

S3 Housing Connect Meeting Notes
May 10, 2018
Lee County Government Center, Gordon Wicker Room

Attendees: Michelle Bates, Mary Ann Gaster, Dick Poletti, Kendra Martin, Cindy Hall, Brooke Bruner, Alton Vann Jr, Carla Carpenter, Gabby Murillo, Amy Dalrymple, Sherry Shudra, Tamara Brogan, Marilyn Gilliam, Chet Mann, Johnnye Waller, Leo Ficht, Emily Schwartz, Brenda Clegg, Tami Carter, Kate Rumely, Terry Allebaugh, Jefferey Rawlings, Zach Horner, Bill Horner III, Charmaine Earnest, Adrienne Mullinax, Karen Kennedy, Marshall Downey and Rachel Picard

Welcome and Introductions, Agenda Review

Jefferey Rawlings called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. New members were introduced. The mission statement was read.

Report about County Commissioners Presentation, Mayor Mann

On Monday, May 7, Mayor Mann made a presentation to the County Commissioners highlighting the progress of *S3 Housing Connect* to date and the goals and initiatives the group is centered on for the next few months. The presentation was a strategy to show a case for investment in the local homelessness initiative to be shared by local government, service providers and private fundraising opportunities. The Mayor responded to multiple questions and concerns raised by several commissioners and agreed to provide additional information to them at a later date. A video clip with *S3 Housing Connect* members was also a part of the presentation.

Review of Community Partner Breakfast, Tami Carter

On April 18th, the Service Provision committee hosted a community wide breakfast. Several people in the community representing different services and resources were invited. The goal for this breakfast was to establish a rapport in the community. 95 invitations were sent out and 42 people attended. Central Carolina Hospital sponsored the breakfast and hosted at their facility. The breakfast began with a slideshow presentation to show faces of homelessness and what is happening in our community. It was expressed that the goal is “to not give a handout, but to give a hand up”. After the slideshow, a powerpoint was presented. It described what *S3 Housing Connect* is. At the programs end, mini compact mirrors were handed out. The mirrors showed “the face of homelessness”, and the point was to demonstrate the fact that anyone looking in the mirror could potentially be homeless. The event was very successful.

Report from *Bringing it Home* State Homelessness Conference, Jefferey Rawlings and S3 Housing Connect attendees

The North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness and the Housing Coalition conducted a state conference in Raleigh. A group of *S3 Housing Connect* members attended. Terry Allebaugh and Jefferey Rawlings were presenters at the conference. This conference helped defy typical notions about homelessness, and helped everyone to realize that most of us are one or two paychecks away from being homeless. The conference started as a group setting, then had a keynote speaker give a presentation and then broke off into concurrent sessions. Jefferey stayed with Track One, which was a presentation about reducing barriers and creating housing-focused shelters. Sanford has high criteria and barriers for the homeless to get into local shelters. A lot of places in Lee County have the mindset that bad choices equate to not receiving assistance. At the conference, it became clear that Lee County is very behind because of this mindset. An example of this is that there should be no time period where people are not allowed to stay in shelters, but some shelters in Lee County have a 30 day waiting period. Jefferey said “asking people to get well before we help them makes no sense. It’s like asking people to get well before they go to the hospital.” We have to challenge the shelters and ask questions to try to get them to change their ways. Karen Kennedy said that Terry Allebaugh led a group called Champions for Change, and that was the most impactful part of the conference for her. Formerly homeless people who made a change presented their stories. They then asked how many people in the room had been formerly homeless, and the amount of people who stood was powerful. Tami Carter agreed that Champions for Change stood out the most. She also said that when they discussed coordinated assessment and having local agencies work together, Sanford was right on track. Tamara Brogan went to the Putting the Pieces Together workshop which discussed the history of homelessness. She also went to a workshop about trauma and stress (also known as Trauma Informed Care), which helped to teach what the homeless are experiencing. Next she went to a workshop about homelessness and where that ranks in budgets. Dick Poletti asked how to separate people who are looking for handouts from those who just want “handups”, and how to ensure they don’t take people who need help’s spots. Jefferey said we can’t ensure that, and we need to accept that there will be abuse in the system. We can’t stop what we are doing because of the abusers, because there are far fewer who abuse than there who actually need. There is no way to filter because at that point you would be making a judgement, and it is not our place to make that call. Tamara added that we have to remember we are helping children, so we should always give benefit of the doubt. Furthermore, shelter should never have conditions as long as no one is in danger. Services can be slightly different and they have to be wanted. However, as a humanitarian, we have to give shelter always because our top goal is to prevent anyone from dying. At this point Jefferey shared his personal story of being homeless to drive home the point of how necessary it is that we help everyone and take this responsibility seriously.

