

Notes for Southern Mountains Homeless Coalition online/Zoom meeting  
Region 2 in the N.C. Balance of State (BoS) Continuum of Care (CoC) for Homeless  
**July 7, 2022, 9:30 AM** Thrive hosting

**Persons on the call:** Regional co-lead: Emily Lowery.

Tracey Gruver, Kristin Dunn, Rachelle Dugan and Josh Shelton (Thrive); Emily Lowery (The Haven of Transylvania County); Makala Perez and Trisha Ecklund (Blue Ridge Health); Suzanne Porter (Rutherford United Way); Jackson Corbin, Just'us Resource Lounge, Rutherfordton; Rachel Ingram (Hendersonville Connections Center); Beth Branagan (NC Homeless Education Program); Alyce Knafllich (Aura Homes); Michael Absher (Only Hope WNC); Jessica Joyner (Vaya Health/Housing Support, Transylvania); Chris Berg. See also the **appended Chat**.

**Emily Lowery** facilitated. Please see the agenda for a ground rules statement.

**Minutes** of June 2 online meeting were approved by common consent.

**BoS Steering Committee** met June 7. It covered **Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG)**, to rapidly re-house homeless persons and families; to operate homeless Shelters; or to prevent homelessness. The funder, U.S. Dept. of HUD, requires emphasis on rapid re-housing, getting clients into stable permanent homes quickly. There are two program components, Emergency Response, covering street outreach as well as shelter operation, and Housing Stability, covering re-housing and targeted prevention. Regions such as ours will submit an ESG application (with recommended projects) to BoS staff, who will consolidate the regions to submit to the N.C. Dept. of Housing and Human Services, DHHS. Webinars covered these on June 20 and 29 – recordings may be available at <https://www.ncceh.org/bos/esg/>.

Processes and priorities are updated from 2019. All program applications go to NCCEH and its Project Review Committee. Application priorities must be changed to reflect Continuum updates and the new process. People with questions may contact Kristen Martin, Emily, Alyce Knafllich or Suzanne Porter; all are pretty familiar with the program. Details are also in coming webinars, see p.3 of <https://www.ncceh.org/media/files/files/639048b8/bos-sc-board-packet-july-final.pdf>.

Alyce was asked to outline the new **ESG funding process**. She highlighted a requirement to limit Crisis Response activities to a top of 60% of Regional Fair Share (street outreach, emergency shelter), and dedicate 40% or more to Housing Stability (rapid re-housing or homeless prevention) (see <https://www.ncceh.org/media/files/files/01cd76fc/regional-committee-esg-webinar-final.pdf>, page 11). Agencies must submit applications by August 12, and project scoring is to start August 19. Alyce thinks we have – and will need – volunteers to score these, beyond herself. Anyone interested community person not affiliated with a potential applicant could review and score projects. There's a followup meeting to set priorities, see Chat.

**The CoC competition** was covered by several NCCEH,org webinars. Any new CoC grant applicant must submit an Intent to Apply [<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/2cf2061052884e979b8587ab91438811>], to be due two weeks after the release of the related NOFO (expected soon; see also <https://www.ncceh.org/bos/prospectivegrantees/>). Suzanne Porter will discuss application scoring (below).

A by-county services grid was presented.

Their anti-discrimination policy has been updated, affecting its Overview, its Equal Access section and the procedures table. It now mandates annual training for ESG funded program staff, it protects LGBT persons, sets a family separation policy, a faith-based services policy, and a grievance process.

The North Carolina Coalition against Domestic Violence received a \$2 million+ CoC allocation for DV survivors/those made homeless by DV.

Emergency Housing Vouchers were discussed – they are covered below.

**A supplemental NOFO** for CoC funds targeted to Rural areas, and to Unsheltered, was released about two weeks ago. Alyce said that Henderson will not be an eligible project area, but our other three counties qualify. It can cover SSO (supplemental services?), or HMIS (a required Management Information system). Alyce said it's a real opportunity for these counties, it could start outreach in Polk for example. It is also **time competitive** – the first 100 Continuums applying will get funds! See <https://www.ncceh.org/media/files/files/655bf3c5/july-2022-sc-slides-final.pdf> , pages 13-17. Questions? Talk to Brian Alexander or Laurel McNamee at NCCEH.

