

Council to End Homelessness in Durham  
May 17, 2018 Minutes

Attendance: Lisa Rowe, (Families Together), Jesse McCoy (Duke Civil Justice Clinic), Donna Carrington (CEF), Valeria Brown (HNH), Sheldon Mitchell (UMD), Tasha Melvin (FMF), Rikki Gardner (HNH), Andrea Mikesell (DCRC), Ann Tropiano (FMF), Catherine Pleil (FMF), Malcolm White (ABHC), Gino Nuzzolillo (CEF), Megan Noor (Mayor's office), Courtney Ashley (VoA), Karreem Morris (Volunteers of America), Malcolm White (Alliance Behavioral Healthcare), Daniel Oladela (VoA-Maple Court), Courtney Millsap (DCRC), Lloyd Schmeidler (City of Durham), Ashley Towe (VoA-HVRP), Melody Marshall (Durham Public Schools), Erica Wilkerson (VA), Doneicia Johnson (VA)

The meeting was called to order with welcomes and introductions by Chairman Sheldon Mitchell. Minutes from the April 2018 meeting were reviewed. Motion to approve the April minutes was made by Valeria Brown, seconded by Megan Noor and unanimously approved.

1. Upcoming Mayor's Landlord Roundtable – Gino Nuzzolillo gave an overview of the Unlocking Doors initiative and described the partnership between the City, private landlords, DHA, and homeless service providers. He shared information about the Risk Mitigation fund, encouraged partners to sign agreements, and stated that the major goal of this year's event is to deepen the relationships between all key partners. He shared the tentative date of June 21<sup>st</sup> from 10 am – 12 noon and that the challenge with confirming a date is assuring both Mayor Schewel and Anthony Scott can participate. Gino also noted that Megan, intern at the Mayor's office, is helping to coordinate and plan the roundtable.

Gino asked for feedback regarding the small group format that is being considered. There was good discussion, questions, and ideas shared. The possibility of giving recognition and/or awards to landlords was also discussed. Megan passed around a document for point people from organizations to sign so that communication about the event can continue and that key partners are invited to the roundtable. The event is expected to be held at Trinity Avenue Presbyterian church at 927 W. Trinity Avenue.

One of the suggestions from CEHD was that the asks being made of landlords be sent out in advance of the event so that there are no surprises and that they might be able to know their commitment level prior to the public event. Questions were raised and discussion was had about the number of meetings we might be asking landlords to commit to, how to give landlord recognition to those who want to work with the effort (whether they have one or 100 units) as well as those (whether they have one or 100 units) who are already demonstrating commitment, who and how many folks would be at each table, how the discussions would be moderated and the information collected and shared, and how much landlords know about Coordinated Intake and prioritization in Durham and how the By Name List works. It was also suggested that the housing programs invited landlords in for tours as a way to meet staff and maybe clients, too. Another suggestion included mapping out the cost savings for the city when individuals are in permanent housing rather than experiencing homelessness. Gino shared that Terry Allebaugh will moderate the event. Gino will take the input given back to CEF and Unlocking Doors. Gino can be contacted at: [ginon@communityempowermentfund.org](mailto:ginon@communityempowermentfund.org)

2. Eviction Diversion – Jesse McCoy of Duke Civil Justice Clinic gave an overview of evictions in Durham, the collateral damage individuals and families experience as a result of evictions, eviction law in NC, and that the goal of the program is to reduce the number of eviction judgments. Jesse shared that in NC, landlords typically get to pick the date and time of the hearing, automatically win if the tenant doesn't show up, that most tenants don't know their rights, that tenants are usually worried about how much they owe, that tenants do not usually have counsel, and in NC if a tenant can't come up with the funds, it is in their best interest to move out of the unit before the judgement passed because the tenant cannot then be held to the judgement. He further shared that the clinic usually gets involved last minute because tenants haven't been aware of the program. One remedy instituted is that now a clinic flier is placed into every file. Jesse stated that DSS is the first point of contact, but that there is a gap as everyone is not eligible for the funds. Jesse also shared that there is an advocacy effort to get the City to hire a coordinator to direct the tenants to the assistance for which they are most likely eligible.

Jesse shared that the program launched in August of 2017 and that of the 50 cases they saw per month they successfully avoided eviction judgement in 80% of the cases and 67% of the tenants were able to stay in the unit. Jesse believes that if the clinic is contacted early enough that filings can be avoided and repair completion will

increase. Another piece of advocacy could also be in asking for legislation to guarantee the right to counsel for tenants facing eviction.

Jesse ended by stating that we don't want court to rubber stamp evictions, that magistrates are frustrated that folks don't know their legal rights, and that even if a tenant losing their case with the magistrate they have 10 days to appeal district court—before the 15<sup>th</sup> they will be on the next month. After the 15<sup>th</sup> they will get 2 months in the unit. He also stated that the tenant must be responsible to the court for the bond; amount of uncontroverted rent—full amount gets paid to the court. The clinic representation will always fight the rent; tenants can file for indigent status and not have to pay fees to court for the appeal. Some cases get dismissed as there are no police reports.

**Eviction Diversion Process:** people go to DSS and within 24 hours meeting will be scheduled with tenant who will be given flyer for clinic program. The eviction diversion clinic is held every Wednesday from 2-4 PM in the Community Agencies Suite on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the Durham County Courthouse. People can go the clinic with questions and do not need to be in the process of eviction, and are encouraged to bring all related paperwork with them. Goals of the clinic include education, advocacy, catching Durham tenants in a timely manner to give them an opportunity to get back on their feet, build bridge between tenants and landlords, avoid forcible removal from rental units, and to be seen as a resource.

Good discussion followed Jesse's presentation and the group was reminded that the City Recommendations will be presented at the HSAC meeting on May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 3 PM.

3. Agency Announcements –Lloyd shared that of the 225 HCV slots available in Durham, that our system made 107 referrals through May 9, 2018. He further reminded the group that the fiscal year ends September 30<sup>th</sup>. Agencies also need to continue to enter referral, lease up information, etc. to [info@unlockingdoorsdurham.org](mailto:info@unlockingdoorsdurham.org)

Lloyd shared the Community Development is hosting a fundraiser hamburger lunch and 50/50 raffle to benefit the Ronald McDonald house of Durham on June 8<sup>th</sup>. Please see Lloyd if interested; the lunch is \$5 and the raffle tickets are \$1 each. Delivery of meals totaling 10 or more for one location is available. The lunch will be held at the bottom of the hill at Golden Belt. Update: Lunch is \$7

Rikki shared that Housing for New Hope is holding their annual breakfast fundraiser at the Cotton Room at Golden Belt on Tuesday, June 19<sup>th</sup>. She stated that the event will include a panel discussion about affordable housing featuring Mayor Schewel and Farad Ali.

Catherine shared that members of the CoC and partners presented a different conferences about Diversion and/or the impact of homelessness on children. She also shared that former person served in Durham's continuum also spoke at one of the conferences.

Malcolm shared a brief statement about the work Emily Carmody is doing in partnership with Duke researchers and the Robert Woods Foundation.

Ashley reminded CEHD members that VoA would like to discuss enrollment with any male veterans, males with children or female veterans. She also shared that Maple Court has single room vacancies. She can be contacted at: [atowe@voacarolinas.org](mailto:atowe@voacarolinas.org) 919-704-6057.

Melody—families with children will have access to her this summer as she will be working out of her office at Brogden Middle School. The clothing and food pantries will be open.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:27 AM

Next Meeting Date: Thursday, June 21, 2018