Taking up the Challenge: Deepening our Understanding of the Systems Response to Homelessness, Terry Allebaugh

Ending homelessness is a big, yet sometimes frustrating job and we have to maintain a growth mindset. Adding the word “yet” to sentences creates a growth mindset. For example, “I have not achieved my goal *yet*.” The three things needed to end homelessness are affordable housing, appropriate services, and an adequate income.

Six for Six Committee Reports

• Data and Metrics

Emily Schwartz stated their last meeting was a joint effort with Community Engagement. They want to hold a breakfast event in downtown Sanford or Tramway to bring the community in. Ideally, different committees could host the event in different locations. We could have items to give away and hopefully assist with ID cards. We could collect basic information, such as name, age, etc. Data and Metrics created a volunteer waiver for all events. Emily spoke with the NCCEH to get access to something used in California that tracks interaction between the homeless, jails, and police. It also tracks spending. This could be used to track interaction and spending here.

• Housing

Karen Kennedy said their biggest project is the landlord outreach program. Durham is a model for landlord outreach programs. At the last Housing meeting there were four landlords, a builder, and a developer. They discussed that finding landlords to work with service providers is a key step, and asked when a good time would be to reach out to landlords. Another goal is to find long term affordable housing. They will be partnering with another committee soon to look further into this. Dick Poletti asked about implementing a three cent tax increase, and if we have looked into this. Karen said that was the first thing we looked into, but because Sanford/Lee County’s population is so low it would take a long time to build up that pot of money. Charmaine Earnest said that big time developers don’t have to be involved, it is just about making whatever is being built affordable. Terry said that one of the Champions for Change is living in a fourplex specifically for families moving out of shelter. The landlord makes some profit and it meets demand, but it’s made a huge difference for these families. Marshall Downey added that an update to land policy is being added, and a developer friendly approach has been adopted to make it easier for local government to partner with local developers. Marilyn Gilliam asked if we have any information on tiny homes and if they could be insured. Charmaine said the city has all of the information on insuring tiny houses, but tiny houses on wheels definitely are not allowed in the current zoning regulations. There is a whole market of insurance for “stick built houses”, or tiny houses on a slab.

- **Low Barrier Shelter**

Sherry Shudra said that Bread of Life is looking for options so they can continue working over the summer. They need a way to address the heat. Bill Hicks is working with the city to develop a plan for air conditioning and to solicit bids for funding. Bread of Life will also be working with Terry to build capacity. Their kitchen was recently refurbished by funding from BB&T. They are also working with a plumbing contractor to make separate showering areas for men and women. HAVEN is creating a list of resources for people willing to help with homelessness.

- **Community Engagement**

This committee met with Data and Metrics for their last meeting so they have the same report. They also worked with Service Provision committee for the Community Partner Breakfast.

- **Resource Development**

Tamara Brogan said that Irene Smith has been working with Bill Hicks to get presentations ready for finding funding and to get documents ready for grants. Irene will be training two volunteers in grant writing. At their last meeting they discussed the homeless workers program. Johnston Lee Harnett Community Action has volunteered to take that on, and a proposal has been submitted to the city. They also discussed Bread of Life's need for air conditioning. Karen Kennedy will be putting together a bid package for that need. As a committee they went over potential fundraising plans to prepare S3 Housing Connect to go into the community and seek funds. They also looked over project proposals from S3 members.

- **Service Provision**

Community Engagement assisted this committee with hosting the community breakfast. At their last meeting they reviewed the breakfast and discussed landlord outreach.

Other Business, Closing Remarks, Adjourn

Jefferey reminded everyone that the effects of homelessness linger for years after people experience it. We need to stay focused and stay driven. For the rest of the year all S3 Housing Connect meetings will be held in the Gordon Wicker room. Bill Horner gave a hiring update and told a story about Crossroads Recovery Mission in Hastings. Gabby Murillo made a comment that not everyone is as passionate about helping the homeless as we are, and we need to focus more on how we are helping people.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.