**Coordinated Entry (CE):** Rachelle Dugan said that the Emergency Voucher resource is now limited. After July 1 applications for these go to a waiting list. Our By-name list is 490 people, in 369 households. Rachelle will begin training shortly to take on lead CE duties in Thrive, so more outreach – work with shelters, day centers, meeting people in need where they are.

**Back@Home:** Trisha Ecklund said the Blue Ridge grant closed June 30, but got extended use of hotel vouchers- these rooms are in Henderson County, but Blue Ridge will transport from other areas to the hotel. These cases they would plan to cover later with Emergency Solutions funding.

Kristin Dunn said the Thrive Rapid Re-housing grant extends through September. Thirty people, adults and children, are assigned this help, so they are looking for about 13 houses/units for them. Thrive, with a ~\$20,000 budget, can move in a family, pay out a twelve-month lease, and after three families the funds will be all committed. ESG funds will come in soon and help continue placements. In a month or two the Coordinated Entry group will again talk about prioritization. Kat Black will be starting to also place clients for these programs.

**Racial Equity:** Makala Perez said they have an annual evaluation cycle. June-September starts with getting numbers from the Data Center, and this month and August the subcommittee will draft a report, then revise and edit. In September this goes to the Steering Committee to adopt or decline. They next meet July 20.

**CYHAC, the Child and Youth Homeless Action Coalition:** Beth Branagan said the group meets next Tuesday with Partners for Impact, for their early childhood homelessness Community Engagement project, that is to connect Homeless providers to Early Education providers. Beth will be contacting schools' homeless liaisons, or DSS workers or others with child-care subsidies, especially in Rutherford and Polk but across all our counties. They want to put together a planning team soon. A launch in August or September is in view, to be followed by six consult meetings (to November 2023), with the group creating a vision, deciding on actions to take, sustaining that effort, all directed to assuring that the youngest kids in unstable situations can access as much learning opportunity as possible.

Beth, now with the N.C. Homeless Education program, is promoting 'Yay Babies', as an advocacy group for the young children. They want to visit shelters and care centers in July to create a kids' footprints quilt. The completed work would go in December to hang in D.C. in the Capitol. Filming this process will be Diane Nyland, a storyteller-documentarian who travels to create portraits. Please email Beth if you have a visit site to recommend, [bbranagan@serve.org](mailto:bbranagan@serve.org) .

Michael Absher said that **Only Hope WNC** this month started a partnership with Healthy Transitions/Pathways/Family Preservation. They have \$23,000 in a pilot budget for youth housing; a second round of \$30K would become available if warranted, as Michael expects. It's for Buncombe and Henderson, to cover deposits, initial rents, or hotel space, for youth to age 25 (as heads of household). It should go quickly. The partnership allows these youth to waive a qualifying process and access mental health services more directly. Only Hope also will add a second staffer courtesy of a grant from the Bridge Foundation.

**Day One Family Fund:** Rachelle Dugan said Thrive obtained \$40K last year to support families (parent/s and child/children, or pregnant/expecting), later increased, ending last month. The fund has now been renewed to ~\$100K, to be paid in two portions. This month will see staff trained to divert unstable clients from

homelessness, and to recruit local sources/agencies likely to encounter these clients, to better access the Day One funds and immediately alleviate an eviction or similar situation. It's to help those in several counties including this region and perhaps beyond.

**Lived Expertise** Advisory Council: Alyce said they meet tomorrow at noon. They are getting some added people. They hope to put a formerly-homeless person on each committee, of BoS and of each region. They are developing a Bill of Rights, now in draft, to offer to BoS Steering Committee.

**Veterans:** Alyce reported finally getting a Transylvania vet help with coverage of her full rent, after a difficult process with the county Housing Authority. Transformation Village is filling up. Alyce is busy, talking to four women veterans yesterday about housing issues, about landlords not keeping properties up, flea infestations, claims that 'its all in her head' if they report problems.

**Hendersonville Connection Center: Rachel Ingram** started June 13 with the organization. Several agencies here are partners with the Center or are represented on its board. She has a background with Crossnore and with Homeward Bound in Asheville, and looks forward to cooperative work.

