

### ***S3 Housing Connect Meeting Notes***

**August 10, 2018**

#### **Lee County Government Center- Gordon Wicker Room**

**Attendees:** Mary Ann Gaster, David Whitaker, Lesa Price, Bob Finch, Max Dolan, Earl Murphy, Laura Spivey, Chet Mann, Michelle Bates, Chris Kelley, Sherry Shudra, Tamela Carter, Brenda Clegg, Betsy Jungkind, Adrienne Mullinax, Hamer Carter, Kendra Martin, Cindy Hall, Wayne Chew, Sherry Grello, Dick Poletti, Pam Gordon, Marcia Johnson, Claire Hunt, Marilyn Gilliam, Beth Kelly, Emily Schwartz, Brooke Bruner, Heather Garrity, Pat Hawes, Carla Carpenter, Bob Hughes, John Paschal, Gabby Murillo, Karen Kennedy, Marshall Downey, Rachel Picard, and Jeffrey Rawlings

#### **Welcome and Introductions, Mission Statement- Jeffrey Rawlings, Chair**

All meeting attendees introduced themselves. Everyone read aloud the mission statement.

#### **Membership Items- Welcome New Voting Members- Pamela Glover & Max Dolan**

Jeffrey R. introduced Max Dolan as a new member to the task force and welcomed him to the meeting. Pamela Glover and Max Dolan were voted in as new members during the July meeting. Ms. Glover was unable to attend the meeting today.

#### **Coordinated Entry Update and Recommendation, Kendra Martin, United Way & Jeffrey Rawlings (Item for Vote)**

Jeffrey yielded his chair to Betsy Jungkind in order to discuss this topic. Kendra Martin gave a brief overview of 211 and Mecklenburg County's service plan. Service Provision committee is recommending this system be brought to Lee County. The United Way Board will vote on funding 211 for the upcoming year. At September's S3 meeting, Heather Black will come explain how the upgraded tier service will operate locally and respond to additional questions/comments at that time. Operators will be trained on the local service providers to better respond to questions from local citizens. In addition, the calls for service and data collected will assist with grants, funding, and planning. Jeffrey added that the current 10 location entry point systems have further displayed some "holes" in local service provision needs, especially when weekend needs arise. Hopefully, 211 will make this better. 211 will be updated to include all information and will have a live person on the phone that knows Lee County's data. Chet Mann asked "If a citizen asks for help on the street can we call 211 for them?" Kendra said yes, we would want them to call 211 from any available phone. This will take pressure off all of the coordinated entry points. Wayne Chew asked if the trained call specialist would be housed in Lee County, but Kendra said no, they would be at one of two call centers in North Carolina. Betsy asked if we would need to worry about funding for the second year of 211, and Kendra stated there may be opportunities for grant funding to assist with future costs. Wayne asked what the relationship will be with HMIS. Kendra said the 211 operator will start a HMIS file so an agency will know what the need is, then the agency will finish the HMIS file. Kendra added the importance of this is that no matter what entry point a client starts at, they'll still have to be entered into HMIS and this removes a burden from staff at entry points. Jeffrey explained why homeless people have to be verified as homeless. Right

now HUD is asking us if all 10 entry points are verifying people as homeless and in Sanford; we're not currently. Marilyn G. asked if other counties are using this system. Jeffrey said only counties that are paying for it are receiving the full service. If we begin the program here now, maybe it would encourage other counties to follow our lead. Sherry Shudra added that 211 is a tremendous help to agencies who currently receive calls all the time and in addition, it provides better statistics than we could gather on our own. HAVEN took 188 general homeless calls last year which slows down their ability to service their domestic violence clients. Kendra added 211 is doing this process with us, not for us, so we'll have lots of input to design the plan for our needs. Furthermore, 211 has multiple language options available.

**Jeffrey R. made a motion to approve pursuing the enhanced 211 Tier locally and Tami C. seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **Conversation about Homelessness in Downtown Sanford, Inc. - Pam Gordon, DSI Chair**

Downtown Sanford, Inc. sent a letter to the City of Sanford officials concerning issues from 11 PM to 6 AM in Depot Park. This was not specifically about homelessness, but that is part of it. DSI wants to place signs in Depot Park addressing various issues of concern. Several individuals sleep throughout the day and night in the park on the stage, benches, etc. Another concern has been some of the people remaining in the park all day have been known to wash clothes in the fountain and hang them on the park perimeter fence railings. The bathrooms have been closed for some time due to damage and abuse of the rooms.

