as our committee. They asked about the Wilson-Greene committee and they were invited to attend any of our meetings. They noted that Albert Baron is out of the picture and Kim Jones (Barons Replacement) from Eastpointe noted that the Wilson-Greene Committee is at bottom in consideration. Diane noted they were trying to obtain mental health services and medication for a Veteran they are working with but they did not find the service from Eastpointe. Marty asked that everyone document both the good and bad experiences with Eastpointe and bring it to our attention. Susan noted the important of mental health services and that our success with a client is affected by the quality of the mental health services.

Susan asked if we have a listing of mental health professional in Wilson County. There appears not to be one available and that Eastpointe would be the place to obtain that information. Marty talked about having looked at compiling a local resource listing. Susan noted that Paula Benson is the new 20/20 contact person.

Amanda noted that if someone is in need of mental health services at Eastpointe and they do not have insurance or income, they might be eligible for state funding to obtain free mental health services.

Monica Jones represented Eastpointe back in November and Diane wondered if possibly she is a good contact at that organization.

Susan added that she is concerned that landlords may be less than interested in taking mentally ill referrals because of the recent behavior issues that resulted in three ESG evictions. With the lack of mental health services she is equally concerned about the ESG program and being able to find housing for MI folks. The consensus at the table that there has been an increase in the issue related to our MI population and/or gaining treatment services. Lynne reported that mental health issues are affecting the shelter as well. Residents who are not medicated often exhibit behaviors that become safety issues for the other women and children. There is a lack of alternate shelter/housing when dismissal becomes necessary.

The group talked about the need for quality mental health services and that it would be good to have our own in-house services and not have to bill others. It was suggested that perhaps this would be a grant opportunity.

Candice presented the last agenda item asking everyone to feel free to share information that is relevant to his or her organizations. Lynne noted they are seeing more Domestic Violence Clients and have been at capacity with DV populations. This is a change in recent months. Usually there is a mix of DV and Homeless. Lynne noted the difficulty in finding temporary housing for people noting the change in the use of CIP Funds. Susan noted that DSS are meeting with our state CIP representative to discuss issues. Susan noted that we have DOT money that may be able to help with transportation for Wesley Shelter clients.

Diane noted a number of landlords are not allowing them to place the utility in their names. The City is addressing this by telling landlords they cannot keep the utility in the landlords name and it must be in the tenants name.

Hope Station is running largely at capacity. Riley was recognized that they are very satisfied with the social work services he is providing them in his internship. Linda noted she had heard about a “White Flag” shelter night in which the shelter is opened up to anyone needing shelter for the evening. Linda wondered if we could do something like this to allow for emergency shelter during adverse weather days/evenings.

Susan stated that we did get the contract for the ESG grant with a slight increase in the amount. WCDSS has opted to remain as the fiscal sponsor because of the challenges with the state system. This also puts us in a position to obtain/apply for ESG funds next year.

Lynne noted they are still waiting on another state funding contract that was supposed to be effective October 1, 2012. The kitchen at the safe house is in the being renovated which will be a challenge with so many residents. Wesley Shelter is celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2013. There will be a Strong Soles 5K and Dash Fundraiser on May 4th at First Presbyterian Church. Male dashers in high heels will be featured in the 30 yard dash.

Marty noted that the deconstruction project of the carriage house is almost completed. This may be a possible location for future mental health services efforts.

Next Meeting will take place on March 19th at the Wesley Shelter. 10:00-11:00am