

**SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES
CONTINUUM OF CARE WORKING GROUP
SEPTEMBER 19, 2008 – 8:30 A.M.
MANCHESTER ROOM – TOWN HALL**

Members present: Diane Wicks – SAFS, Sarah Melquist – MACC, Debra Macht – Worksource, Nydia Einsiedel – Head Start, Phil McNally – MACC, Valerie Bozzi – EHCHS

Also present: Gary Anderson, Planning Department

After welcoming the group Mr. Anderson asked each member in attendance to give an update on the recent activities of their agency or department.

- **Head Start:** Nydia Einsiedel reported the new Head Start building is currently under construction on Hollister Street. Because of recent objections by some residents, the Bentley School building is not currently being demolished as planned. Ms. Einsiedel said if the building is not demolished the Head Start building will lose some parking and a playground. The foundation for the new building is currently laid and the organization looks forward to opening the building in September, 2009. The building will include 11 classrooms for 190 students. Currently the Head Start program is being run at Buckley, Verplanck, Highland Park, and Robertson Elementary Schools.
- **MACC:** Ms. Melquist reported the MACC shelter is currently nearly at capacity. She noted the organization recently opened a food pantry next to the shelter on Main Street. MACC's administrative offices are also housed in that building. She said an increase in the number of Spanish speaking guests at the shelter has become a challenge and staff has discussed learning Spanish to address the problem.

Mr. McNally reported a significant increase in the outdoor population in Town. He said two tent cities have reemerged over the summer, one with a current population of approximately six individuals, down from ten at its height. The other currently includes two individuals, down from a height of six. Both tent cities include a younger population which has some discretionary income. Mr. McNally said he doesn't expect these communities to remain over the winter.

- **Manchester Human Services Department:** Ms. Wicks reported Senior Adult and Family Services recently finished accepting applications for its Renter's Rebate Program. The program received 858 applications, more than 100 more than it received last year. She said the department focused more on outreach this year and there were more applications from people with disabilities.

Ms. Wicks reported Senior Adult and Family Services began receiving calls for energy assistance beginning in July. She said no money from the program will be available until November. The Governor has also increased funding for Operation Fuel and income

guidelines include families of low and moderate income. Those interested in the program should contact MACC.

- **Worksource:** Ms. Macht said the Worksource program is currently stable and strong and there is currently no wait for referrals. She noted the recent rise in unemployment numbers and said many people are currently looking for a second job. Many of her clients are also not getting the hours they were promised when hired.

Ms. Macht said the recently completed Walgreen's Distribution Center in Windsor, designed to accommodate workers with disabilities, has instituted a training program which she finds disappointing. The criteria for the program is extremely limiting, requiring participants to attend a nine week un-paid training program. Applicants may not have criminal records and the program is currently attempting attracting those with physical rather than mental disabilities.

- **Genesis:** Ms. Harnois Cherry reported Genesis is currently fully staffed and has a new APRN, giving the organization two full-time nurses. Genesis is currently in the process of developing seven supportive units of scattered site housing through the Manchester Housing Authority. These units are permanent housing and are offered through Residential Assistance Program (RAP) Certificates. This program allows clients who are currently doubled-up to qualify for assistance, unlike Section 8.

In partnership with the MACC shelter, Genesis is currently running the SOAR Program which targets people with disabilities and encourages them to apply for Social Security benefits for the first time. The case manager goes through the process with clients individually.

- **EHCHC:** Ms. Bozzi reported the health center's OB pediatrics center will be opening September 29. She said the center is getting new providers including a new physician's assistant who speaks Spanish, a new Vietnamese doctor, and a nurse mid-wife. She said the health center will be the only one in the State of Connecticut to have an OB on staff.

Mr. Anderson told the group the week-long Point-In-Time Homeless Count will take place from Sunday, October 19th through Saturday, October 25th. The group suggested putting an announcement in the newspaper to let people know the count will be going on. The group reviewed the Point-In-Time Count survey and suggested a few changes: Under Survey Question 2A the group suggested adding the words "homeless" or "at risk" to "another adult". Members also suggested re-wording the options in #9 under Client Service Needs so that each of the options states an actual need.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m. The next meeting of the Manchester Continuum of Care Working Group will be ***Friday, October 10, 2008 at 8:30 a.m. in the Manchester Room of Town Hall.***