Depot Park is considered the "jewel of downtown", and a lot of money has been spent to make the park a nice addition to downtown. Therefore, we need to make an effort to keep it nice. One of DSI's goals is to ensure the park remains in good condition and welcoming to all who want to visit. Many groups that visit the park include children and the appearance of it being unsafe or unclean is not the way it should be viewed. Due to these concerns, DSI wants to form a partnership with *S3 Housing Connect* to help with addressing individuals in the park if they are homeless. Jeffrey said homeless people go to the park because it's a safe place. It's also a central place for them to receive services. Pam G. asked if additional police presence would be beneficial for helping people feel safe and Max Dolan said yes, as long as the police aren't arresting anyone for loitering or vagrancy. Bob Finch was concerned about DSI's view of the issues and needs of homeless individuals. Gabby Murillo asked if a shower is currently operating at any low barrier shelter and John Paschal said no. Gabby felt that it isn't fair to criminalize people for showering and/or washing clothes in fountains if they have nowhere else to go locally. It was suggested that DSI continue to pursue options about this subject and work with local service providers and S3 to assist with their concerns.

### **Discussion about Fundraising & Monetary Donation Collection- Karen Kennedy and Beth Kelly**

Karen Kennedy explained several of the reasons for hesitations about making S3 a nonprofit entity and financial concerns with handling of funds, non-profit board management, etc. When funds for S3 are given to local nonprofits and agencies for various projects, the group should make every effort possible

to research the financial practices and ensure funds will be handled responsibly. The original intent of the task force was for any funds accumulated through S3 efforts to be voted on by the task force for disbursements. Karen introduced Beth Kelly, the City's Finance Director, to further discuss what it means when the City of Sanford manages funds from fundraisers on behalf of S3. Beth Kelly stated that money could be handled as a designated S3 line item but reminded the group- if it comes through the city it has to follow procurement policies on how it's spent, there's time delays in fund disbursements, w-9 and 1099 paperwork for payees and audit requirements. Also, contributions more than likely would not be tax deductible. Beth reinforced anyone should check with their personal accountant concerning tax deductions. The City is not saying it is unwilling to manage the S3 funds; just wants everyone to know that this decision is one that is being researched and discussed by City Staff often on the best way to proceed while taking everything into consideration for the good of the group. Kendra Martin asked if there could be a fiscal sponsor and Karen said we don't know who is qualified to do that at this moment but this could definitely be researched for future collaborations. Gabby Murillo asked if the city would stop being as involved if S3 became a nonprofit, and Chet Mann said, no, the city would stay very involved with the process.

### **Funding Opportunities for Outreach Mission, Inc. - Jeffrey Rawlings**

Outreach Mission representatives stated that they took on the new low barrier approach but the demands on the current staffing and facilities are being realized every day. Anytime individuals live in close proximity to each other, issues often arise. The financial demands are increasing and donations for the organization aren't, at the same pace. Outreach Mission is working on a media fundraising campaign to include a GoFundMe option immediately. Earl Murphy gave examples of good things happening in the shelters and why money is needed to assist with their efforts. The OMI Board continues to be supportive and positive about the work of OMI. 84 people are in jobs and housing from Outreach Mission's efforts right now. Max Dolan added the shelters have been operating on less than \$30,000 a year from local donations.

### **Six for Six Committee Reports**

#### **Data & Metrics- Emily Schwartz**

There will be a community outreach event on September 6<sup>th</sup> in Depot Park and the Food Lion Tramway Area. The committee also created a PIT count infographic and is collecting facts and statistics for Cow Patty Bingo promotions.

#### **Low Barrier Shelter- Sherry Shudra**

At their last meeting the committee discussed low barrier transitions and how to bring together partnerships. A needs assessment for beds, housing, and community is being looked into with North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness. This will assist when local decisions about shelter development are pursued. There is also discussion about merging the Interagency Committee, which has been meeting to discuss local shelter options and collaborations, into the Low Barrier Shelter committee.

**Community Engagement- Cindy Hall**

Cindy discussed past meeting highlights and efforts for cow patty event promotions. A t-shirt order form was passed around to everyone that wanted to purchase an S3 T-shirt! Cindy encouraged everyone to assist with ticket sales and event promotions.

**Service Provision- Tami Carter**

At their meeting they discussed 211, the service provider network, and hosting a Jobseekers job fair, similar to the ones Salvation Army has handled in the past. Tami stated she is still waiting on final HMIS upgrades from State agencies for future training to entry points.

**Resource Development- Rachel Picard**

Rachel presented a PowerPoint on Cow Patty Bingo ticket sales and event promotions. Members were encouraged to take tickets to sale and/or purchase tickets. Karen let everyone know how much she appreciated Rachel's enthusiasm and cow costume appearances for the promotions. Join S3's Facebook and watch her promotions.

**Housing- Bob Hughes**

This committee is currently focused on landlord engagement. Bob assisted with a VolunteerLee account for S3 Housing Connect. Karen K. and Shannon J. are preparing grant applications to the Department of Commerce and NC Housing Finance Agency for the Linden Avenue project. This project will rehabilitate an abandoned daycare, into affordable housing units with a preference to homeless individuals. The Sanford Housing Authority will remain as owner and manager of the units.

**Closing Remarks and Adjourn**

Jeffrey reminded everyone to check out Outreach Mission's website and Facebook.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.