

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  
**October 7, 2021, 9:30 AM** Kristen Martin at Thrive hosting

**Persons on the call:** Regional co-leads: Kristen Martin, Emily Lowery.

Kristen Martin, Kristin Dunn, Tracey Gruver, Kayla Asquith, Rachelle Dugan and Nickie Kilgore (Thrive); Emily Lowery (The Haven of Transylvania County); Suzanne Misur-Porter (United Way of Rutherford County); Makala Perez, Danita Simpson, Trisha Ecklund, and Kennett Melgar (Blue Ridge Health); Jennifer Drum (NC Works, Rutherford-Polk); Adam Jahnke (Charles George VA outreach); Catherine Beaver (Henderson Dept. of Social Services); Alyce Knaflich (Aura Homes); Michael Absher (Only Hope WNC); Brenda Ploss (NC Works Veterans Careers); Chris Berg; Beth Branagan (Transylvania County Schools); Sarah Kowalak (Henderson United Way); Trina Rushing (Henderson Library); Derick (VAYA Health); Shelly; Jessica Ownbey (Henderson Schools); Monica Mathes. *See also the **appended Chat**.*

**Kristen Martin** facilitated. Please see the agenda ground rules statement.

**Minutes** of September 2 were approved by common consent.

**BoS Steering Committee October meeting:** Kristen reviewed the ESG (Emergency Solutions Grant) applications now nearing approval. Our region has three: The Haven, \$35,483 (emergency shelter, a renewal); Blue Ridge Health, \$35,483 (outreach); Thrive, \$47,318 (rapid re-housing). The amounts are tentative. No votes were taken at this Steering meeting.

**Alyce** asked if these amounts were determined by the PIT numbers (as a ‘fair share’). **Trisha** said yes, and given the shift to “all-year” counting from the PIT, there is a fair prospect of raising the amounts through outreach.

The Continuum of Care grants are also in process. Alyce scored seven of about 32 projects in BoS, and a ranking session by the Funding subcommittee is this afternoon at one. This is a multipage scorecard process, and there may be difficulties from a database or uploading problem...

**Racial Equity: Kennett** reported the subcommittee continues to explore a VI-SPDAT update which could enable more client-friendly interviews. The group is holding a dialog with online link, Tuesday, Oct. 12 from 11:30-1, to look at racism and COVID, with a second session Tuesday, Nov. 9<sup>th</sup> at the same times. It was asked if these dialogs will be recorded, so Kennett will check.

**NCCEH Leadership:** Ryan Fehrman is the new Executive Director at the state coalition.

**ESG:** NCCEH has set up a required webinar for ESG agencies (The Haven, Thrive and Blue Ridge) on Dec. 9, from 10:30 – noon.

**CoC grants:** A complex application process (dictated by the 102 page NOFO) will be summarized by the Project Review Committee for Steering Committee review of prioritization on Oct. 13 (2-3:30 PM), with appeals possible, which would be reviewed by Steering Committee on Oct. 20 (noon-12:45). Emily will represent our region as Thrive is a competitor, so Kristen must recuse.

**Assessment Dashboard:** NCCEH is creating a data dashboard to allow simpler system and program performance. Factors include case in/out characteristics, positive outcomes, strategy, regional and county data... Housing prevention activity will also be a concern as will privacy. It is presumed that ‘high’ performance would somehow be used to direct dollars. Alyce noted there are transfers (reallocations) typically open to all regions. The idea goes to Steering Committee for review in November, and is anticipated to the regions in mid-2022.

**Recommendations:** Leadership notes concerns such as digital equity, redlining, and other items pending in the federal budget. We urge advocacy for the child tax credit and its extension, as it plainly affects families that may be at risk of homelessness.

**Back @ Home outreach:** **Trisha** celebrates the new truck available, which is more reliable and with better ground clearance and range. Adding **Khadiya** and **Grace** to staff allows more time to be dedicated to covering Polk and Transylvania. They have to deal with changing schedules affected by COVID. The Hendersonville Rescue Mission has no female unit supervisor and no new case manager, so referrals seemingly have to go to Ti Jones.

**Back @ Home rehousing:** **Kristin Dunn** reports that the awkward process driven by inherited SmartSheet cases from 2-1-1 is gradually being worked past (these require 3 calls to verify current need), as that caseload is down from 42 to 18 in a week. About \$110,000 has been used for assistance. New cases will be handled through Coordinated Entry (below).

