

Public Policy Committee Minutes

Date and Time

Tuesday, September 17th, 2013 9:00AM-10:00AM

Location

The Way Home, 214 Spruce Street, Manchester, NH 03103

Attendees

Dianne Pitts

Kyle Beaulieu

Erik Wirkkala

Christiane Wolski

Jocelyne Pinsonneault

August Minutes Approved

Jocelyne's Last Meeting

- After officially giving her resignation in August, Jocelyne informed us that this meeting would be her last Public Policy meeting as committee chair.
 - The announcement about the open position will be made at General Assembly, 9/19 with a vote held in at G.A. 10/17.
 - It has been mentioned that someone from Housing Action NH would be a good fit for this committee.
 - They are very busy, however, and may not be able to devote extra time to chair a committee.

Discharge Policy and Inmate Outreach

- Public Policy's main focus has been bridging the gap between prison/jail and housing.
- Recently, Paul. H. Cote, ATR Care Coordinator of NH DOC (Community Corrections) reached out to Kyle at N.H. Coalition to End Homelessness.
 - He is looking for more resources to help inmates when discharged.
 - He also wanted a better awareness of the services and programs offered in the Concord and Manchester areas.
 - He will be attending Balance of State CoC meetings and sending someone to the MCoC meeting.
 - MCoC VISTA will reach out and invite this person.
- Christiane stated that any female inmate may also apply to Angie's.
 - Apply, phone interview, check with case worker/ counselor.
- Dianne said that she knew of a client scheduled for discharge from a local half-way house who refused to be discharged into homelessness, as this is illegal.
- Institutions are required to house clients until they secure housing, employment, etc.
 - Many inmates or half-way house residents do not know it is illegal to discharge someone into homelessness.

Dorothea Advocacy Project

- Boston’s women’s shelter, Rosie’s Place, awarded a recent law school graduate a \$40,000 fellowship to begin the Dorothea Advocacy Project.
 - This project pairs women who are or were formerly incarcerated and who also have mental health issues with legal advocates to help them reacclimatize to life outside of prison.
 - We are also thinking of contacting the woman leading this project for collaboration/advice.
 - Follow the link for the complete article. <http://bo.st/16EVICa>

Homeless students entering college

- Members of the NH Teen Task Force are working to bridge the gap between high school and college for homeless students.
- The goal is to establish a single point contact at the colleges/universities (SPOC) in order to provide resources and services to homeless students.
 - Many colleges leave dorms open for foreign students and students i.e. students involved in sports, bands etc.
 - They are trying to expand this policy to schools who do not already offer housing over breaks.

Minutes Prepared By

Erik Wirkkala
Manchester Continuum of Care, VISTA