

RCCRCEH Meeting Minutes August 19, 2010

Present were : Ellery Blackstock, presiding, Dick Frohock, Alvarez Henderson, Jason Thompson, Leon Barton, Bobby Martin, William Roach, George Galloway, Todd Dalton, Deborah Maryland, Beverly Scurry, Melondy Graves, Sharon Foust, Randy Judkins, Ruth Mitchell, Marlene Pruitt, Faye Pierce, Terri Hill, Linda Wilson, and Joanne Case, 20 members total present.

Meeting was called to order by Chairman, Mr. Ellery Blackstock

Members were welcomed to the meeting and each introduced themselves and the agency they represented.

The invocation was led by Ellery Blackstock

Members reviewed the minutes of the last meeting.

Sharon Foust noted a correction needed to be changed on page one to read applying (**not applied**) for renewal of 2006 Transition Housing for 7 women and families. Grant was written just for women and children and a cash match of \$15,460, which Help for the Homeless had in the bank account.

Mr. Dick Frohock moved to approve the minutes and it was seconded by Mr. George Galloway. Minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

Ms. Sharon Foust gave an update on the grants:

- After a discussion with HUD Representative, Dianne Dillahunt, RCHH, Inc. will apply for renewal of the existing 2006 and 2007 Transitional Housing grants. This will be the last year for a cash match for grants. Therefore, next year RCHH will apply for a new permanent housing grant.
- Next year we will not be competing with other larger cities for grants. We will compete with counties our size for the grants.
- **Leona Williams, LME Housing Coordinator** has spoken to Andrea Kurtz, Executive Director For Forsyth County's 10-year plan to end homelessness to assist Rockingham with the 10 year plan. There will be a meeting soon concerning this committee. Reidsville Area Foundation has consented to pay MS. Kurtz to complete the 10-year plan.

- Sharon thanked **Deborah Maryland, Care Giver's Executive Director**, for serving on the BoS CoC Score Card Review Committee. Once the grants are completed the Score Card Review Committee will meet to review and score the grants. The new score card regional committee members as of this date will be Ellery Blackstock, Dick Frohock, Marlene Pruitt and Mary Davenport. Other Regional Committee member are welcome to be a part of this committee.
- The RCRCEH members voted and gave approval for RCHH to apply for the Transitional Housing grants 2006, 2007. If additional cash match can be raised RCHH will apply for a new permanent housing grant. Motion was made by Dick Frohock to approve request and it was seconded by William Roach. Motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Dick Frohock, RCHH Board Treasurer, stated that we need a major funding drive to raise money. We need \$85,000. If we could get 300 churches in the county to give \$500.00 a year to RCHH this would help the organization to sustain operations and programs. The Regional Committee was asked to take an active roll to seek funds. He added that he is willing to go to the news media to put the word out that the RCRCEH needs funding which would help with the new permanent housing application that would house 15 homeless families.

He mentioned the Golden Leaf Foundation, which usually meets at Rockingham County Community College will be meeting at Rockingham County High School in Wentworth at 6:00 pm. this evening. There is approximately two million dollars to be spent on 3-county projects. Citizens and other organizations that have been present at this meeting have been pushing for money to build a new library in Madison. The three major needs facing Rockingham County is housing, transportation and jobs. Rockingham County needs a permanent homeless shelter. Therefore, Dick encouraged all members of the RCRCEH to be present to represent our homeless concerns for Rockingham County.

Dick, also added that there was a roomer that the RCRCEH was not working together but this is not true. He used the example of the committee members joining together to help the Reidsville Housing Authority obtain their cash match information and how well that effort went. Per capita, Rockingham has the highest homeless rate and is ranked 78 out of 100 counties in unemployment. There is a need for a homeless shelter for people and everyone needs to be aware of that. If we can get a shelter for animals, why can't we have one for people?

Sharon Foust added that we would need about 6000 square feet for a shelter to house 100 homeless individuals. Therefore, a minimum of 3-acres of land if donated would be sufficient to build a shelter.

Ruth Mitchell expressed that the RCRCEH call Pam McClain, in the county manager's office to get on the agenda for the next commissioner's meeting in September to express our concerns. The Regional Committee Chair will coordinate this effort and possibly get some of our homeless families to attend as well.

