

## Homeless Coalition Minutes: 06/21/06

**Present:** James Breslin, Maureen Miernicki, John Allan, Tim Grippen, Leanne Spencer, Sarah Von Esch, Colleen Wagner, Beth Saxton, Karen Foley, Barbara Rick, Bernard Fleming, Mateo Garcia, Thomas Clifford, Sarah Smith, Terri Shields, Maria Collyacme, Terry Cole, Lucy Fleming, Justin Hoch, Rachele Courtright, Phill Ginter, Steve Randall

1. **Call to Order:** James Breslin called the meeting to order
2. **Introductions/Agency Updates:** YWCA-0 emergency beds 3 YWRAP beds, YMCA-2 beds, VOA 0 women's beds
3. **Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting:** Minutes were reviewed and approved by unanimous vote.
4. **Treasure's Report:** Rachele Courtright of MHAAT stated there were no changes since the last report of \$6,003.02.
5. **Subcommittee Reports:**
  - A. **HMIS:** Justin Hoch reported the VOA Men's Shelter has gone live and has begun collecting data. Justin and Jim Hulse are currently customizing the forms for the YWCA. The YWCA's Emergency beds will be first, followed by the rest of the programs.
  - B. **Continuum of Care Committee:** Terry Cole reported that the CoC elected new co-chairs; Nancy Johnson and Jamie Cocodrilli both of the YWCA. James recognized the exiting co-chairs Terry Cole and Cindy Nord for all their hard work this past year. Terry reported stated that the CoC had a debriefing on the HUD Panel Review process and will look at possibly revising the process due to extensive changes in the format of the HUD grant application. Terry recognized Justin Hoch for all his work on the grant, stating that he made it easy and pleasant and without him it would not have gone nearly as smoothly.
  - C. **Runaway and Homeless Youth Committee:** Karen Foley reported that the committee would meet tomorrow to continue discussing the introduction of the Community Readiness Model in Broome County. This would be the first time this model was implemented in New York State and they are working with Jim Bolus to assure its effectiveness. They are continuing to do a needs assessment and are sending consumer surveys to agencies to give to the youth to complete and send back, as well as sending surveys for the agencies themselves to complete. Discharge planning from the BC Jail will be discussed at tomorrow's meeting with the D/C planner from the jail to better serve RHY exiting jail. The committee also hopes to develop a protocol for the local police to use when encountering a RHY. In preparation for November which is National Runaway Prevention Month the committee is discussing ideas for something to recognize this, including creating an anthology book.
  - D. **Community Awareness Committee:** Maria Colleyacme reported that due to busy schedules, no meeting was held this month. The committee is still looking for new members. Maria has agreed to remain as the Co-chair of the committee. At the next meeting they will discuss plans for a recognition breakfast celebrating the Homeless Coalition's ten-year anniversary.
  - E. **Development Committee:** Tom Clifford reported that there will be a Homeless Coalition fundraiser at Sam's Club in Vestal on July 1<sup>st</sup> and a volunteer list was sent around. There will be an information table set up with info on the Homeless Coalition (tri-fold) and on any individual agencies that wish to bring their information. They are continuing work on the 5K run/walk scheduled for Saturday October 21, 2006, including looking into posters, shirts and food for the event. The committee needs new members. Steve Randall will have a banner made for the event.

- F. **Steering Committee:** James Breslin reported that the Community Thrift Store run by Les Platt raised \$234 from sales. Les will present to the Development committee about setting up something similar on a continual basis. The disinterested attorneys were again unable to make a presentation on 501©(3) issues, but will hopefully be able to do so at the next meeting. If they are unable to do so James Breslin will present and recuse himself from any voting on the issue.

**New Business:**

- James Breslin presented the state of the Coalition, stating that the last year had been very successful in terms of fundraising, bringing the balance of funds up approximately \$4,000. Also in the past year the media including television, radio and newspaper were used to bring greater awareness to the issues of homelessness and the work of the Coalition. This use of the media will continue, as the Coalition has standing offers from the media to utilize them whenever needed. The Coalition has had a website developed and over the next year will utilize the Internet even more. The HMIS system has begun to improve the data collection for the Coalition and will continue to do so as it is implemented in more agencies. The Coalition has reached out to “less active” groups in effort to get greater participation and SUNY Binghamton as well as C3 have raised money and donated personal items for use in the Cantina on Wheels. Issues that continue to need improvement and will be important in the coming year are increasing the job opportunities for homeless and previously homeless people. Lockheed Martin has already agreed to set aside jobs for the homeless and formerly homeless, but more companies could be persuaded to do the same. Transportation also remains an issue and while the Rescue Mission has helped a great deal with the use of their van to transport people to appointments, money still needs to be set-aside for this purpose. Also to be looked at in the coming year is a need for a RHY drop in center. Finally continued discussions with the faith based community need to be held regarding the development of shelters for the coming winter.
- The elections for the Homeless Coalition Co-Chairs were held. James Breslin, Beth Saxton and Tim Grippen were nominated and accepted.
- Elections for the remaining positions in the Coalition were held.
  - Keith Leahy was nominated for Treasurer and elected by unanimous vote, pending his acceptance of the position.
  - Maureen Miernicki was nominated for Secretary and elected by unanimous vote.
  - Mateo Garcia, Barbara Rick and Steve Randall were nominated for the at large Steering Committee members and elected by unanimous vote.
- Justin Hoch presented on the possibilities for the Homeless Coalition website. Currently the site is a single page on the Shelter Net site, but will eventually become it’s own site. The site can be used for any information, documents, announcements of events, pictures from events, or committee minutes/notes. Currently the listserv for E-Mail is through Yahoo, but this will also be moved to another server that will be automatic when people sign up. Eventually the site could also be used to advertise employment or volunteer opportunities within agencies.

**Old Business:**

- Update on the female veteran and her family, she received assistance through DSS and three American Legions and avoided eviction.
- Update on the Homeless 16 year old. The youth is currently being held in Broome county Jail due to an altercation at the hotel in Endicott where he was

being housed. Mateo has gone to visit him and the Rescue Mission will continue to do so on a weekly basis to ensure proper discharge planning.

**Announcements/Other Issues:**

- Sarah Smith of the YWCA stated that their new program “Today’s Journey” would begin taking applications immediately. It is a two-bed program for homeless women with one child accompanying them. The women need to have a diagnosis of Chemical Dependency and be recommended by their treatment providers to be in a Supportive Housing level of care. Nancy Johnson and Sarah will both be working with the women as well as staff on at night to ensure complete care.