

Coordinating Committee to End Homelessness (CCEH) Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2009
First United Methodist Church

Facilitated by: Jean DeMaster and Marc Jolin

Recorded by: Dove Hotz

Reviewed By: Steering Committee

Present: Chiquita Rollins, Patty Doyle, Wendy Kohn, Heather Mosher, Sonja Arigbon, Cassie Matsuzaki, Gloria Willis, Brad Gibson, Cindy Davis, Randy Curl, Kristin Kane, Erin Dougherty, Heidi Stoner, Dixie Hedge, E.V. Armitage, Steven Keenan, Ken Loyd, Rachel Post, Natasha Roe, Shannon Singleton, Jean DeMaster, Annabeth Moseley, Renata Wilson, Mike McGee, Amanda Hurley, Rick Stolker, Janet Smith, Caitlin Campbell, Gina Montenegro, Larry Turner, Mindy Stone, David Krizz, Heather Brown, Patrick Johnson, Susan Montgomery, Liv Jenssen, Ian Slingerland, Beth Kaye, Bryan Swisshelm, Jennifer Chang, Tiffany Kingery, Marc Jolin.

Introductions / New agencies

Ms. DeMaster asked if there was anyone in attendance who had not participated before. Janet Smith of East Hill Church in Gresham said they were looking into hosting a warming center or day center.

Approval of October minutes

Approved without dissent.

Updates

Severe Weather Planning

Ms. Chang reported that the winter season begins November 1 and ends March 31. Last winter, we experienced an unprecedented winter of cold, severe weather. Many community partners worked together to organize a strong response to helping get people inside and out of the cold. Portland Housing Bureau (PHB) has coordinated with Portland Office of Emergency Management (POEM), 211info, American Red Cross and other providers and partners to finalize the Standard Operating Procedures for 2009-10. The weather triggers are slightly warmer than last year. PHB will be the central source for monitoring the weather and issuing a Severe Weather Alert if the criteria are met. Once an alert is declared, PHB will contact 211info, who in turn will send out the message to all key providers and partners. PHB will also communicate with the Red Cross, who will open a minimum of 150 emergency warming center beds. Transportation for homeless individuals will be available, and coordinated through a “drop off” area at Union Gospel Mission (15 NW 3rd), which will be open from 8:30pm to 9:30pm on each day of Severe Weather. More information on housing and services for homeless individuals and families are on the document “Winter Housing and Day Services FY 2009-2010”.

Alternatives Workgroup Initiatives

The workgroup had hoped to have the top initiatives in place by November 1, but they are still being worked on. The warming centers are in place, which is great. The two priority alternatives were the Eugene model and the revised camping guidelines. Many discussions have taken place, and there has been a lot of interest, but nothing has officially gone to Council as of today. The camping guidelines are delayed pending a lawsuit.

Ms. Kohn from Kwamba Productions reported that they started an email advocacy campaign focused on the theme that “a decent night’s sleep is a human necessity.” She and Ms. Mosher drafted a petition available at www.change.org, requesting Commissioners Fish and Kafoury, and Mayor Adams, to consider and adopt reasonable policies to ensure that homeless people have a safe place to sleep. Some items included are: adopting camping guidelines, having the police not target expired tags on cars containing homeless people, and other suggestions. Ms. Kohn encouraged others to read and sign the petition and also pass it along to their networks. In other news, the PAW Team is working on helping agencies and individuals with pet boarding.

SHARE Project

Ms. Rollins reported on this CDC-funded study. They are in their fifth year, studying victims of intimate partner violence who have sought services. Housing is critical to helping them, and the study tests the effectiveness of a unique model that combines housing with advocacy supportive services. She described the study design and reported on the demographics. Most results have been very consistent with demographic trends typically seen in homeless populations. Many individuals may have a home of some sort, but they experience very unstable, and often unsafe, housing situations. Most of them suffer from extreme danger levels and high levels of PTSD. They use lots of services such as police and emergency rooms, and have generally lower levels of health than the average population. The next step in the study is to examine whether the services increase housing stability. Ms. Rollins mentioned that the definition of homelessness needs to be redefined, because many of the women do not fit many of the technical homeless criteria, but their experiences were often very similar and they are in need of very similar services. Ms. Rollins is willing and able to return to the group and present future findings from the study in six months.

Next Steps:

- Individuals or organizations who are interested in advocating for reasonable policies to ensure that homeless people have a safe place to sleep can join the email advocacy campaign led by Kwamba Productions. Go to: www.change.org.
- In 6 months time, CCEH will invite Ms. Rollins for a return visit to present on updated findings and data from the SHARE Project.