

**Greater Virginia Peninsula Continuum of Care Council
Task Force on Homelessness Meeting, Mary Immaculate Hospital
November 17, 2009 Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Attendees

ACCESS – S Walls-Beegle, A Bradshaw Avalon – S Meacham HNNCSB – D Schwartz, R Pierce HDC HR – Sr. David Ann JCC Housing & Comm Develop – A Taylor HELP – L Davis LINK of HR – N Vollette, L Finding, R Harrison, A Bartlett Menchville House – S Jones, T Harmon Natasha House – S Melvin, R Vick, K Eckstein NN DHS - J Kirsch, W Harrison	NN Development Office – T Wilson Office of Human Affairs – B Lester PHRI, Inc – H Holmes, B Harvey PICH – E Lemon The Planning Council - J Dixon, J Cohen The Salvation Army, Peninsula – R Hertzly, T Satchell Transitions – M Wright VAMC – D Wall, M Chick-Evey WJCC Comm Action Agency – R Bolden Wmsbg DHS – J Coles York Co Housing Division – T Keefer
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Welcome – Sarah Meacham

Introductions of persons attending the meeting

Meeting Minutes from October 20, 2009 were not reviewed and will be included at the next meeting.

Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing: City of Newport News

The City of Newport News received an award of \$659,00 for direct financial assistance. Agencies that were awarded contracts to provide intake, case management or other services are:

- ACCESS AIDS
- Office of Human Affairs
- Transitions
- HNNCSB
- The Salvation Army
- LINK

The program was announced in the newspaper and there is a very high amount of client calls and requests for assistance. Some homeless provider agencies expressed their concern about the delays in starting the HPRP for the City of Newport News. There was also a concern that the program design submitted in the application and approved was now being changed without provider input. In particular, the approval by the SCAT members of each case and timeline were brought up. To date, agencies are awaiting their fully executed contracts with the City to begin the program. Trish Wilson and Joel Kirsch heard the provider concerns and promised to try and arrange a meeting with other City officials to finalize details of each program, the referral and approval process, budgets, etc.

The regional HPRP that is being managed by HNNCSB was launched in November. Funds are available at the Department of Social / Human Services within each jurisdiction.

Coordinated Services Committee – The street sheet is being updated. Dee Schwartz announced she will not continue as Co-Chair since she now has to participate on the HMIS Committee.

Housing Development Committee – The committee is reviewing the mission statement and current work plan to determine how many activities are realistic for the committee. Family Unification Vouchers will begin to be available in July 2010 in Newport News with referrals from NN Dept of Human Services.

HMIS Committee – The committee will meet immediately following the Taskforce meeting. Agencies continue to be trained and add licensed users.

Program Monitoring Committee – The application to HUD is being finalized and should be submitted by Monday, November 23rd. There are 9 projects requesting Renewal funding as well as the New project application from Avalon for 10 Permanent Housing units for families with disabilities. The Committee also discussed HPRP design and set up a schedule to begin monitoring each project's performance on a monthly basis beginning in January 2010.

Other Business

1. Jessica Park (jpark@theplanningcouncil.org; 757-622-9268 ext 3003) was just hired at The Planning Council as the new Continuum of Care Coordinator and will begin work on November 18th. She will be introduced to the Taskforce members shortly after settling in.
2. The Point in Time (24-hour) Count of homeless persons will take place statewide the last Wed & Thursday of January. Members discussed the benefits of participating this year and it was decided to go forward with the planning of the Count. Dee Schwartz will work with Christopher Newport University to utilize student volunteers again. Jessica Park will work with Dee and other PIT committee members to coordinate and implement the Count. Sites previously not targeted – the Northern Peninsula in particular – will be included as various members have noted places where homeless are sleeping.
3. PHRI introduced their intent to become involved in the Continuum and provide services to the homeless. Their original intent was to operate a Day Shelter but are finding there are zoning and other issues in doing that.

Round Table Updates

1. PORT winter shelter is open since November 4th. (<http://www.linkhr.org/>) and is full, housing over 80 persons each night. Wrap-around services are available on-site. There is a noticeable increase in young and very old persons seeking shelter. Many are also due to recent evictions.
2. The Salvation Army is currently assisting several households due to the storm last week and displacement.
3. Newport News has hired a Housing Specialist, Wendy Harrison, who will be recruiting landlords that provide affordable housing to households assisted by the Dept of Human Services and other homeless agencies. Wendy will be part of a two-person team and the second individual begins work in December.
4. The Veterans Affairs is now enforcing its policy of zero tolerance for homeless vets and taking referrals for Vets with honorable or other discharges (excluding dishonorable) for housing. However, only honorable discharge Vets can receive medical and support services.
5. Malachi House, operated by the VA, which provides 14 transitional housing units for women and women with children, has opened. If the units do not remain full with female Vets then males will also be considered. Contact David Wall for more information.
6. Menchville House has three single rooms for females and can also take infants. The mother must be employed to be eligible.

7. Avalon shelters are full.
8. Project Onward, funded by HUD last year and operated by the HNNCSB, is looking at space to begin placing chronic homeless individuals soon.

Meeting Adjourned – 1:55 pm.