Jackson Corbin does peer support for **Eden of Abundance**, at the Just'Us Resource/Recovery Lounge in Rutherfordton. They opened officially in January. Jackson's background includes experiences dealt with by this coalition. Patriqua Lahey, the director, had wanted to join today, but worked through last night. Chris asked them to consider applying for the new Rural/Unsheltered assistance. Contact [edenofabundance@gmail.com](mailto:edenofabundance@gmail.com).

Emily Lowery said **The Haven** in Transylvania has its mens' quarters full. The have female beds, and one place for a family unit, so please let her know of people in need for those spaces.

**Next regional Coalition meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, at 9:30 AM**

- With respect, Chris Berg

### **Chat messages:**

09:34:45 From Kristin Dunn (she/her); Thrive to Everyone: If you can, please also put in the chat your name and agency for our minutes

09:34:48 From Kristin Dunn (she/her); Thrive to Everyone: Kristin Dunn, Thrive

09:34:58 From Rachelle Dugan (she/her) to Everyone: Rachelle Dugan; Thrive

09:35:00 From Makala Perez (her/she); BRHS to Everyone: Makala Perez, BRH

09:35:04 From Suzanne to Everyone: Suzanne Porter, United Way of Rutherford County

09:35:10 From Josh Shelton to Everyone: Josh Shelton, Thrive

09:35:16 From Beth Branagan to Everyone: Beth Branagan- NC Homeless Education Program

09:35:18 From Tracey Gruver, Thrive to Everyone: Tracey Gruver, Thrive

09:35:32 From Michael Absher to Everyone: Michael Absher - Only Hope Wnc

09:35:42 From Rachel Ingram to Everyone: Rachel Ingram, Hendersonville Connections Center

09:36:03 From Alyce to Everyone: Alyce Knafllich, Aura Home Women Vets, [aurahome.alyce@gmail.com](mailto:aurahome.alyce@gmail.com), 828-771-6979

09:42:52 From Suzanne to Everyone: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyype9zUKQvs>

09:43:13 From Suzanne to Everyone: That's the link for the ESG funding webinar that was held on June 29th.

09:44:25 From Alyce to Everyone: Special NOFO Rural Set Aside and Unshelter Aside Homelessness <file:///C:/Users/MRM/Downloads/Special%20NOFO%202022.pdf>

09:44:30 From Emily Lowery to Everyone: Emily Lowery, The Haven

09:44:31 From Suzanne to Everyone: These are the slides with the criteria, eligibility, and due dates. <https://www.nceeh.org/media/files/files/01cd76fc/regional-committee-esg-webinar-final.pdf>

09:47:45 From Jessica to Everyone: Jessica Joyner, housing specialist Vaya health

09:48:54 From Jackson Corbin to Everyone: Jackson Corbin, peer support, Just'us Resource Lounge, Rutherfordton

09:49:32 From Beth Branagan to Everyone: New Email for Beth Branagan- bbranagan@serve.org

09:52:26 From Kristin Dunn (she/her); Thrive to Everyone: I can't talk apparently, can you guys ask Beth if she has the info for the Rutherford Homeless Liasons at the schools? I can find their email and phone again. I've met them

09:53:35 From Michael Absher to Everyone: Dr. Keith Silver at 828-288-2310 - Rutherford County Homeless Liason

09:53:38 From Trisha Ecklund to Everyone: Trisha Ecklund Blue Ridge Health

09:58:03 From Kristin Dunn (she/her); Thrive to Everyone: Michael do they have to be youth Head of Household? Can you remind folks what the upper age limit is for that fund?

10:00:21 From Kristin Dunn (she/her); Thrive to Everyone: I got the contract this AM and we will get 50,000 when we sign it to begin :)

10:00:47 From Beth Branagan to Everyone: @Kristin- Yes I have the contact info for all of the homeless liaisons. Just haven't gotten any response from them. Thanks!

10:10:14 From Chris Berg to Everyone: Alyce, Ron Howard might be a possible...

10:17:41 From Rachel Ingram to Everyone: Rachel Ingram Executive Director, Hendersonville Connections Center

10:18:10 From Rachel Ingram to Everyone: [Rachel@hendersonvilleconnectionscenter.org](mailto:Rachel@hendersonvilleconnectionscenter.org) 828-708-8602 (c)

10:20:06 From Kristin Dunn (she/her); Thrive to Everyone: Jackson do you have a website that outlines your programs?