Wilson-Greene BoS CoC Regional Committee Meeting Minutes

Location: The Wesley Shelter, Wilson, North Carolina

Date: April 16, 2013

Attending:

Candice Rountree – WCDSS (CoC Regional Committee President)

Howard Anthony – WCDSS (CoC Regional Committee Secretary)

Marty Stebbins – St. Timothy’s Church

Valinda Peeples – Wilson Housing Authority

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

Claudia Baker – Veterans Residential Services

Terri Hooks – Wilson County Schools

Ellen Blackman – Eastpointe

Cynthia Smith – Saint John Community Development Corporation (CDC)

Judi Thurston – United Way

Candice started the meeting with introductions of all members present. Judi from the United Way was welcomed as one of our new members.

Candice talked about the agenda noting the hyperlinks that everyone has assess to and she discussed some of the items from our point in time count. Greene County had some difficulties obtaining law enforcement assistance thus they were not able to go out this year.

The BoS staff are advocating for the BoS Interagency council for coordinating homeless programs funding to be restored, as it is not on the budget at this time. Everyone is invited to contact their legislatures to ask that this funding be restored.

Candice and Lynn White talked about the fact that the present governor and the administration is looking very closely at funding and budget items. Candice noted that she is aware that the funding for child welfare in Wilson County alone is going see a shortfall of over $300,000.

The group discussed the lessons that we learned in our last point in time count (January 2013) noting that we have a good partnership with local police. One thought is that PIT count will take place a little later that evening next year. It was noted that some homeless people are staying in abandoned houses so it might be good to check with other homeless people or shelter residents to see if they have knowledge of where people are living. Efforts can then be added to search out and locate homeless people living in these abandoned houses.

A presentation was conducted by Valinda Peeples with the Wilson Housing Authority. She provided a handout and discussed the system involved with the preferences given to people regarding WHA units. Valinda noted that she recommended that anyone who does not have a preference, they would be well served to apply to all housing units (E.B. Jordan Homes, Forest Road Homes & Whitfield Homes). Application can be turned in on Thursdays (except the 1st Thursday) from 8:00am-4:00pm. Applications cannot be picked up from the main downtown administrative office. They can be obtained from E.B. Jordon rental complex office. The rental amount for applicants is based on 30% of their income (Presently ranging from $50-605). The housing authority is responsible for conducting the criminal records check. She noted that housing units are normally available at anytime. But, EB Jordon is scheduled for a major renovation towards the end of 2013, thus there will be a number of families that need to be transferred from EB Jordon. This relocation of tenants will take up many available units and this will likely cause new applicants to be on a waiting list. Candice asked that the WHA consider including Wi-Fi access for the new or renovated units to allow children to have access. In regards to what constitutes a family, Valinda noted that the WHA accepts couples as well as married people. There is not a set timetable for looking at preferences, but the last one was done in 2007 and this most recent one was done in February 2013. There was a discussion about notification to the community regarding section 8 vouchers being available and Valinda noted that the only requirement is to post the notice in the newspaper. She does not know when the next opening will take place. Valinda stated she would inform our group when the next opening takes place. Valinda noted that if a resident has an increase in income, it would be applied at their certification date. Valinda talked about the WHA Self-Sufficiency Program that allows for increased rent changes to have the money placed into an escrow account for up to five years. The community service program involves the need for some residents to complete 8 hours per month of community service. If they are working 20 hours per week, elderly/disabled or a full time student, they do not have to do the community service. Residents can have another person live with them for up to 30 days per year without it being an issue.

Amanda Florey from WCDSS noted that she was contacted by another social worker noting that Habitat for Humanity is looking for families in need of housing. She also discussed details of he Targeted Housing Program. Eastpointe added that there are approximately 9 targeted housing units and 6 shelter pus care units in the Wilson area. Sherrie Daniels from WCDSS was noted as being the contact person for individuals interested in applying. Eastpointe stated she would be happy speak at our next meeting concerning targeted housing, shelter plus care and other programs.

Ellen Blackman from Eastpointe: In addition to discussion on housing, there was discussion concerning the mental health services in the area. Ellen has volunteered to talk at our next meeting on housing. In addition, she can bring someone to talk more about mental health services. After the meeting, Ellen also provided clarification to a question that was brought out in the meeting. I am including a copy of her email to us. Thanks Ellen!

**Hello,**

**I have an answer for the question raised at the meeting regarding the Head of Household being disabled for the Shelter Plus Care Program**

**“Persons with Disabilities” - a household composed of ONE or More persons at least one of whom is an Adult who has a disability-**

**Thanks,**

**Ellen**

Hope Station: Linda participated in the data quality call and she found out their organization is in need of improvements with their data quality and they are making efforts to update their procedures. She attended a hunger conference in Washington DC and she is hoping to see a hunger community focus group to look at the issues in Wilson County. The Hope Station is full at this time but they have seen a number of dismissals of residents because of violation of rules.

The Wesley Shelter: Lynne White stated they have also had some issues with residents not following the rules with some being dismissed. She noted that they are full also. Normally may be able to house up to 21 individuals with 8-week maximum duration possible depending on the family situation. There is some flexibility to address specific case situations and extensions. 162 women and children were housed last year with the average length of stay at 32 days. The Wesley Shelter notified the committee that they will not be applying for the ESG grant next year.

Candice noted that WCDSS along with the Block of Hope was awarded the Strengthening Families Grant. This will allow funding for two more years to work with families. WCDSS has decided to continue to have a full time Parenting Coordinator position though Barbara Evens recently left the agency. This position is open and it is posted to be filled. Candice noted that WCDSS is working to bring back Domestic Violence training at some point in the near future.

Veterans Residential Services: Diane Brought pamphlets for everyone outlining some of their services. She announced they have opened a clothing closet to help veterans in need of clothing and furnishings. She noted they have two veterans with apartments who need household items and furniture.

The Wesley Shelter is celebrating their 30th anniversary and they will be sponsoring a Strong Soles 5K Run/Walk and a 30 Yard Men Pump it Up Dash (for men in heels) on May 4th at First Presbyterian Church. Activities begin at 9:00 A.M. and will include fun things for children.

CDC: They have a food pantry that is open Tuesday and Thursdays. People can come if they have a pictured identification and social security card. They are opening a new deli/ice cream shop in the old Terminal Drug Store building located on Nash Street.

Marty Stebbins, St Timothy’s Episcopal Church: Marty provided the following web address to for committee members to review.

<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/homeless/icchp.htm>

Candice announced that this Saturday is the Kids on the Lawn event at the Wilson Public Library. Everyone is invited to attend.

Our next BoS CoC Committee meeting will be held on May 21, 2013 @ 10:00am. The Wesley Shelter has again graciously offered the use of their conference room.