**SOUTHWESTERN REGIONAL HOMELESS COALITION MEETING**

**APRIL 16, 2013**

In attendance: Kristi Case, Smoky Mountain Center; Ashley Freeman, Reach of Macon County, Brenda Cormack, New Life Women’s Center in Hayesville, Lynne DeLuca, Smoky Mountain Center, Cheryl Wilkins, Mountain Projects, Bart O’Sullivan and Debra Clarke , Friendship House, Jeremy Lance from DSS Cherokee County, Rhonda Pratt, Reach of Cherokee County.

The meeting was held at the Hurlburt- Johnson Friendship House in Murphy, N.C.

The group discussed about the transition of leadership from Kristi Case to Bart O’Sullivan. The first order of duties was for Debra Clarke to take the minutes for today’s meeting.

We discussed the need to attend the Balance of State conference calls that occur on the first Tuesday of every month. This is necessary for the regional leaders.

Kristi informed us that the PIT counts are now available for anyone that is interested. There was an increase and the reason for this was because there were more un-sheltered counts this time. Also there was an increase in available beds. HUD wants households with children to decrease, so we need to work on solutions to do that. We talked about whether we want to participate in the un-sheltered counts.

We discussed concerns about HPRP and the rapid-rehousing dollars. How is that doing? We discussed how to use the money and who is eligible for the rapid-rehousing monies, verifying that they must fall under the definition of homelessness before we can help.

We were informed about Open Door soup kitchen in Waynesville, and their intent to work with the Haywood Christian Shelter which currently operates during the cold weather season to transition into a year-round shelter.

There was a discussion about SOAR training and Debra Clarke agreed that she would take the class as that would be a great asset for the residents at their shelter.

We talked about how to end homelessness by working together and enlist the help from elected officials, contractors, or landlords to increase housing to then decrease homelessness. Build awareness in the communities about lack of housing.

Lynn and Kristy are working on affordable housing, working with private investors. Possibly, there are seven apartments available in Haywood County with one unit being handicapped accessible. The affordable housing consultant will work with the investor to determine feasibility for bringing these units up to code.

Smoky Mountain Center accepted 5 people for Shelter Plus Care housing program, 1 housed. HJFH, has 14 residents (7 children and 7 adults). We have Joyce Bernier starting on May 5th, 2013. Mountain Projects has 4 clients in Rapid Re-Housing. HUD has cut their rental assistance funding. REACH of Macon County has 4 people (two women and two children). Women’s New Life Center has 3 adults and one child. REACH of Cherokee County has 2 women in shelter and 1 adult and 1 child in transitional housing.

Our next schedule meeting will be held on May 16, 2013 at the Macon County Resource Center at 10.00 a.m. It is located at 108 Wayah Street, and their phone number is 828-349-0211.