

Homeless Coalition Emergency Meeting Minutes: 07/06/06

Present: James Breslin, Maureen Miernicki, Colleen Wagner, Beth Saxton, Karen Foley, Bernard Fleming, Maria Collyacme, Justin Hoch, Steve Randall, Steve Soma, Paul Graham, Lynne Webb, Mike Warren, Joe Gosney, Mary Lee **Cochnyo**

1. **Call to Order:** James Breslin called the meeting to order
2. **Agency Reports:**
 - A. **Broome County DSS:** Steve Randall reported that DSS Benefit workers went to the emergency shelter set-up at the Binghamton University Event Center to help process people for DSS benefits. Those that were applicable were provided with emergency food stamps, and given vouchers for ten days at an area motel. Steve transported the people with vouchers to the motels. There are also centers set up to help process people both at the Binghamton Senior High School and in Conklin.
 - B. **YWCA:** Maria reported the YWCA did not need to evacuate. They are at full capacity, but they can accommodate more people if absolutely necessary.
 - C. **County Executive's Office:** Colleen reported that they have fielded lots of calls through the Office For Aging and appear to be in serious need of both short and long term housing options. Colleen suggested that the available resources for housing (press connects etc.) be made available on the website.
 - D. **Opportunities For Broome:** Mary Lee reported that OFB has 4 studio apartments open, but in need of work and they are working as hard as possible to get them ready for people to occupy.
 - E. **Project Uplift:** Mike Warren reported that the chronically homeless population, particularly those living on the riverbanks, appear to all be accounted for. They appear to have gone to the ACC and other available area beds.
 - F. **Mental Health Association:** Mike Warren reported that the MHA is acting as the primary contact source for anyone with any mental health issues that is affected by the flooding.
 - G. **YMCA:** Bernard reported that the YMCA was evacuated and was closed from Wednesday 6/28/06 until Friday 6/30/06. Most of the residents were evacuated to the Event Center at BU or to Owego. They are currently at full capacity, but have been able to house two extra people so far and are providing whatever services they can to other (ex. hot showers).
 - H. **VOA:** Lynne reported that they have one open bed and that so far have been able to house two people displaced by the flood.
 - I. **CPEP:** Bernard reported that people have been remaining at CPEP for a night or two due to the flooding.
 - J. **Catholic Charities:** Joe reported that they are continuing to run their food pantries and operate at the three drop-in centers, but they have had to evacuate Bridgeway (which will be in need of long term repairs) and some of their supportive living apartments due to the flooding. Joe stated that Madison House is currently over capacity.
 - K. **Fairview Recovery Services:** James reported that FRS' Binghamton Supportive Living apartments had to be evacuated and that most clients went first to the event center and then they were transferred to the motels. The clients are beginning to return to their apartments now as repairs are made. The ACC is at full capacity and has a waiting list of people.

New Business:

- James Breslin stated that the fundraiser at Sam's Club on Saturday was very successful and recognized Lynne Webb for organizing it. The coalition raised \$715 and Les Platt of the Community Thrift Store wrote a check for \$260, Sam's Club may match up to the full \$985. Pictures from this event are up on the website. Beth Saxton suggested that since it was stated during the fundraiser that the money would be used for flood victims, that the Coalition move to set aside this money specifically for this use. All present agreed to this and suggested uses were to purchase medications and for a school supplies drive.
- Paul Graham offered his assistance in anyway and can be contacted through James Breslin.
- Justin Hoch will set-up the main page of the Shelter-net web page to be a central source of information for flood victims. The page will include all available resources (including those listed by the Press and Sun) and any Coalition agencies that wish to be added. If anyone has any info they want added to the page they should call or E-mail Justin.
- Mary Lee stated that at the end of next week Tim Grippen of OFB will be putting a statement in the paper regarding resources for flood victims, so anything Coalition members wish to add they should call Tim and give him the info.
- James Breslin asked that if any agencies were able to accept credit card payments, if they would be willing to do so on behalf of the Homeless Coalition. It was suggested to talk to both MHA and the United Way.
- James Breslin stated that he has contacted Dr. Frick of the Broome County Council of Churches Re: the possibility of setting up shelters for displaced people, similar to those already being discussed for the fall "no freeze" program.
- Mike Warren suggested that the Coalition should issue a press statement requesting that all local landlords with available apartments contact the HC.
- Town of Union has opened its section 8 housing with priority to people displaced by the flood.