

DATE: September 9, 2014

LEADER: Ben Maas

TIME: 4:00-6:00 p.m.

RECORDER: Lisa Gjerde

COUNCIL MEMBERS			LIAISON MEMBERS			GUESTS
Name	P	A	Name	P	A	Name
Caroline Beise	√		Alene Chelman	√		Jen Romero, Housing Coordinator
Sam Deweese	√		Melissa Hanson		√	
Christine Dondlinger	√		Gary Norman		√	
Lisa Gjerde	√					
Lisa Inman		√				
Sue Kunitz	√					
Ben Maas	√					
Sue Maki	√					
Rod Sawtell	√					
Twyla Sawtell	√					
Becky Sorenson	√					
Eddie Tipton		√				
Virginia Wright	√					

Agenda	Activity/Discussion	Decision/Action/Conclusion
Call to Order	Sam called the meeting to order.	Approved by consensus.
Approval of Aug. Minutes	Christine and Caroline made motions to approve the minutes.	Approved by consensus.

<p>Approval of Sept. Agenda</p>	<p>Christine suggested we include on the agenda plans to discuss next month’s meeting. With this proviso, Lisa G. and Sue M. made motions to approve the agenda.</p>	<p>Approved by consensus.</p>
<p>Introductions</p>	<p>Our newest member, Sue Maki, introduced herself. Sam explained to her the various issues we have been working on recently, including the priority action items.</p>	
<p>Guest Speaker, Jen Romero</p>	<p>Jen Romero came to her position as Housing Coordinator for Carver County after eleven years at the CAP Agency. She is part of the COC coordination and oversees HUD projects for Scott and Carver counties. She is trying to improve the homeless response system, and she meets with workers to help their clients with housing concerns. There are various contracted housing programs throughout the county, including: Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program; GRH with Five-Star; Shelter and Plus Care, which provide subsidies to people with mental health diagnoses; Families Moving Forward, a program in Prior Lake sponsored by the YMCA and area churches to help homeless families; and the Community Development Agency (CDA), which provides public housing. The CDA has 84 units and rent is calculated as 30% of one’s income, of which liquid assets can be considered as part of the income.</p> <p>While Section 8 has been closed for the last seven years, the waiting list for Public Housing at the CDA is not; it has a six-month to four-year wait. At least 8% of senior project-based public housing is filled with people with disabilities. Jen is hoping to expand and enhance the current housing situation and provide a more unified way to help people access services. She is currently working on creating a central wait list for the homeless in Carver and Scott Counties. Also, she is hoping to bring in more housing opportunities and build a list of apartment complexes willing to rent to those who are homeless or have limited incomes.</p>	

<p>Guest Speaker (cont.)</p>	<p>Christine asked if the singles get lost in the hunt for housing, but Jen said the wait list is divided between families and singles, and more single units are currently available.</p> <p>On January 22, 2014, 102 households participated in a Point-in-Time Survey to try and determine the number of homeless in Carver and Scott Counties. Of the 102 surveyed, 33 were unsheltered, while the remaining people were doubled up or in a temporary housing program for the homeless.</p> <p>Jen discussed various programs and studies regarding homelessness, including HUD’s “Housing First” approach to help reach their goal of ending chronic homelessness by 2016. As part of the Wilder Study of 2012, there was a liaison in each school to report on homelessness. The Minnesota definition of homelessness includes people who live on the streets, in their cars, or in shelters, as well as people who have “doubled up” with family or friends for over a year.</p> <p>Part of the problem is that there are not enough funds to help everyone. For example, in spite of a “Homeless Youth Act,” the CAP agency received vouchers for only 6-8 youth. As part of the Safe Harbor Act, a shelter will be opening soon in Scott County for youth who have been sexually exploited. Launch Ministries now has a youth drop-in center at the Moravian Church in Chaska. Sometimes other agencies will help with rent deposits, such as the Salvation Army, CAP, Love, Inc., and FISH (in Scott County).</p> <p>In response to the frustration felt that not all families are able to succeed in meeting their goals and maintain their housing, Jen said that a large part of any social worker’s job involves “planting seeds” to help people struggling with housing issues; unfortunately, workers don’t always get to watch them grow. But eventually they will likely succeed.</p>	
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<p>Guest Speaker (cont.)</p>	<p>Jen’s goal is to make a Housing Guide for case managers to use to help their clients navigate the system. Another goal is that case managers will be able to refer clients in and out of other county systems; long-term, she’d like this referral process to be state-wide.</p> <p>Currently, the main intake number is 952-361-1600.</p>	
<p>Member Comments</p>	<p>Ben discussed Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, in which food, clothing, and shelter are the basic needs a person requires. It was noted that often when a person is in crisis, all he/she can handle is one small thing (such as a single point of contact – one phone number for housing issues).</p> <p>After our guest speaker left, we spent much of our remaining time discussing what we learned from her and how we can use this information to work toward our first priority action item (housing).</p>	
<p>Adjourn</p>	<p>Ben made the motion to adjourn. Lisa G. seconded.</p>	<p>Approved by consensus.</p>