

Homeless Liaison Committee Minutes

Date and Time

Tuesday, September 18th, 2012 11:00AM-12:00PM

Location

Homeless Services Center, 140 Central Street, Manchester, NH

Attendees

Chris Emerson	Bill Sullivan	Doreen Brown	Katie Simpson
Dave Carroll	Jocelyne Pinsonneault	Jacob Hull	Abby Easterly

Outreach Activities: Updates

- Outreach activities need to be reorganized and more consistent.
- There are new camps up in the city, such as Livingston and Second Street.
- An Outreach group will meet on Wednesday afternoons at New Horizons.
 - The first meeting will be Wednesday, September 26, 2012 at 1:45pm.
 - Call Jake if you are unable to attend.
- The Police/Highway Dept. recently swept through the city and cleared out some of the camps.
- Jocelyne contacted local campgrounds about homeless residents and mailed them informational brochures to hand out.
- The Saturday and Sunday morning breakfasts held in Veteran's Park by Do You Know Him Ministries is beginning to get families with children.
 - They do not want anyone there with children under the age of 12.
 - It is an unsafe environment for families.

Homeless Services Center: News/Updates

- The number of individuals visiting the Center is rising.
 - Average in July was 150, average in August was 166, and September has already surpassed the 166/day average.
 - Numbers for lunch are rising as well.
- The Center got rid of the picnic tables outside.
 - The tables were broken and taking up room needed for the trash bins.
 - More importantly, they were causing problems for the Center.
 - Dealings, sleeping, etc.
- Individuals visiting the Center are being asked more and more to help out around the place.
 - This helps them to increase their life skills and job skills.
- Chris has started to do more intake with individuals as they enter the Center.
- Chris is also teaching a Service Learning course with Southern NH.
 - Some students will be placed at the Center to help out.
- The Center has a Reading Program, Art Class, and is possibly developing a newsletter.
- Only 20% of the individuals (considered truly homeless by definition) who were at the Center in August 2011 were still at the Center in August 2012.
- On average, half of the individuals that come to the Center are out within three months.

Street Newspaper

- We have someone interested in funding this project.

- Homeless individuals become the vendors and sell the papers.
 - They keep 75% of the profits.
- The paper needs businesses interested in advertising in it.
- The students working at the Homeless Services Center could possibly help organize.
- This may also create work for a VISTA position.
- Kyle has offered to help with the online portion of the newspaper.

General Discussion/Updates

- Abby has offered to sit in on informational meeting about IDA programs and Match Savings done for education – NH matches the individual's savings 3 to 1.
 - Those participating can always remove their own money from the savings, but they are unable to remove the matched savings unless they reach their goal.
 - Angie's has a similar program – individuals pay more in rent, and receive that money back later as savings.
- NH is now requiring individuals to have an ID to vote.
 - Many homeless individuals do not have IDs.
 - Chris will ask around the Center and find out whether this is an issue for many people.
 - FIT and The Way Home will generally help individuals get IDs.
- Springfield College is beginning to get a bad reputation.
 - The college is giving credits out for life experiences.
 - There are a high number of Springfield graduates who end up unemployed and even homeless.
- Another goal of the committee is increasing outreach to minority groups in the city.
 - Possibly having a Spanish-speaking individual on the committee.

Homeless Representative

- The committee is required by the Continuum to have homeless representatives as members.
- The committee could have a representative come in and speak with the group at each meeting.
- Don, a member of the Center, joined the meeting and spoke with the members about issues the homeless in Manchester are dealing with currently.
 - He believes there is a huge drug issue in Manchester.
 - There needs to be more emphasis on disease prevention.
 - Possibly by providing drug kits, safety/how-to classes, and needle exchanges to the homeless.
 - Hepatitis C is becoming a real issue in Manchester.
 - On the weekends the homeless have no place to use the restroom.
 - There ends up being human waste throughout the city.
 - The parks will not open their restrooms on the weekends.
 - Manchester could benefit from a better Labor Ready program.
 - A van picks individuals up from a shelter and takes them to the work site.
 - They keep part of your pay and create a savings for you.
 - Portsmouth has a successful program.
 - The city is very unfriendly toward the homeless.
 - Apartment costs are much higher in Manchester than in other areas.
 - Individuals would benefit from bus passes to get to areas of the city other than the downtown to look for jobs.



- There is also an issue with the homeless young adults/teenagers mugging the older/middle-aged homeless.

Minutes Prepared By

Katie Simpson

Manchester Continuum of Care Coordinator, VISTA