**CYHAC, Child and Youth Homeless Action Council:** **Beth** has a Zoom meeting set for 9 AM, Friday, Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>. She would like topics and speaker suggestions. She said the important National Association for Educating Homeless Children and Youth conference will be hybrid this year, with the in-person work in Atlanta.

**Coordinated Entry (CE):** There are two different evaluations under way. The system as is has some double-entry problems. As Kristin Dunn said, the 2-1-1 intakes will cease as SmartSheet, and regular interviews will be the sole intake path. We are waiting to learn what happens after June when the incentives system will disappear. Our by-name list will incur pockets of cases that have no housing in prospect, and focus on high SPDAT scored cases and prevention. The occasional additional funding (as in Rutherford, or from Bezos Foundation) that offers Kristen and Rachelle some ‘one-and-done’ help, may be gone in 30 or 60 days. Our strategy has to be “help us all be part of the solution”. We will need to capture the data; to keep communications with housing authorities, Section 8 programs, Habitat, veterans programs. Beyond that, it is time to take action in zoning changes, permitting questions, and support for affordable housing. Rachelle will be the key CE person for Thrive soon, and that includes ID work. We urge folks to become documentation specialists. Please work with DMV contacts.

**Veterans:** Alyce said **Aura Homes** has funding available to help the women vets. They expect to start soon on electrical work on their Middlebrook Drive project, but funding for that is a concern – homelessness programs don’t fund rehab. She asked us to monitor the HOME program which can apply to Henderson and Transylvania as well as Buncombe and Madison Counties’ affordable housing.

Less than honorable **discharges:** Trisha and **Adam Jahnke** discussed the rule changes seemingly under way, which affect HUD-VASH and Grant Per Diem programs.

**Cheridan Lewis** (Veterans Services of the Carolinas) spoke of a coming shallow-subsidy program for vets – they are waiting for guidance from SSVF. She was asked about Transformation Village: 20 beds are funded, they are working on having staff available.

Brenda Ploss (NC Works) will email an update, she doesn’t have a good voice connection.

Jennifer Drum continues to have good progress in getting Rutherford and Polk vest work positions.

**Michael Absher** said the Only Hope WNC Sleepout will be November 5 at the Henderson Historic Courthouse steps. He invited providers to table on your services or programs in collaboration with the event.

**The next regional Coalition meeting will be November 4, at 9:30 AM, via Zoom.**

- With respect, Chris Berg

## **Chat messages:**

From LCSWA Adam Jahnke to Everyone: 09:29 AM

Adam Jahnke, Charles George VA Homeless program.

From Trina Rushing to Everyone: 09:29 AM

Trina Rushing - Henderson County Public Library

From nickie kilgore to Everyone: 09:29 AM

Nickie Kilgore Thrive

From Emily Lowery to Everyone: 09:29 AM

Emily Lowery, The Haven of Transylvania

From Kristen Martin (she/her); Thrive to Everyone: 09:29 AM

Kristen Martin, Thrive

From Makala Perez to Everyone: 09:30 AM

Makala Perez & Danita Simpson - Blue Ridge Health

From Jessica Ownbey to Everyone: 09:30 AM

Jessica Ownbey, Henderson County Public Schools

From Trisha Ecklund to Everyone: 09:32 AM

Trisha Ecklund, Blue Ridge Health

From bbranaga to Everyone: 09:32 AM

Beth Branagan- Transylvania County Schools Homeless Liaison/School Social Worker

From Rachelle Dugan (she/her); Thrive to Everyone: 09:43 AM

Ryan Hehrman

Fehrman\*

From Tracey Gruver (she/her) to Everyone: 09:50 AM

Kristen, do you know if that Racial Equity dialogue series will be recorded? I can't make it on the 12th, but would love to watch the recording.

From Kristen Martin (she/her); Thrive to Everyone: 09:56 AM

<https://www.getctc.org/en>

From Brenda Ploss to Everyone: 10:04 AM

audio and video not working. in and out conversation. I will forward veteran updates to Kristen for distribution.

From Michael Absher to Everyone: 10:04 AM

<https://naehcy.org/2021-conference/>

From Trisha Ecklund to Everyone: 10:07 AM

Data for the meeting minutes Blue Ridge reached their %20 spending goal at end of September spending \$70,346 which includes our new outreach truck for the region, supplies and staff salary for street outreach services.

From Kristin Dunn, Thrive to Everyone: 10:15 AM

Alyce I reached out to two from last meeting already

From Chariden Lewis/VSC to Everyone: 10:16 AM

Alyce, I'm also on with VSC. Please feel free to shoot me an email.