Fundraising Ideas:

- **October 2, 2010**, Emmanuel Ministries is sponsoring a Walk-a-thon to benefit RCHH, Inc. at the Dalton L. McMichael's High School from 9:00am – 12:00 pm. This event is called "Shadow to Shade Walk". Featured activities are the ACT Choir from Sharon Baptist Church, radio personality "Busta Brown" from WNAA-90.1 FM, McGruff the Crime Dog, Ronald McDonald, food, fellowship and fun. Sharon Foust will be going on the radio WLOE on September 7, 2010, to talk about the walk-a-thon and homelessness. Hopefully, listeners will participate in the walk-a-thon or financial want to make a donation to support homeless endeavors in our county.
- Per **Mr. George Galloway, DAV Representative**, stated that he is trying to get disabled veterans to sign up to ride in the Christmas parade and have riders donate money to support homelessness. He is still working on this effort and will keep everyone updated.
- **October 23, 2010, Mr. Todd Dalton, RCHH Volunteer** has gotten the Masonic Lodge in Madison to sponsor a car show at the old Highway 220 restaurant in Madison. There will be an entry fee for the cars/trucks and motorcycles, and monies will be donated to RCHH, Inc. to continue homeless efforts in Rockingham Co. There will be a tent and raffle along with other activities beginning at 8:00 am – 4:00 pm.

It was explained to the Regional Committee members that at each meeting, an agency or two will present how they assist with homelessness and/or play a part in the effort to end homelessness in our community. Today, the two presenters were: **Terri Hill, JobLink Coordinator from the Employment Security Commission in Wentworth** and **Melondy Graves, Food Nutrient Services Supervisor of the Rockingham Co. Department of Social Services.**

Terri Hill presented the unemployment rates for Rockingham County:

- In 2009, Rockingham County had a total population of 92,282 and there has only been a 0.4% change from the years 2000 to 2008.
- In 2000, only 69% of high school graduates actually graduated, and 11% of the population have a bachelor's degree or higher.
- The median household income was \$38,267 compared to our neighboring county; Guilford, which was \$47,836.
- The top five largest employers in our county were Rockingham County Schools, Morehead Hospital, UNIFI Manufacturing Inc., Rockingham County Finance Office, and Wal-Mart Associates Inc. The textile industries use to be in the top five of companies who employed 60% of the counties workers, but these jobs no longer exist in the county.
- A total of 25,739 workers are commuting out of Rockingham County to work, while only 10,506 worker are commuting into Rockingham County to work. There are only 18,392 Rockingham County residents that live and work in Rockingham County.

Melondy Graves presented the Food Nutrient Services by giving general policy regulations and updates:

- The poverty level did increase from 130% to 200%, which may enable more families to become eligible for assistance. Ms. Graves stated that her staff was prepared for a lot of calls and visits once the new policy went into effect July 1, 2010.
- Applications and caseloads have increased with her workers and continue to rise which means more federal money spent on food in Rockingham County.

Several questions were posed such as:

- If someone gives their EBT card and pin number to another person, what could be done about it. **Answer:** Nothing. EBT pin numbers should be kept by the owner at all times just like a bank card.
- If there are two families in the same household could each get an EBT card for their family. **Answer:** Only if they prepare and eat their food separately.

Ms. Graves added that members should encourage family, friends, co-workers and others to apply for benefits if they have any questions about it. Since the policy changed more people could eligible to

receive benefits. She then gave out pamphlets and the income levels for families to the regional committee members to take with them.

Joanne Case, Executive Director Eden Salvation Army, stated that they have seen an increase in people coming to receive a hot meal at lunch time. The bulk of the people who visit for a hot meal, get there by 11:50 am and are gone by 12:15 or shortly there after. They encourage families to come for a hot meal due to the hard times families are having now. Their food distribution has also increased. Her staff continues to work with the other partners at the table of RCRCEH and is thankful for the cooperation.

Miscellaneous: Sharon Foust handed out the Balance of State Participation Form for members to complete and turn back in or they could complete it on the website. She explained that this was necessary for grant purposes. Members were encouraged to complete the form as soon as possible and everyone agreed.

Ellery Blackstock thanked everyone for attending the meeting and thanked Terri Hill and Melondy Graves for their presentations. He also encouraged members to be present at the Golden Leaf Foundation meeting at 6:00pm this evening at Rockingham County High School.

Next Regional Committee meeting will be September 16, 2010 at 8:00 am, at the American Red Cross in Reidsville.

Meeting adjourned

Submitted by Ellery M. Blackstock